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- PANASONIC LF-D101 DVD RAM
- BUDGET VINYL FEATURE



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Subscriptions & Back Issues

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Private & Trade Classified Ads

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Distributed by

Comag Magazine Marketing,
Tavisstock Road, West Drayton,
Middlesex UB7 7OE
Tel: +44 (0)1895 444 055

Printed by

Southernprint, Dorset.
Tel: +44 (0)1202 622 226

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Whilst audio journalists (ourselves included!), manufacturers, Uncle Tom Cobley and all were bemoaning the death of the vinyl record, little did we really know how strong the old fella still was.

Thousands of vinyl records are bought each week throughout Europe, the vinyl presses at disc plants such as those at MPO's French HQ still churn out hundreds of the things day in, day out and to top it all, the sales of both DJ decks and 'hi-fi' turntables are very good indeed.

When record companies stopped manufacturing vinyl en-masse it didn't mean that stopped production altogether. You can still buy certain new releases on vinyl in larger music stores. Another saving grace of vinyl was the dance music boom. Most dance releases are one or two tracks per side however, signalling a move from the old style multi-

track album (albums can now consist of up to six discs!). There are two reasons for this. One, DJs won't touch anything with more than two tracks on it, they're easier to mix. And two, you can get a higher level and more dynamics when the information is spread out.

Yes, you mostly have to play them at 45 rpm (remember that?) and you have to get up out of your chair a lot more frequently than you used to, but there is one advantage. More often than not the sound is absolutely cracking. Certain well-produced drum 'n bass tracks will have more mind-blowingly low bass than you can shake a mucky stick at, and a wonderfully wide frequency range - LTJ Bukem's Earth compilations spring immediately to mind.

Even if you don't like the music, you'll appreciate the sound. They seriously blow the majority of 'audiophile' cuts out of the water. And any large music store or specialist dance music shop will sell them (or try the internet). Give them a try, because if they sound great on a Technics SL1200, imagine what they're like on a top spec. hi-fi job!



Simon Pope

How we test the products

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

● Hi-Fi World has a dedicated in-house team of experienced listeners. We review thoroughly by extensive auditioning, rather than by quick-fire group listening tests.

● Hi-Fi World's engineering team designs a wide range of products in-house. No other hi-fi magazine is so expert and dedicated.



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Superb sound, something we'd use ourselves.



GOOD -
Has strong merit. Well worth an audition.



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



POOR -
Seriously flawed. Not worth considering.

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P12... Group Test

REVIEWS

AMPLIFIERS

12... GROUP TEST

This month sees us with six budget amps with phono stages. We get our turntables spinning and our ears pricking. . .

25... MUSICAL FIDELITY A3CR PRE/POWER AMPS

These new amps from Musical Fidelity are described by the company as the best they've made. Simon Pope gives our verdict in this 'World First' review.

35... AUDIO ANALOGUE PUCCINI/SE REMOTE INTEGRATED

These are the brand new, improved versions of the already near-legendary integrations from Audio Analogue. Jon Marks gets the first crack of the review whip.



P49... Chario Academy



P47... Musical Fidelity X-Cans V2



P33... Castle Acoustics Richmond

LOUDSPEAKERS

33... CASTLE ACOUSTICS RICHMOND

Another exclusive for Hi-Fi World as we give a listen to Castle's new entry-level standmounts. Richard White gives his verdict.

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April
2000



P35... Audio Analogue Puccini/SE Remote

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47...MUSICAL FIDELITY X-CANS V2

The V2 is the successor to the original X-Cans and benefits from an improved circuit.

47...COPULARE EQUIPMENT SUPPORT SYSTEM

Simon Pope encounters the mother of all hi-fi racks in the shape of Copulare from Germany.

FEATURE

22...BUDGET VINYL

Hi-Fi World gives you the low down on the best of budget vinyl. The hardware, the software, what to get and where to get it!

50...COMPUTER AUDIO WORLD

Our monthly look at the world of computer music, drive featuring Panasonic's LF-D101 DVD-RAM.



P39... Klipsch KG3.5

39...KLIPSCH KG3.5

Popular in the USA, Klipsch are mostly famous here for their Klipschorn, but there's more to them than just this. We give this floorstander the 'World treatment

49...CHARIO ACADEMY MILLENNIUM 1

These Italian-made standmounts benefit from a beautifully crafted, solid hardwood cabinet and high quality drive units. Simon Pope does the honours. . .

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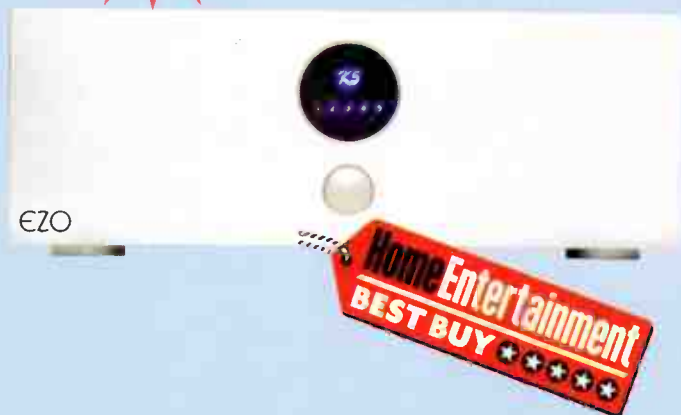
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P25...Musical Fidelity A3^{CR} PRE/POWER

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PHILIPS PUSH SACD

Philips used a recording session for Super Audio Compact Disc to brief journalists on its future. Held at Abbey Road Studios - made famous by the Beatles - a broad swathe of high technology recording equipment was being used to capture the work of Jerry Goldsmith who, with the London Symphony Orchestra, was making a compilation of his film scores.

Super Audio Compact Disc, or SACD for short, is being promoted by Philips and Sony as the eventual replacement for the CD. It offers improved sound quality, with surround sound as an option. Recording for SACD requires a mountain of advanced equipment, as this session showed. Just outside the main control room we saw no fewer than four different recording setups, for CD, for six channels of Dolby surround sound, for eight channels (stereo + surround sound) through a set of DSD converters for SACD, and 24bit at 96kHz high resolution stereo.

Philips were keen to let us know that in Japan the Marantz SA1 SACD player became available at the end of 1999, priced at 550,000Y (£3200) and Sony were now releasing SACD discs in Japan. In Europe Philips expected to release a player after June 2000, in time for the winter season.

There seems to be confusion over discs. In Japan, Sony are selling single layer SACD discs we were told. They are easy to make and inexpensive, but will not play on ordinary CD players. In Europe Philips prefer hybrid discs that will play both on CD and SACD players, giving full quality on the latter. This avoids consumer confusion and the need for additional SACD stock at retailers. Trouble is, hybrid discs have two layers, making them difficult to manufacture and expensive. Only one European plant can produce commercial quantities at present, Philips told us.

On price Philips could only say an SACD was around 30% more expensive to make than an ordinary CD. Since manufacturing cost is less than £1 this would seem to suggest a price increase of 30p. However, the music business is likely to put a hefty premium on SACDs, so expect to pay £18-£20 in the shops.



MUSIC BUSINESS COMES UNDER INTERNET PRESSURE

EMI recently announced a 50:50 merger with Time Warner, to form the world's largest music company. Time Warner will pay EMI shareholders £790m if the deal goes through; it would only fail if there is a hostile counterbid, but that's unlikely. Behind this merger lies fear of forthcoming changes in music distribution,

notably through the internet. EMI feels rationalisation of distribution will save in excess of £200m, but thousands of jobs are likely to go as the two companies merge their operations.

At the same time Virgin Megastores had some interesting observations to make about this part of the music market, claiming a 10% loss of sales would force many music retailers to close. At present, however, in spite of all the talk about sales of music on the internet, they said it accounted for just 1% of turnover in the USA. Pushing down CD prices in order to compete with this perceived threat was an over reaction, Virgin felt.

Mission CUT LOOSE

Mission loudspeakers has gained its independence through a management buyout, ending its association with NXT. Rumours of its purchase by Wharfedale had been circulating, but a management team comprising D.C. Barkataki (managing & finance), David Marchant (sales) and Paul Swebstone (operations) eventually succeeded in gaining control.

The company was founded by Farad Azima in 1977, who built the brand steadily. During the 1990s, Mission was joined by Quad, Leak, Roksan, Premiere Drums and Wharfedale under the Verity Group banner. At the same time Farad embarked upon another quite different strategy, investing heavily in a new flat panel loudspeaker technology, NXT.

As NXT grew, drawing Farad away from specialist hi-fi, Quad, Leak and Wharfedale were sold; Roksan regained its independence. Of this latest divestment, Farad said: "With the development of NXT, its derivative technology SoundVu® and our new joint venture 2020Speech Limited gathering pace and taking up increased management time and financial resource, it is the Board's wish to see the Mission brand taken forward by a team with commitment and focus".

Mission was optimistic. The company's latest 78 series loudspeakers had been received well and new NXT Home Cinema loudspeakers, previewed at America's Winter Consumer Electronics Show, would "transform" the market they felt.



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DVD-AUDIO HACKED

OFF

All is not well for DVD-Audio, thanks to the work of Norwegian computer hackers. The Japanese electronics giants behind DVD, including Matsushita, Victor and Nippon Columbia, have announced that sales of DVD-Audio players and software are being suspended after technology enabling illegal copying of DVD videos appeared on the Internet in October of last year.

Hackers cracked DVD's Content Scrambling System (CSS) and uploaded the software onto an Internet website for the world to see. Although it was promptly shut down by motion picture industry lawyers, it has forced Matsushita and others to postpone the DVD Audio launch from December 1999 until June 2000.

The hack, called DeCSS, permits the digital extraction of DVD videos to computer hard disks via PC DVD-ROM drives. It's a pretty long-winded process and not really commercially viable for pirating, but it has important ramifications for DVD Audio. Because the latter disks con-

tain far less data than DVD videos, they're easier to pirate onto cheap CD-ROMs or distribute cheaply over the Internet.

The revelation set alarm bells ringing in an already nervous music industry, the result being that most DVD-Audio hardware manufacturers agreed to postpone the release of the new format until a new copycoding system was developed. As a result, Nippon Columbia has had to throw out nearly 10,000 DVD Audio disks that it had produced to coincide with the December launch, and retool its manufacturing process for the new copy-protection format.

Pioneer, however, has taken a different



position. By announcing its intention to launch DVD-Audio players in its domestic market in early 2000 as originally intended, it has put itself at odds with the rest of the industry. It says the six months needed to develop a new copycode system "is not beneficial to the DVD-Audio industry" and is duly going ahead regard-

less. Pioneer will then upgrade all DVD-Audio players free of charge when the new system comes to market in mid-2000. Unfortunately it's unlikely that Pioneer will go ahead with DVD-Audio outside Japan due to the logistics of upgrading players outside its home market. The cost of sending players back to Japan for modification is thought to be prohibitive.

These developments have sent shockwaves around the entertainment and computer industries, and highlight the tensions between the two. Unlike CD, DVD was born primarily as a computer data storage medium with audio/visual applications. Being a computer based format with much of its operating system in software, it's open to hacking and ultimately there's nothing that high power entertainment industry lawyers can do to stop it. Now that CSS has been shown to be inadequate, the consortium of companies that develop DVD copy protection - Matsushita, Toshiba, IBM and Intel - have egg on their faces. Music industry nerves, already frayed by the proliferation of Internet music distribution, are now in shreds. The postponement of DVD-Audio, and all the industry upset it causes, is the result.

THAT HACK IN FULL

DeCSS is C++ software that reads DVD video from a computer DVD-ROM drive and saves it to hard disk minus the encryption. It takes around 10 minutes to process a DVD Video (.VOB) file on a 500MHz Pentium III personal computer. DeCSS uses code found in PC DVD playback software but bypasses the encryption system in the DVD decoder.

Once ripped to hard disk, the DVD

video files are too big to fit on CD-ROM (the average size is around 4GB), but there are various DVD conversion utilities on Internet DVD ripping sites which convert them to multiple CD-ROM discs. Once in CD-ROM format, the discs are easy to pirate. DeCSS almost happened by accident. While there are several Windows DVD players around, none exist for the Linux operating system. So a group of Norwegian computer programmers duly started to write one, and began by reverse-engineering the

existing Windows players. They found all the existing programs had encrypted decryption keys except XingDVD from Xing Technologies, which lacked one due to an oversight. A couple of hackers jumped on this and used the decryption key to write a program to strip DVD movies of their encryption. Thus was born DeCSS. It was promptly uploaded to the Internet and the rest was history!

GOGGLE-EYED NADS



Two new AV products with an audiophile edge are launched by NAD this month.

Firstly there is the £650 T760 AV receiver. It features Dolby Digital and DTS on-board decoding and delivers 5x60Watts of power per channel, 30 tuner presets, pre-amp outputs for all channels and NAD's

own EARS surround music mode.

It's joined by the T550, NAD's first foray into DVD players. The DVD-Video player which has a built-in Dolby Digital and Pro Logic decoder concentrates on NAD's tradition of "music first" by using components from NAD's hi-fi equipment. It's priced at £500.

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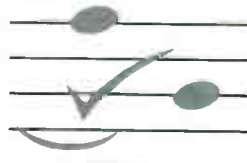
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HIFI WORLD

WORLD-FIRST DVD-RW MACHINE FROM PIONEER

On a cold January afternoon at their UK HQ Pioneer gave the UK press a tempting little taster of the future (and the likely end of VHS) in the form of their breakthrough DVR-1000 DVD recorder. The unit is presently only available in Japan, where since its launch on December 3rd over 10,000 recorders have been sold for 250,000 Yen (about £1300) a piece. The system uses a 4.7GByte re-recordable disc that can apparently be recorded onto over 1,000 times without losing sound or visual quality. Joining Pioneer at the launch were TDK, who are producing DVD-RW discs.

The model currently available in Japan will not be same as the first European model, which is targeted to hit these shores by the end of the year, but looks a more likely proposition for 2001, at somewhere near the Japanese price.

The main difference will be that the European model will play ordinary audio CDs (but not DVD-Audio discs) whereas the Japanese version cannot. Pioneer are obviously seeing versatility as being an essential European selling point.

As far as features go, the DVR-1000 is jammed full of them. It uses MPEG compression to record real-time information, with extensive editing capabilities such as erase, combine, divide and move that are

trouble in programming it to record Last Of The Summer Wine or Songs Of Praise - this, however, remains to be seen. It looked a little complicated at first glance.

You may be wondering if discs recorded on the DVR-1000 will be compatible with existing DVD-V players. The answer is no. Players launched from now on by Pioneer, of course, will be compatible and others signed up to DVD-RW technology such as Kenwood, Sharp, JVC,



impossible to achieve with domestic VCRs. Pioneer claim that ease of use is a priority, so that Granny should have no

Hitachi and Mitsubishi could well be releasing compatible players in the near future.

DVD-RW: THE DISCS

As well as producing analogue tapes, the Japanese recording software giant TDK are at the forefront of optical disc technology and are currently supplying DVD-RW discs to the Japanese market.

The DVD-RW disc is a single layer 4.7GB disc just like a DVD-Video disc, except it's re-recordable due to a phase-change recording layer. It can store up to 2 hours in SP (highest quality) mode and 6 hours in manual mode (lesser quality). A disc can contain a mixture of both SP and manual mode information. It has a quoted lifetime of over 1,000 overwrite cycles and 30 years. Following its production launch in Japan, TDK are hoping to start manufacturing in Europe and the US to coincide with hardware launches.

DVD - CONFUSED?

The following are the international standards agreed by the DVD Forum:

DVD-Video

This was launched in 1996 in Japan and has now gained household recognition and is being hailed as the most successful product of all time. DVD-Video players will play ordinary CDs and single layer 4.7 GByte DVD discs containing movies or 24 bit/96kHz audio. They will not at present play CD-RW discs.

DVD-Audio

This is an extremely high quality audio format (24 bit/192kHz stereo) capable of multi-channel information and video enhancement such as lyrics, performance clips, short documentaries etc. It's currently undergoing a few problems due to the music business.

Pioneer will apparently launch two players later this year. The more expensive of which (approx. £4000) is a box of

tricks that will apparently play anything except the piano: DVD-A and SACD discs, as well as DVD-V, DVD-RW and bog-standard CD and CD-RW discs.

DVD-R

This is a professional standard which has been in use for a couple of years in studios and uses 4.7 GByte discs that will record only once. Recorders are confined to studios only.

DVD-RW

As DVD-R, but for domestic use and can be re-recorded onto.

DVD-RAM

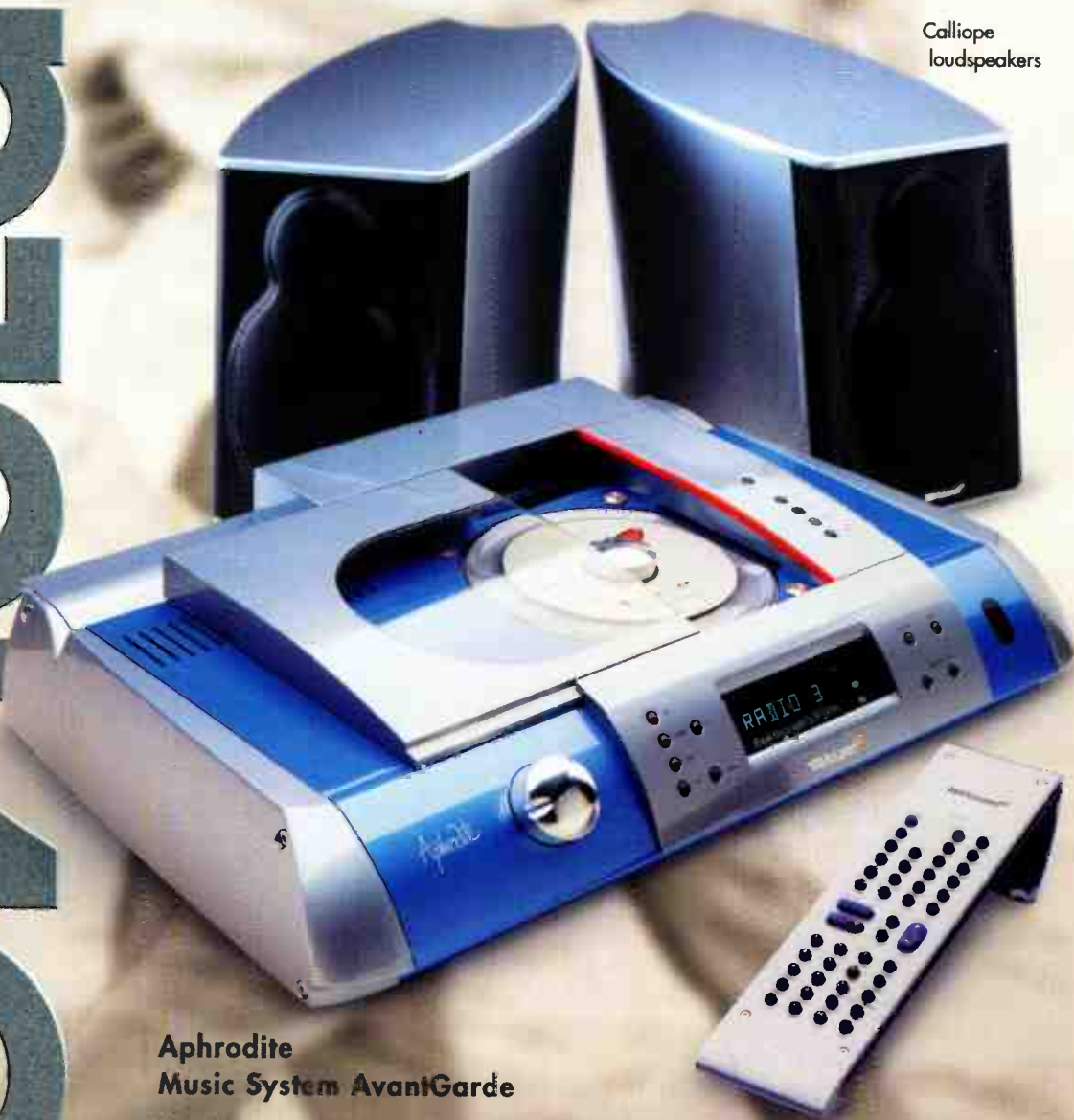
A re-writable format for use in computer systems. The discs are in a caddy device but can be removed for playback only. Drives are available from Panasonic and Toshiba, amongst others. DVD-ROM drives are also quickly replacing CD drives in computers.

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Julian Vereker

1945 - 2000

Julian Vereker, founder and managing director of Naim Audio, died of cancer on Friday 14th January 2000. Julian founded Naim in 1973. He promoted the idea that a high quality amplifier could justifiably be simple in terms of controls and facilities, improving sound quality by the elimination of unnecessary circuits and use of better components.

At a time when the UK hi-fi market was being taken over by



Japanese amplifiers laden with facilities it was a contrary view point. He pursued it successfully, building Naim against strong opposition.

Julian was rewarded with an MBE for his efforts. Hard working, single minded and determined like anyone in his position, he was at the same time unassuming, honest and thoughtful about those around him. He was a bastion of the UK hi-fi business, showing that the pursuit of quality could be made to work in the face of fierce competition. Known widely and respected highly, his death came as a shock to Britain's hi-fi industry.

PHILIPS LAUNCHES MP3

Philips have finally shown their first MP3 player, a tiny device called Rush! (that's with an exclamation mark - we didn't put it there). Looking strangely biscuit-like, Rush! is 7cm square and 1.7cm thick - quite a lot smaller than most MP3s. All the same it houses two AAA batteries, from which Philips claim 12 hours use in Long Play mode. Rush! carries 32MB of on-board memory, giving one hour playing time.

Unusually, Philips supply a mains adapter, as well as headphones, parallel port PC cable, flash memory card and RealNetworks RealJukebox CD ROM software for archiving, playlist assembly and loading. They quoted a price of \$199 in the US, which suggests a UK price of around £125.

www.philips.com



NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

A selection of some of the goodies we hope to bring you next month:

Active/Multimedia Speaker Group Test

Are the new active and multimedia 'speakers on the market good enough for hi-fi use? We gather in six examples and give them a Hi-Fi World grilling.

KEF Cresta 1 loudspeaker

This is the smaller brother of the excellent Cresta 2 from the KEF Stable. Will it stand tall in the shadow of its older sibling? All will be revealed in four weeks.

Denon Multidisc CD player

Denon's new £1500 monster of a CD player can hold up to 100 discs at a time and features HDCD compatibility. Will it prove to be the world's first truly audiophile multidisc player?

WELL INTEGRATED



Budget amps are still big business. Hi-Fi World picks the cream of the current crop, all with phono stages, for a six-man shoot-out.

There is no doubt that we are at a crucial and exciting stage in the development/metamorphosis of hi-fi. The big names are concentrating on DVD's rise to household fame and most of their research and development efforts are seemingly being channelled into this. They have not forgotten the hand that once fed them, however, and many big manufacturers are still producing erstwhile main stays such as the budget amplifier. While line-input only models have the upper hand, many still include accommodation for the old black stuff (usually MM).

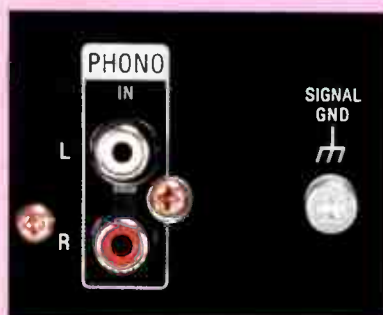
Vinyl declines to decline, even at the budget end of the market. Many manufacturers are aware of this it seems. The half-dozen candidates we have gathered together here include both new models and old favourites. The new kid on the block from Marantz will take on the tough and reliable Denon, for example. We'll highlight their features, sound quality and build and tell you which we think is the best value all-round.

THE PHONO STAGE

The pickup cartridge of a record deck produces a weak signal, one-thousandth that from a CD player. So an additional amplifying stage is needed to play LP, called a "phono stage".

When LPs are cut, bass is reduced to extend playing time and treble boosted to lessen surface noise. The phono stage applies 'equalisation' to restore the original balance. In effect, it is a specialized preamplifier unusable for any other source.

Some phono stages have a Moving Coil (MC) option. It gives even more gain to cope with the minuscule output from high quality moving coil cartridges. External phono stages are available from many manufacturers (see feature P22 - P23)



"PS:"

It's not the whole truth that phono inputs will disappear with future models. Kenwood, for example, are currently working on a budget amp of around £250 that will apparently handle the extremely high frequencies of DVD-A (up to 1000 kHz) and guess what? It will also have a phono stage. So despite rumours to the contrary, manufacturers are still very much aware of vinyl's popularity.

ultimate





Denon PMA-350 SE £200

Although provided with a remote sensor, unless there was a mix-up at the warehouse, the Denon PMA-350SE is truly a hands-on experience. Like most of our group, the Denon has two pairs of loudspeaker terminals and is not recommended to drive two pairs of 4ohms speakers, although it will output 50W/channel into two pairs of 8ohms impedance. There are no tone controls and the front panel layout is simplicity personified - only the presence of a balance control might offend the purists. The version we tested was fitted internally with a 'phono card' but this is optional and should be checked before you buy.

Christa Ludwig needs no special favours to sound wonderful but the

Denon nevertheless pulled out all the stops for her. The sheer immensity of the Wagnerian orchestration can leave some amplifiers sounding a little crowded, but whether it was the filigree of the woodwind or, quintessentially, the mammoth bass department, the Denon sounded as if it was enjoying the performance hugely. In certain places the modest output of the amplifier showed, when the volume knob was advanced to antisocial levels, but this should not be a consideration to outweigh the satisfying musicality of the reproduction.

Marcello's 'Cello Sonatas were a real treat and quickly demonstrated that, optional extra or not, the Denon 'phono card' means business. Solo string lines sang away with a richness and absence of harshness which contradict-

ed the 'budget amp' label. All the little nuances of bow technique which contribute so much to the living quality of string music were presented without an ounce of superfluous harshness. Harpsichord reproduction was crystal clear and very pleasant to listen to - this is a difficult coup to bring off with an inexpensive amplifier. Full marks here.

Best stereo demands good separation and should carry with it the promise of realistic soundstaging. The late Benny Waters was recorded in Stockholm in the full richness of his twilight years. Opus 3's CD issue of this found the Denon ready, willing and able to place any stereophonic event properly - loudspeakers permitting. Waters' huge alto sound and the casual 'clubby' audience resulted in the amplifier giving a very relaxed interpretation. Coupling this laid-back approach with the chink of glasses and murmur of conversation, the Denon reinforced its remarkably musical credentials.



Marantz PMA-4000 £130

This is the new budget amplifier in Marantz's Century Range and replaces the well-respected PM-57. It comes complete with full remote control, 30W/channel, three line inputs and an MM phono input. All the usual budget features are present, such as two speaker inputs, tone controls with defeat button and a natty rotary input selector.

Like everything else that Marantz have

produced over the years, it's sonically as good as you're going to get at the price. Marantz have made a name for themselves for having the knack of producing budget hi-fi that stands out among the crowd for its commendably up-front, yet neutral sound. So it is with the PM-4000. With Stravinsky's challenging Rite of Spring there is commendable control over the multiple layers of sound which lesser amps could make a mess of. Here everything was discernable which for this music is very rare at this price.

Paul Weller's Stanley Road album

showed that the PM-4000 was as happy with studio-processed material as it was with acoustic recordings. The syncopated rhythms of Walk On Gilded Splinters danced deftly through the 'speakers and the track became involving listening rather than merely a background toe-tapper. Talvin Singh's ultra-low bass lines on his OK album (on vinyl) showed that the PM-4000 isn't lacking where it matters. Although it hasn't quite the most obvious bass of the test it has one of the most cohesive.

The one little gripe we'd have is that the treble could sometimes be a little crispy, due to the uncoloured sound of the PM-4000. This is just a symptom of a competitively-priced amplifier that doesn't put too much of a sonic stamp on the music. Other than this the PM-4000 is very hard to fault for the money.

statement



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World Radio History



Guitar-heavy tracks could become a bit wearing on the old ear drums after a while, and Weller's vocals shrieked a bit at high volumes. This

didn't detract too much from the inherently exciting sound that the Onkyo has

This excitement was again brought to the fore with Stravinsky's Rite Of Spring. Rhythms were punched out heavily, confirming suspicions that Stravinsky was some eighty years ahead of his time with the invention of drum and bass. Some of the more subtle sections of the piece didn't work in comparing light with heavy. Likewise, woodwind and upper strings were sometimes a little thin. But overall the performance was impressive.

The A-9211 has a very good phono input, as highlighted by Talvin Singh's 'OK' album. Bass was both smooth and tuneful and the wide frequency range found in this album was as good as can be expected. The Onkyo is a very good all rounder, as its higher price would hint.

This is the only Onkyo

integrated in the 'budget' range. Its looks and facilities (but not weight) bear an uncanny resemblance to Sony's competition, except that the Onkyo is finished in metallic silver which manages to give it the look of Technics c. early 1980s. Like many others in the test, it comes complete with system-compatible remote control and 40W/channel. To produce optimum sound quality it uses discrete amplifiers to drive the channels

instead of the IC power-packs found elsewhere.

There are four line inputs plus MM phono stage and the usual knob/button fest of loudness, defeatable tone controls and balance. Couple this with remote control and you have everything you need to make listening life as easy as possible.

Whipping up a voodoo frenzy with Paul Weller's version of Walk On Gilded Splinters on CD saw the Onkyo providing good, deep bass with optimum control. The separation was impressively wide, highlighting the severely panned tape effects in the track, and the sound stage was also impressive, quite rare at the price. It has a very exciting, forward sound that has a negative side.



At the price, the A-207R is as well-endowed with features as any of its rivals: full remote control, 3 line inputs as well as the MM phono stage, tone controls with a bypass. Build is no worse than you'd expect at the price but it doesn't have the weight of Sony or Onkyo's amps.

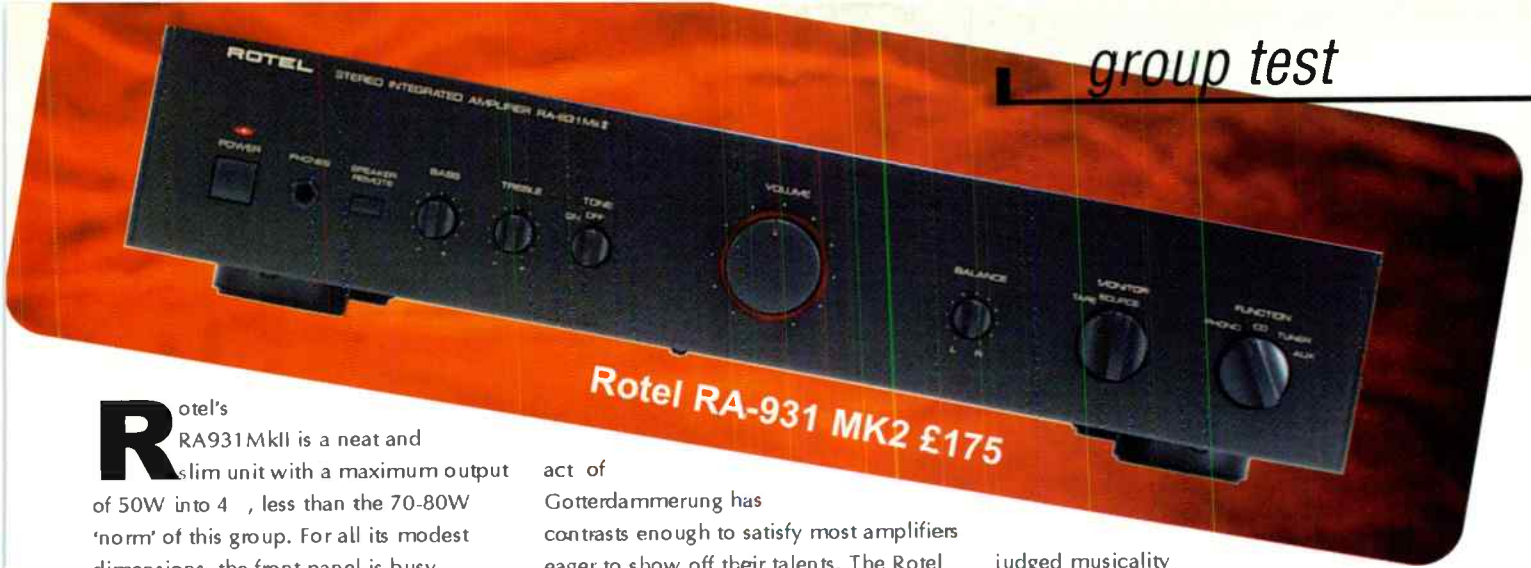
Pioneer have a lot to live up to in the integrated amp stakes when you consider the glory days of the excellent A-300R, a classic that still maintains almost cult status along with the NAD's 3020. Consequently Pioneer's subsequent affordable integrations have always had their

work cut out.

Let's start by saying that the 207R isn't quite up there with the 300. It's not a duffer - with Paul Weller's Stanley Road it showed impressive excitement and verve, especially with the driving voodoo rhythms of Walk On Gilded Splinters. Whilst bass was deep and fast, the treble suffered from splashy cymbals and a cutting edge to higher midrange guitars and vocals.

Moving on to classical, Stravinsky's Rite Of Spring in the spacious Reference Records/Minnesota Orchestra version failed to budge the floodgates that other

amps prise open. We had the feeling that spaciousness was being slightly compressed, making woodwind and violins a tad lacklustre. On the plus side, this is exciting music and the Pioneer definitely homed in on this, banging out the harsh rhythms with aggression. With Talvin Singh's OK on vinyl, we found that the bass didn't quite reach the low levels that others could, but again attack and speed were the Pioneer's priorities and it showed good detail, highlighting a commendably good phono input.



Rotel's RA931MkII is a neat and slim unit with a maximum output of 50W into 4 Ω , less than the 70-80W 'norm' of this group. For all its modest dimensions, the front panel is busy enough with function, volume, balance, tape monitor, defeatable tone controls and headphone socket. One of the 'speaker outputs is governed by a 'speaker remote' button on the front panel; it is recommended that loudspeakers are attached to the 'remote' terminals so that they can be switched off if headphones are in use. What are termed the 'direct' speakers are not switch-off-able under these circumstances. Not unexpectedly, the maximum load for both pairs of 'speaker outputs is $>4 \Omega$, so two pairs of 4 Ω should not be used.

Wagner is a tall order for any reproducing chain. Small-scale it ain't! The last

act of Gotterdammerung has contrasts enough to satisfy most amplifiers eager to show off their talents. The Rotel gave a well-balanced rendition, with the gargantuan orchestra splitting nicely into light and shade. Only on the most bass heavy sections did the amp seem to be choosing its words with care. Voice was accorded full value but there was the teeniest feeling of compression in the scale of the orchestral accompaniment. For all that, the woodwind was given a very creditable slice of the action, with the complex reedy tones well sorted.

Spinning a 'proper' record - L'Oiseau-Lyre's Marcello 'Cello Sonatas - gave rise to a mixed response. On the one hand, the elusive tones of the solo 'cello and continuo harpsichord were given a well-

judged musicality and realism. On the other, the breadth of emotion and delicacy which the 'cello possesses seemed just a little reined in. Possibly the frequency response of the phono stage is super-flat, but the result was a more than a little on the dry side with some recordings.

Jazz saxophone recorded live gave high marks for stereo accuracy and soundstaging. The Rotel placed the instrumentalists with care and, with this almost analytical recording from Opus 3, the amplifier's flatness proved no handicap at all. This tended to give a better all-round performance than the amplifier had managed with the previous classical titles.



The Sony model TA-FB730R is one of the bulkier items in this group and, as things went on, turned out to be one of the warmer jobs as well, which is not entirely unexpected with an output of 70W/channel into 4 Ω . To select function, the large knob can be turned in either direction indefinitely, the indicator lamp jumping from phono to DAT 1 without the need to reverse. Defeatable tone controls and a balance pot, plus a tape monitor switch and remote make this a well-specified item.

On the back panel two pairs of switchable loudspeaker terminals provide various combinations, although the fitting of two pairs of 4 Ω 'speakers is not recommended. The amplifier is also fitted

for EON remote control for tuners.

Seeking some complexity and drive, the last act of Gotterdammerung seemed about right. From the start, it was apparent that the Sony didn't reckon much to subtlety, but there was drive! The enormous sound of the double bass section made its presence very welcome. All the emotional power of Wagner's monster orchestration seemed meat and drink to the amplifier, although a little less top might have been beneficial. Christa Ludwig's staggering voice got full measure, which is a thumbs-up for the midrange.

As a tough test for the phono stage, L'Oiseau-Lyre's excellent pressing of Marcello's 'Cello Sonatas combines the almost vocal sonorities of the solo instru-

ment with the subtle transient sparkle of the Baroque harpsichord. Here the Sony was a little less lovable: although the 'cello tone was full, much of the detail such as the bowing sounds became rather too aggressive and perhaps sharp. The harpsichord was clear and bright, but for all that, a bit too forward. A sturdy work-horse maybe, but not the most winning of phono sections.

Benny Waters in Stockholm showed that the Sony was well endowed with stereo separation and soundstaging abilities. This first-class recording gave the amplifier the opportunity to reproduce the ambience of the Stockholm venue very well: you are there - and why didn't Benny tune up beforehand?!

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HI-FI WORLD MAY 1999

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CONCLUSION



Denon PMA-350SE £200



Marantz PMA-4000 £130



Onkyo A-9211 £200



Pioneer A-207R £150



Rotel RA-931 MK2 £175



Sony TA-FB730R £200

Sources and Loudspeakers:

CD players

Musical Fidelity X-Ray, Roksan Caspian, Rotel RCD 991

Tonearms

Linn Akito, Hadcock 228 SE arms

Cartridges

Linn K9, Cartridge Man Music Maker cartridges

Loudspeakers

Aura LSB627M, Klipsch Heresy II, Magneplanar SMGa loudspeakers

CONTACT DETAILS:-

Denon	01753 888447
Marantz	01753 680868
Onkyo	01788 556777
Pioneer	01753 789789
Rotel	01908 317707
Sony	01932 816000

It's actually satisfying to say that, for once, the group test sprung very few surprises. This is to say that all of the amplifiers did their job more than adequately. As far as value for money is concerned, the Marantz PM-4000 has to take top honours. It's hard to imagine anything else at £130 bettering it. The sound is neutral and exciting, and above all, it's still hi-fi.

We were still impressed by the Denon's musicality and its exceptionally sweet phono stage. However, on the downside, it's no spring chicken and is therefore lacking the 'compulsory' facilities now found at the price, such as tone controls and a remote. But if it's sound you're after and you don't mind stretching to £200 for it, the PM350SE is a sensible choice.

The other contestants all have their strengths, starting with the Sony and Onkyo amps. These two similarly-priced amps also look and sound uncannily alike. Being nearer the £200 mark than the rest they are both more sturdily built too. Features are present in abundance and the sound of both is exciting and up front. The phono stage of the Onkyo had more presence, clarity and better dynamics, the Sony's being slightly down in level compared with other inputs. Nevertheless, both can be recommended, but may be tiring to listen to over a protracted period.

The Rotel is the replacement of the RA931 Mk1 which is a favourite of ours. We found that the MkII sounded slightly 'flatter' than its predecessor, with less depth to the sound but still good value. The same goes for the Pioneer. Whilst not having quite the best hi-fi sound of the bunch, facilities were well thought out. Whilst overall detail is good, we found the bass slightly thin, depriving it of a bit of obvious power.

INPUT GUIDE

PHONO: For gramophone records only. Not always fitted nowadays. New chart material is becoming rare on LP, but there's a wonderful legacy of music that can be bought cheap, as people sell off their collections.

CD: Universally known and used but, as sales slow there's a battle looming to cheapen and/or replace it.

For cheaper CDs go to sites like www.cdnow.com on the internet, where chart CDs are around £7.50, + VAT and postage.

For alternatives to CD consider getting a DVD -Video player that will play CDs and video DVDs with surround sound. DVD Audio and SACD will be available in the UK by the end of 2000. Both offer better quality than CD but both players and discs will be expensive to begin with.

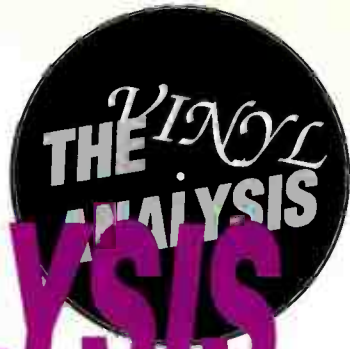
Less well known, MP3 CD players are coming. They will play ordinary CDs or CDs carrying MP3 music files, compiled from the internet.

MINIDISC: Increasingly popular as a portable medium. Small, durable discs with CD sound quality. Cheap blank discs make recording inexpensive but pre-recordeds are expensive and scarce, coming mainly from the Sony Music catalogue. Competition is looming from MP3 but Minidisc has the edge on sound quality at the moment.

TUNER: Nowadays FM mostly, although AM sections are still thrown in for good measure. The Digital Audio Broadcast (DAB) tuners currently available offer similar quality to FM but have less hiss from indoor aerials. They're still expensive, as are the more useful in-car sets.

AUX: This input has the same characteristics as tuner and CD, effectively a line input without a specific designation.

CASSETTE: Cassette is fading away. For those with collections to play, Denon, Teac, Pioneer, Nakamichi or Technics are among the companies still offering this format.



THE VINYL ANALYSIS

Who said that vinyl's dead? The Hi-Fi World editorial team shine the light on the resurgence of vinyl as a budget option, highlighting what's available new and old, hardware and software.

When Henley Designs started distributing the Pro-ject Debut turntable in August last year not even they could have quite predicted how popular it would be. After all, some may be thinking, who plays records these days? Well, quite a lot of people actually. The next sentence could bring on a coronary for many readers, especially other turntable manufacturers. According to Laurence Armstrong of Henley Designs they sell in excess of 1,000 Debut turntables a month. They would sell more if they could, but the factory simply can't make any more than this!

Now, if someone would have predicted this a year ago, many people, including us, would have laughed merrily and pointed at flying pigs. But it seems there's something inherent in mankind which simply stops you chucking out your old

records. The Debut phenomenon seems to be based around those who have read the rave reviews and promptly climbed the ladder to blow the cobwebs off the collection in the attic. There is consequently, in the microcosmic standards in hi-fi anyway, something of a resurgence of vinyl. Importantly though, it's as a secondary source. For one hundred quid you can relive all your teenage memories, providing that is, you're over 30!

Clubs, mastering studios and Technics have never been busier when it comes to the black stuff. In addition to Henley selling 1,000-plus Debuts a month, Technics sell roughly 1,800 SL-1200 DJ turntables per month. This takes the tally up to almost 3,000 turntables being sold from just two manufacturers. And the dance craze hasn't waned. MPO, the French disc manufacturer still have vinyl record press-

es going ten to the dozen, day in, day out, banging out "bangin'" tunes from all over Europe (especially UK and Germany). Not only is the whole industrial process of the vinyl record (and all it encompasses) in good shape, it's as fit as a butcher's dog.

Let's not forget those who wish to take up the vinyl addiction that don't have the hardware and don't realise that it's still available. Specialist shops can be found in many towns and cities throughout the nation, but if you don't wish to get off your butt the internet is a brilliant source for vinyl records.

The following information is mined from the depths of Hi-Fi World's knowledge of budget vinyl and all things connected. We tell you what hardware to look out for, where to get the software, new and old and how to make sure it's all in perfect playing order. Read on...

WEBSITES:

ANALOGUE ADDICTS

www.analogue-domain.org.uk

A superb Internet resource for those of the vinyl persuasion, Analogue-Addicts runs under the capable stewardship of British-based US high end junkie David Allcock. Subscribing lets you join in an eternal ongoing debate about all things pertaining to black plastic, from old Japanese direct drives to how to best set up your high end Moving Coil!

'NET COLLECTORS: VINYL WEBSITES

For collectable/specialist rock/pop records:

www.vinylrecords.co.uk

www.wabbeyrecords.co.uk, www.vinyldisc.com

all supply second hand collectables and bargains by mail order

For classical records:

www.lpbclassics.demon.co.uk, www.nvc-classical.com, www.lpclassics.co.uk

supply mail order second hand classical records in mint/excellent condition.

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Impressive Debut

PRO-JECT DEBUT

£109

An unbeatable product at the price. It comes with arm and Ortofon OMB5E cartridge all set up. All you do is take it out of the box, plug it in and play records.

REGA PLANAR 2

£214

Excellent value turntable complete with a Rega 250 arm - all for £214!

NAD 533

£220

Another great value package that delivers the good without fuss. Based on the Planar package, but with NAD's own 'input' and a Goldring cartridge to boot!

BUDGET PHONO STAGES



NAD'S box of tricks

PRO-JECT PHONO BOX

£40

A solid performer that offers MM/MC compatibility at an unbelievable price.

NAD PP-1

£40

One of the first of the new wave of cheap phono stages on the market and a great buy. MM only, it has a clean and detailed sound.

DED DISCOVER

£35

This may look a bit like a potting-shed job, but it's very good indeed. Clean, sharp sound with battery power option

Richard White Checks out some vinyl accessories

Budget record accessories are no longer big business. In the heyday of the 1970s, pocket money could buy innumerable gadgets for the discerning collector. Having researched what is available, most of today's products fall down on their price - it's no longer a mass market and production costs reflect this. I have sourced some more reasonably priced bits and pieces, but bear in mind that these are in many cases new old stock and manufacturers' guarantees are unlikely to be worth the cardboard they're printed on!

Household dust is one of the great destroyers of gramophone records. For all its innocent looks, dust is usually heavy in silicates, an extremely abrasive group with a hardness co-efficient greater than steel. Get a pinch of this between the diamond and the soft vinyl and it's obvious which will be the first to suffer. Because the non-conductive stylus is very good at generating dust-attracting static charges, the chances of a record being dust-free are negligibly small.

The great acetate recording pioneer Cecil Watts investigated this problem with the aid of a groove microscope. The upshot of his research was the well-known Dust Bug. This device employs a nylon brush to tickle the dust from the groove when it is then caught by a plush pad. With the practical development of carbon fibre, the Watts idea was adapted for several similar devices. The Microtrac and the Decca are good examples, both having negligible down-bearing force. It is surprising how much fluff they glean from a supposedly clean record. Both of these products claim de-staticizing action via the conductive carbon bristles and earth wire, but this is not fool-proof, particularly in a dry atmosphere.

Carbon fibre is again much used in record brushes. These all look the same to me, and appear to be 'badge engineered' from possibly a single source. Monacor and Altai are typical brands and are usually available at about £7 from high street electrical shops. Again, I have



Original Watts Dust Bug Available from Technical & General	Tel: 01892 654 534
Decca and Microtrac cleaners	£6.99 each
Playfair Discoota	£1.50 each
Metrocare Stylus microscope	£1.50 each
Available from Broadway Electronics	Tel: 0208 672 3984
Shure stylus balance	£25
Digital Stylus Gauge	£199
Available from The Cartridge Man	Tel: 0208 688 6565
Pentacore Gramophone Mat	£19.99
Available from Pentacore	Tel: 01924 445 039

yet to substantiate wholly the 'anti-static claims of this type of brush.

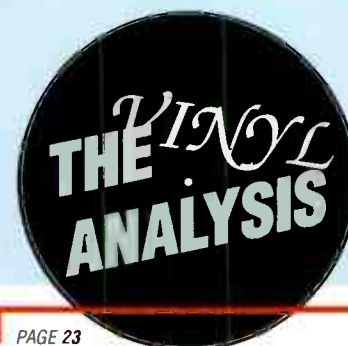
Another type of record brush relies on plush fabric. These work reasonably well, although there is a danger of previously captured dust being simply ground into the next record. Our illustration shows the Playfair Discoota which has an aperture for adding cleaning fluid. The only cleaning preparation I recommend is a 1:1 mixture of isopropyl alcohol and purified water. Both are available from chemists, although you may have to order the alcohol specially.

For a closer look at the grinding-in of your stylus, you could try the Metrocare Stylus 'microscope'. This lightweight gadget looks a bit like something out of a Christmas cracker but with patience and A Lot Of Care, it provides a useful x20 view of your diamond.

Tracking force needs careful and regular checking. The Shure 'see-saw' balance

is about the most practical of the mechanical devices, with an accuracy of about 1/20th gramme, if you're careful. Although by no stretch of the imagination can it be counted a budget accessory, Cartridge Man's Digital Stylus Gauge is the most accurate on the market (to 1/100th gramme) and is to be preferred if your pickup requires exact setting.

Pentacore's Gramophone mat is a simple device made from felted material. This is the logical first step beyond the sometimes indifferent mat supplied with the turntable, and has a gratifyingly good performance at the price.



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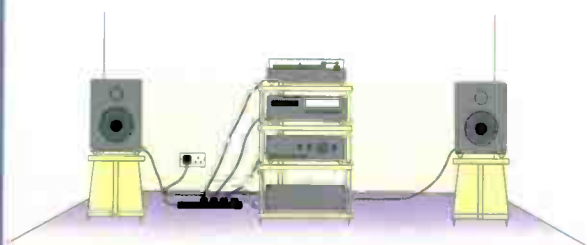
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Class A Substance

Hailed as 'among the best in the world' Musical Fidelity are set to shock the market with their new A3^{CR} pre and power amps. In this 'World exclusive' review Simon Pope gets first crack at the new pair.

Perennially popular with both experienced listeners and 'first time buyers' alike, the Musical Fidelity wheel truly began to turn vigorously with the introduction of the X Series, and particularly the X-D10. At last, here was a range of hi-fi products with truly audiophile performance and esoteric sex appeal, but at an un-esoteric price! Take the X-A200s - a pair of funky-looking, 200W monoblocs that not only shook the rafters, if you wanted them shaken, but also impressed your mates, your wife, the cat and it's cousin and cost £1,000. Others would have charged £5,000 for a lesser product. This company make 'high-end' accessible, much to the annoyance, maybe, of some.

The latest series form the MF stable is the good, old-fashioned, rectangular A3 range which in true Musical Fidelity style embraces two integrateds (A3 and A300), a CD player, a tuner and now the A3CR dual mono pre and power amps (a few X-Series products and the awesome NuVista 300 power amplifier also sprang up during this period!) First let me get straight to the crux of these amplifiers. According to the press release, Musical Fidelity set out to make these the best amplifiers available anywhere, and at any price. Quite some claim, but still at the moment in the two-channel mould (although AV products are in the pipeline), there aren't many around who do it so successfully and with such verve.

The A3^{CR}s are SACD ready. This means they are designed to cope with the vast bandwidth that the new format incorporates, with frequencies up to 100kHz. The technical aims behind the amplifiers were to aim for very low distortions throughout



the frequency range, a vast dynamic range, excellent stereo separation, immunity from mains interference and finally enough power to drive anything except a combine harvester! The power amplifier employs a full choke regulation to eliminate capacitor/mains interference and both use dual mono power supplies incorporating huge transformers that weigh in not much lighter than a 747 full of Rhinos. They will hit the shops in March at an incredibly sensible and very deliberate price - £999 each.

SOUNDS EXPENSIVE

No matter how convincing the product bumph or specs though, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. And checking out the sonic attributes of this pair turned out to be a joyous and satisfying repast of many flavours.

There is always something slightly perverse in playing a string quartet or solo string music through really beefy gear. It has its place though. All the power is channelled into making that one sound as musical as possible and can often show the finesse of good equipment. It's not all just about out and out ballsy bass or ear-splitting power. This is also something that Bach realised. The one line of music in his 'cello suites can often relay as much authority and power as a Bruckner symphony with 120 players going hell-for-leather. Yo-Yo Ma on his Sony Classical recording tackles these jewels of sound with artistic aplomb, which this music needs to sound right. The MF amps sought something more in this music than mere notes. This was due to the exquisite detail present. There was a depth to the sound as the bow dug into the string that was frighteningly realistic. You could smell the

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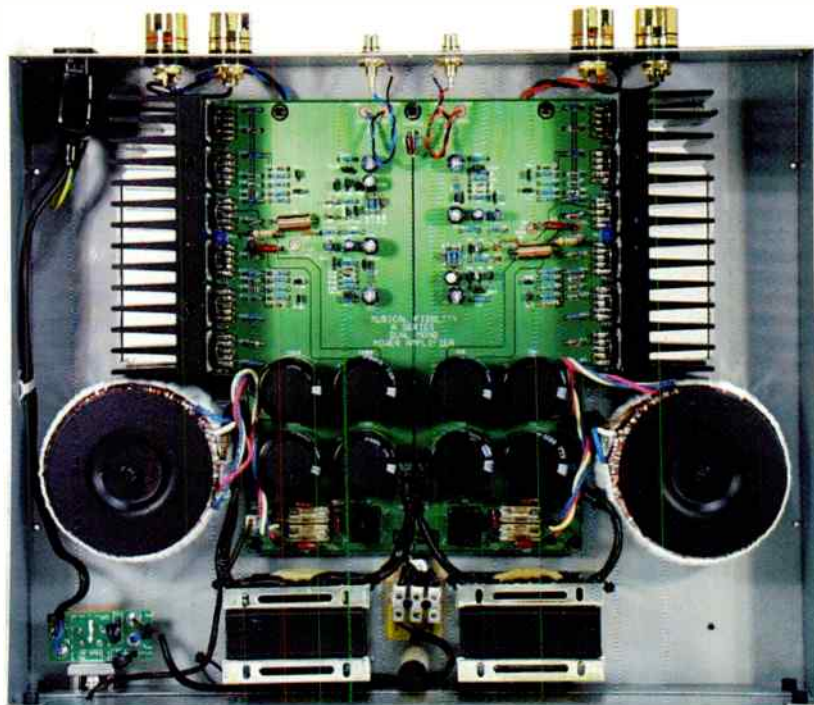
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wood through my Mangeplanars. As I cranked the volume slightly, I was brought more into the music - something that actually doesn't happen that often. Instead of mere volume there was music here to be discovered. Every note and nuance demanded to be heard as the music was handled with grace, authority and sensitivity.

DYNAMIC PERFORMERS

With the big guns of Stravinsky's Rite Of Spring on Reference Recordings the MF pair showed that as well as clout and slam at the bottom end, as the bass drum was hit for all it was worth, there was an immense dynamic range there. This recording has one of the widest ranges you will find on any recording (the stuff that coronaries are made of) and the A3^{CR}s really did it justice. Within one bar you go from light and quiet flute writing to out-and-out GBH-assault in the percussion dept. Rarely does cacophony sound so good. As the timpani thumped and bass drum rumbled, my windows rattled and my mouth smiled in appreciation.

It was during this piece that the A3s showed one of their outstanding characteristics. They have an fully neutral and uncoloured sound and the ability to play recordings just as they are, bad recordings will undoubtedly sound bad, but for some reason I can't put my finger on (I'm sorry, I know it's my job to, but. . .) the music will shine through. There is an almost non-existent quality to the treble. It's neither sweet, shimmery nor harsh. In fact you hardly notice it at all - you actually feel it, it's so life-like. There's no point in me saying that the performance was exciting as this piece sounds exciting through a mono earpiece, but the MFs dug out the dance-like tribalism behind the music to



The innards of the A3CR power amp

result in a consummate listening experience.

There are no real down sides to this pairing. Maybe they are so detailed that some could find the sound a little analytical, but that's only if you're an analytical person by nature. The only other thing that could put some off is the distinct styling of the knob on the preamp which has the trademark A3 'ship ahoy' feel to it.

The best amps in the world. . .ever? Well I can't really answer that, as there's a lot I haven't heard. But they're among the best in this 'World, if you get my meaning. You'd be very silly not to give them a listen should you be in the market for a pre/power at any price. Heck, give them a listen even if you're not - you may even blow the 'new kitchen' money on them!

After this praise, however, it would be wrong to imagine there's no complaints to be had with the A3^{CR} pre and power. These amps are no good for putting on music to iron to, as your shirts will remain forever crumpled, such is the urge you have to sit down and really listen.

MUSICAL FIDELITY CHOKE POWER SUPPLY

The choke comes from another era, when descriptive title was used to suggest function. Used in valve amplifier power supplies, it chokes off unwanted hum.

Power supply chokes are big, heavy and expensive. Nowadays, regulator chips do the job of providing stable, hum-free d.c. to an amplifier. However, they produce noise and can have transient problems.

As far as an amplifier is concerned, only a choke is a truly neutral source of direct current from the power supply.

In practice choke power supplies help produce a smooth, almost silky sound. Considered archaic, they are not normally used in solid-state amplifiers. Musical Fidelity's past experience with valve amplifiers and success with choke supply solid-state amplifiers, like the monstrous A-470, gives them a unique understanding of the benefits of a choke.



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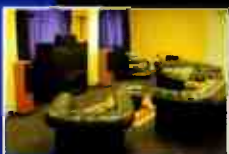
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If I Were A RICHMOND

Not everyone's home is as spacious as a castle. Nouveau Pauvre Richard White finds a corner for the Castle Richmond bookshelf 'speaker.

Castle's Richmond loudspeakers are small enough to qualify for the catch-all 'bookshelf' category. Manufactured in well-veneered 12mm board, the cabinets measure 13" by 6 1/2" by 7 1/2" (hwd) approx., and are suitably sturdy and non-resonant. High frequencies are in the hands of a one inch soft-dome tweeter, whereas the midrange and bass are provided by a 4 1/2" woven driver with a rudimentary 'bullet' phase plug. Like many drivers of this type, the plug is attached to the magnet pot, rather than to the cone and, as far as I can see, there is no dust cover to prevent airborne detritus from entering the gap between the coil and the magnet. A small point this, but it might encourage the user to retain the grille, especially if they're in the habit of flinging iron filings about. Completing the business side of the 'speaker is a narrow (and short) reflex port. All these are covered by the styled grille, which appears designed to allow at least a little of that veneer to show through.

Attachment to the 'speaker cable is by a single pair of 'safety banana' connectors - the plastic middle bung can be prised out for ordinary use. Failing this, the aperture for bare wire will accept a generous gauge of cable or plug; this is the preferable way of making the connections if you can stand the fiddliness. The Richmonds are rated 8Ω nominal and designed for 80W power, sensitivity being claimed at 88dB/W/m.

In Ye Olden Days, when high-fidelity was a concept rather than a label, the problem which confronted the new class of listener was the scarcity of recordings which would show off their new equipment to anything like the best of its abilities. This was the heyday of the pipe organ record. In addition to having the

broadest range of any acoustic instrument, the organ had other advantages; true it was difficult to record successfully, but the hire of the church was cheap, and only one musician to pay at the end!

One of the more recent contributions to this long and honourable line is Opus 3's catchily titled Live at Vatnajökull disc, a feast of organ and percussion music played at the Icelandic town . . . no, it's true!! Ravel's Bolero receives this unusual instrumental treatment and gave the Richmonds plenty to think about in the bass region as the complexities built up. The repetitive pedal figures showed no sign of undue emphasis but were reproduced with an acceptable fullness from a 'speaker of this size. Percussion on Bolero is hardly rhythmically varied but the side drum in particular gave a very snappy account of itself.

Coming under the same one-man-band heading as the organ records but not quite so easy to come by are Bach's series of Sonatas for solo violin. These pretty grueling tests of artistry and technique also make a wonderful ear test for the hi-fi fraternity. Relayed through the Richmonds, the instruments expressive tone was full and pointed; Gidon Kremer certainly pulls out all the stops on this Philips recording and the Castles let you hear the rosin fly.

Staying with Philips, their set of Schumann string quartets with double bass (instead of 'cello) furnished a good opportunity for the Richmonds. For a start, the stereo imaging was comfortable, although perhaps not a generous as could be expected. Prospective owners should try just a modest amount of toe-in rather than the classic isosceles arrangement, otherwise the soundstage could become a little cramped. With the wide tonal differ-



ences between the first and second violins, and the flat-footed grumbings of the bass, these recordings generally gave a good idea of the 'speakers virtues and limitations. When straight out of the box, the treble was more glassy than I like to hear, but this toned down in the course of my reviewing, and it's possible that the remaining taint would have disappeared completely in time.

A swift shuffle round some of the commercial stations on the radio revealed that these 'speakers are determined to tell the truth - happily without noticeable added oil-drum effects. All-in-all, the Richmonds gave good value for their size. Whilst not the most spacious sound ever, they managed to stick with the music from varied sources without seeming to favour any particular style unduly. The sum total of the sound is not exactly huge, but neither is it distorted in any direction. A hearty recommendation for the space-conscious - even if there's no room for pipe organ and percussion.

Castle Richmond £249.90

Castle Acoustics Ltd.,
Shortbank Rd.,
Skipton, N.Yorks BD23 2TT
Tel: 01756 795333

WORLD VERDICT



An engaging sound with well integrated drivers. Fundamentally accurate, but soundstaging could be more spacious.

Measured Performance see page 115



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TWINS AT THE TOP



The original Audio Analogue Puccini amps have gained classic status over the last few years. Can their revamped, remote-control counterparts continue the tradition? John Marks finds out.

I know it's my job as a hi-fi journalist to furrow my brow and burn the midnight oil in the quest to distil the essence of a component's sound. I know it's my job to get the best from any equipment, to discover what it can really do. I know it's my job to put pen to paper in a considered, rational, objective manner. So for what I am about to do, please forgive me.

Remotes. It's as simple as that. Audio Analogue's fresh take on the Puccini standard and Puccini SE integrateds comes with the sort of remote controls that style gurus and interior decorators would sell their coffee tables for. In a world of flimsy plastic lumps that wouldn't survive 20 minutes on a warm radiator before flowing Dali-style, AA have come up with a device that armchair operators will be twitching to get their mits on.

Leading the Puccini revamp is a beautifully brushed and lacquered lozenge which allows you to alter the volume level (or mute it altogether) and switch inputs without that tiresome trek across the living room. Its reassuringly weighty and polished build is mirrored in the construction of both its partnering amps, whose fascias are now punctuated by a ladder of six red LEDs (to indicate the

input in use) between volume and source selector. The latter is no longer your basic rotary switch, but one of those trendy 'flick left, flick right' types that seemed to come in with MiniDisc. Every bit as alluring as it was before is the thick aluminium front panel where the remote receiver nestles next to the Power LED. Its opposite half, in the case of the pricier Puccini (£795 to the cheaper version's £575) is a sight for sore bi-wiring eyes with eight speaker terminals. On top of this, common to both is that favourite obsolescence-bypass, Pre-Amp Out sockets, obviously aimed at buyers with their hearts set on a matching Donizetti power amp.

The refinement count rises with the addition of a Tape On/Off switch, but it's inside that the real changes have been wrought. A rise in reservoir capacitance and a change of capacitor manufacturer are intended to yield an amp with greater dynamic swing and clout. And the SE's twin toroidal mains transformers are rated at 200VA and come straight from the Donizetti parts bin.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

10 more watts and some component

changes might sound as if it should offer more of a subtle evolution than a revolution, but the extra control the new Puccini SE possesses when compared to its predecessor is blindingly obvious. In a system of T+A CD 1210 R CD player and Jamo Concert 8s, son of original Puccini displayed a much better grip on the voice coils of the difficult Danes' magnesium-coned mid/bass units. Where MkI had been a bit like Quad 57s, all midrange and a bit of treble and bass, the MkII pulled a much firmer and more convincing bass (and a finer, more transparent treble) from the Concert 8s.

Even a brief spell with the meaty basslines of Presence's *The Strength (Within)* revealed an amplifier of greater confidence and load-handling ability. But that's not to say this incarnation has traded delicacy for smack - far from it. As with every other aspect of performance, insight, transparency and finesse are well above what they were before.

Shahen Shah is an album of devotional music from the mystical Sufi branch of Islam performed by the renowned Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and party. Its combination of inspirational chanting, chorus, tablas and harmonium is a million miles away from most of today's electronic music,

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Jimmy Hughes (Hi-Fi Choice, March 1999)

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and it gives most amps a tough time. The Puccini SE rose to the challenge, showing off its pedigree in a couple of key areas. Applause can be surprisingly difficult to render accurately, the bulk of equipment giving it a rough, spiky edge that lacks impact at lower frequencies.

Not so this Italian, whose way with clapping steered well clear of any resemblance to a bad burst of static. The chorus enjoyed similarly VIP treatment, as voices retained their individuality rather than being stirred together into an amorphous sonic blob. The icing on the cake with Shahen Shah was made up of superior imaging, sound staging and detailing, which allowed the music to blossom from the Concert 8s, the performers located within an acoustic where the sense of depth matched that of width.

If there was a couple of criticisms that could be levelled at the earlier Puccini SE, they probably revolved around a slightly cool disposition and an output whose 40watt limit could curtail the fire-



MM/MC stage. With a Trio L-07D/SME V/Ortofon MC 7500 doing duty on the Moving-Coil front, and a Technics SL-7 with matching 202C cartridge keeping the Moving-Magnet circuitry happy, the results were impressive. Communicating the musical spirit was the order of the day I found as Bruce Cockburn Live spun under the stylus. Accompanying his singing and the backing vocalists' was crisp, clear guitar and percussion free from any spit, sibilance or excessive surface noise. There was that 3-D imaging and tangibility which vinyl is so famous for too, providing the phono stage is up to it. Laibach's demented cover of The Beatles' Let It Be caused the Puccinis no

to involve regardless of genre and an openness that never restricted the recording to the confines of the loudspeakers' cabinets. As you'd expect with the price differential, there were bound to be differences between these two siblings. While the less costly offered an enjoyable and well-balanced presentation that puts it up at the front of the peer pack, those extra pounds are a wise investment. Delve that much deeper into your wallet and you'll be rewarded with an amplifier which is smoother and sweeter on cymbals, string instruments and vocals. Separation is also better, transparency a notch or two higher and bass tighter, punchier and more detailed.

Audio Analogue swiftly made a name for themselves when the Puccinis first arrived in the UK. Raising the standard higher still was always going to be hard, but they've managed to hit the mark, albeit with a price increase to cover the addition of remote control. Seeing as these latest designs are capable of handling loads that would formerly have been out of the question, it looks as if AA are back to frighten the competition.

Audio Analogue Puccini Remote £575
Audio Analogue Puccini SE Remote £795

UKD

23 Richings Way,
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works on heavier Rock or larger scale Classical pieces unless the partnering loudspeakers were fairly efficient. The MkII, however, never gives the impression it's about to run out of steam into transducers in the 84-90dB bracket, and it has a speed and dynamic reach which leave the first-generation AA sounding gently compressed by comparison. On the other hand, this remains an amp that could never be labelled warm or valve-like, but rather one where the word 'neutral' would be more appropriate.

PLAYING WITH PLASTIC

If you prefer your music at 33.3rpm, there's good news on the phono front, as the improvements to the line inputs seem to have been carried over into the

problems either in spite of some of the most outrageous bass ever committed to LP. And thanks to these Italians' above-average separation, the densest of choruses avoided collapsing in on themselves.

KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

The £795 Puccini SE is, alongside MVL's A2, one of the few integrations which really pays its way at the price. Unfortunately, that's cold comfort if your budget won't stretch that far, so how does this Italian's smaller brother fare?

At the heart of the same system, the non-suffix version proved that it was very much a chip off the old block sonically. Present again was that new-found load tolerance and ability to handle the Jamos. Other shared traits included the capacity

WORLD VERDICT



Whether you go for plain or pukka Puccini, the results are fast, enjoyable and detailed.

Measured Performance see page 115



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KLIPSCH AH-OY!

In addition to their classic horn designs, Klipsch have a strong line in more modern types. Richard White gives some space to the KG3.5 floorstander.

Paul Klipsch was in a position to retrospect his place in the audio world over forty years ago; in the late nineteen-fifties, he wrote: "A good design should not need to be subjected to major change or complete abandonment every few years . . . Steinway and Rolls Royce have endured well with only occasional changes . . ." That was then. As everybody knows, to everybody's cost, change of design has become one of the most powerful forces in economics in the intervening decades. While it's true that the 'classic Klipsches' like the La Scala and the famous Klipschorn have held their own almost regardless of this change, for day-to-day trading, the Klipsch company now makes This Year's Model along with the rest. As a consequence, on the firm's books are several species of loudspeaker which have little obvious connection with the Rolls Royces of the fifties.

The KG3.5 floorstander is a solidly constructed beast which tips the scales at a generous weight, and tips the purse at a reasonably affordable £595. These are not slimline models, and although the black ash vinyl gives a dignified appearance, it's possible that a shoe-box bedsit might be a bit over-full of them. One feature which I liked was the magnetic fixings for the grille - none of that rasping Velcro or, more usually, broken tenons - why isn't this more common? The sound itself is in the hands of a horn-loaded pressure unit for the high frequencies and a reflex-loaded soft-domed mid-bass driver for the rest, with the port at the bottom of the front baffle. When I first fired up the KG3.5s, I was alarmed at the quite horrifying boom-tizz effects which burst forth. The truth, happily, was that these loudspeakers very definitely need running-in for several hours before a fair assessment of their merits can be made.

My first evening spent with them coincided with one of Trevor Pinnock's Bach Pilgrimage concerts on the BBC. In portraying the soprano soloist as bloodless

and 'twee' I was sure that the Klipsches were being a little unforgiving. There is a fine line to be trod between letting detail pass by and rubbing noses in it; the KG3.5s were on the whole just that little bit quick to point out the faults on this broadcast.

Elgar's First Symphony on Decca is one of my measures for 'thickness' of texture, and the Klipsches gave splendid backing to the richly underlined 'cello and bass contributions, not to mention the beautifully slow-speaking orchestral bass drum. Undoubtedly the bass on these 'speakers is inclined to give value for money. For my taste, the treble was still too forward, with the upper partial of the brass tending to slice through the huge ensemble. This was exhilarating but perhaps a bit exaggerated.

Not every loudspeaker is best at every job, of course; having played classical and called it a draw, I turned to some of the more populist radio channels. It was as if the Klipsches were saying "Now, that's more like it!", spitting on their hands and getting right on down to it. The 'speakers' performance on Reggae was electrifying, with impressive bass drive and a sure touch with the electric organ timbre and the 'edge' of the vocals, which kept me listening beyond my usual limits of endurance.

For folk/rock fans, I tried out Eric Bibb's Where The Green Grass Grows. Ignoring the bewilderingly ham-fisted intro on an asthmatic reed organ (Klipsches have no mercy!) the 'speakers provided an entrancing performance of this MOR masterpiece, with crystal-clear lead vocal, firm double bass line and a very natural way with the old National resonator guitar. Experiments with the amount of toe-in required for best results showed that the KG3.5s allow a lot of leeway - even with the cabinets toed out,



there was still plenty of very solid stereo soundstaging to go round.

When considering the award of globes at the end of a review, I always refresh my memory as to what the various designations stand for quite literally. Four globes is 'something we'd use ourselves'. Given the reservations I've expressed, the KG3.5s don't qualify. On the other hand, if you customarily wince at my 'sissy' and 'undemocratic' musical tastes and wonder why I bother with hi-fi if I'm not going to boogie, look no further - these are for you!

Klipsch KG3.5 £595

**Midland Radio Supplies
Maypole Works
Maypole Lane
Birmingham B14 4PE
Tel: 0121 430 7817**

WORLD VERDICT



A fast and furious 'speaker with powerful bass and exceedingly clear treble. Not for the classically minded but immense fun on everything else.

Measured Performance see page 111

You've picked the bones out of the reviews, compared the specs, scoured adverts for the best deals, and endured 'noise experience' demonstrations, yet you just know there's got to be something else ... welcome to KJ West One!

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NAIM NDRDOST OPERA ORTOFON PMC PINK TRIANGLE PIONEER PROAC QED QUAD REGA RDTL REL SENNHEISER SME SONUS FABER SONY

COPLAND & SONUS FABER

Some fabulous hi-fi travels down from the north countries; current favourites include these understated models from Copland - a range commended by several reviewers in the hi-fi press. Seen in the flesh there's more than a hint of 'retro' which simply defies you not to 'twiddle!'

Sonically, both Copland's CD player and matching amplifier are desirably anonymous - nothing gets in the way of the music! So, a preferred choice for this sophisticated combination is the romantically charged, discreet and compact stand mount, Sonus faber Signum, which effortlessly delivers the very realistic sounds of which this system is capable - and with all types of music.

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Driven here by the tasteful Swedish Primare CD player and its matching 100 watts per channel amplifier is a pair of British made Wilson Benesch Orators - a loudspeaker design of world beating pedigree.

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NASA design experience has been turned to domestic hi-fi installations with an incomparably informative CD player and matching integrated amplifier by American luminaries Krell - a company that has become hugely popular with experienced hi-fi enthusiasts.

We're recommending that all this information and true 150 watts per channel power should drive a pair of the near transparent Martin Logan electrostatics. When we say 'near transparent' we mean it - you can see right through these speakers - like an open window into any recording!

If you can discern the difference between sound that merely 'impresses' and the qualities of uncanny realism with deep musical emotion that can actually 'move you to tears', then we believe you could be overwhelmed by a home demonstration!



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Denon DF-100 (Mini system)	£999	£399
NAD 208 (THX Power amp)	£1099	£599
Naim NAC 92 (Pre)	£499	£429
Naim NAP 90 (Power)	£473	£399
Naim Prefix (Phono stage)	£376	£295
Yamaha KX -W321 (Twin Cassette Deck)	£169	£129
Yamaha DSP-A970 (AV Amplifier)	£999	£399
Yamaha AV1 (AV System)	£649	£549
Krell KAV 300CD	£4290	£3399
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Krell KRC-3 (Pre)	£3250	£2695
Krell 250a (Power)	£3498	£2895
Krell KAV 300i (Integrated)	£2589	£2199
Krell KAV 300CD	£4290	£3399
Krell KAV 500i (Integrated)	£4999	£4249
Linn Klassik (CD/Amplifier)	£995	£749
Linn Kan 3 (Spkrs)	£295	£225
Linn Tune Box for Aktiv Boards	£375	£275
MicroMega Drive 2 Kit	£299	£229
Musical Fidelity X-Plora (Tuner)	£600	£450
NAD 524 (CD Player)	£249	£199
Audio Research LSB (Pre)	£1499	£1199
Audio Research VT5 (Power)	£3499	£2999
Theta Miles (SE)	£2390	£1999
Unison Simply 4 (Integrated)	£1595	£1295
Graaf 13.582 (Pre)	£3995	£3395
Graaf GM20 (Power)	£2995	£2495
Mark Levinson No39 (CD Player)	£4995	£3995
Meridian 506 (CD Player)	£1195	£995
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KEF Q35 (Spkrs)	£349	£299
Meridian DSP5000 (Digital Spkrs)	£3885	£3295
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ProAc Response 3.5 (Spkrs)	£4250	£1950
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ProAc Response 4.0 (Spkrs)	£13,000	£4995
ProAc Response 5.0 (Spkrs)	£9000	£5995
Wilson Benesch Orator (Spkrs)	£2900	£1900
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Pioneer SD-T4000 (40" TV)	£3300	£1750
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Pioneer PDP-501MX (Plasma TV)	£13,449	£9999

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LETTER OF THE MONTH

DAB HANDS

I was interested in your reply in the February 2000 issue to the query from a reader David Watkins about the Leak Troughline. I understand that most of the UK will go digital in the near future. Will it be the case that radio reception will only be possible via a digital receiver and thus all non digital tuners become obsolete/unusable?

If this is so why, apart from curiosity, would anyone want to buy second-hand, shortly to be unusable, tuners?

Philip Walden

This largely depends on what you mean by 'in the near future'. At present the vast majority of radios in this country operate on FM broadcasting and, if the cut-off were to come all of a sudden, all these would be redundant. I can't see this happening. For a start, there are only a few digital receivers for anything like domestic use (in-car may be another matter, but let's stick to hi-fi). These are at present expensive, the cheapest being a DAB/FM model from Technics at £500.

Despite the BBC's rather biased endorsement, the sonic merits of Digital Radio over FM are not self-evident. Indeed as far as ears are concerned, first-class FM still has the (lack of) edge, in my opinion.

When television changed to 625-line format, it took years and

years before there were few enough 504 sets left to permit pulling the plug. Even allowing for the metamorphosis of the word 'service' to mean "you'll have it and like it", change to Digital radio will not be a quick process.

Besides this, the wit of man is usually able to contrive something to help out, witness all the phono stages which have become available since amplifier manufacturers decided that the gramophone record was obsolete. A little add-on gadget to convert digital radio back into FM might seem a long way to go round the houses, but I shouldn't be surprised if something of the sort appears.

*Is it worth buying now? Listen to a well-kept Troughline, Quad or Rogers, to name but three high-class vintage models. Sound per pound they are cheap. Even if FM is switched off in only five years' time, I believe every penny will have been well spent. **RMW***



Never say die

SEEING RED

I own a Crimson Elektrik pre and power amp, Heybrook HB1 speakers, Rotel RCD950, Denon TU-215RD tuner, JVC KD720 tape deck and Garrard SP25 Mark2 turntable. As you can see some is old and some is new but the sound is great.

Where can I find any information on Crimson Elektrik? I have bought the amp but cannot find anything anywhere. I have also got a pair of cordless Sony headphones.

Now the problem is I have no headphone socket and was wondering how I can connect them. Is there a box I could buy like a 'speaker separator' into which I could plug them. Any help or tips would be much appreciated.

Robert Powell
Derbyshire

Crimson are still alive and very much kicking. In the UK, service and help is obtainable c/o Virtual Reality Audio Systems (01277 227355) who can, they inform me, deal with Crimson back to the year dot.

As an economical solution to your headphone question, I should be inclined to try a 'Y' lead from your pre-amplifier output. One leg should feed the power amp as usual (which you can switch off when

using the 'phones), and the other should go into your headphone transmitter. If this greatly reduces the volume from your loudspeakers, there is an impedance matching problem and you will have to think again. Similarly, if the gain is too low to operate the transmitter satisfactorily, curses! It's not usually a good idea to try lashing headphones to the output of a power amplifier. 'Y' leads are readily available cheaply from high street shops like Dixons. If it works, you can look to a better bit of wire as a fixed solution; if it doesn't, you've only lost £250 or so.

*I do not consider that it's worth splashing out on a headphone amplifier for 'just' a cordless set but if you are of a different opinion, our own World Audio makes quite a satisfactory kit, and Musical Fidelity (see this issue) can oblige with a ready-made device. **RMW***



Ideal for valve heads

THE PANEL'S CHOICE

Hi-fi World is the only (British) magazine that has given some attention to Magneplanar speakers. A few months ago I bought the Magneplanar 2.7 speakers in a hifi store that used them as demonstration models. Because the 2.7 model is out of production I could have them for about half the price. And now I need a new CD-player and a new amplifier to go with them. I have about £2,500 to spend. I like an open, detailed, clear, bright and dynamic sound. Could you give me some advice on good CD-player/amplifier combinations. I don't need any gadgets but the amplifier must have a balance control and lazy, as I am, a remote control would be welcomed. I hope you can give me a shortlist of equipment I can try. In Holland most hi-fi dealers have sold their souls to three or four brands and when you inform about other solutions they don't have an idea what you're talking about. That's why I ask for your advice!

Are the Magneplanars hard to work with and do I need a heavy amplifier? Some shops give me the creeps: they say that Magneplanars are very difficult to get to work and there is a very serious chance you blow them up when used with a 'normal' amplifier. Is this true? I thought that was/is a problem with electrostatic speakers, not with Magneplanars. I also like the sound of tube-amplifiers, but all the hifi advisors tell me it is impossible to drive the Magneplanars with tube-amplifiers. Is this true?

Thanking you in advance,

greetings from Holland!
Marc Kleijnen, Dordrecht.

True. Magneplanars are a little power hungry but I personally have run the smaller SMGa with a 50W per channel Audio Analogue Puccini and they sounded quite pukka (although I had to crank the volume knob a little) - so forget the creep-inducing dealers you have spoken to!

*To get the full potential of the larger models that you have, however, I would recommend at least a healthy 100W per channel. Musical Fidelity's X-A200 monoblocs at £1000 for the pair will match the clean and open sound of the Magneplanars, maybe powered by a matching X-P100 at £800. This combination would give you a fair £700 spare to splash out on the excellent Creek CD43 at £600 or an Audio Analogue Paganini for a valve-like sound. And talking of valves, you may wish to try a good valve preamp such as the Croft Vitale at £350 which may add a little of the valve's roundness to the sound. **SP***



**MF's X-A200S -
Lots of clean welly**

A CYNIC WRITES...

Like others, I await the arrival of new formats on CD with whetted appetite. At present, I am looking to buy a good quality CD player until SACD and DVD Audio are established. I have a system which was not inexpensive and I think standard CD sound has much to offer. However, I worry that some software manufacturers may be less inclined to provide all the quality possible on future CD recordings in order that SACD/DVD Audio pressings may impress more favourably. Am I being too cynical, or can anyone offer me some words of reassurance?

Yours Faithfully,

Paul Nutter
Leeds.

As far as recommended CD players go, there are many good value buys in the shops. You don't say how many shekels you have to spend, but if it's budget-to-mid you're after we would recommend Sony's excellent CDP-XB930E or Rotel's RCD-951, both of which give a performance well above their price range. If you're looking for something with better build and a more refined sound check out the Audio Analogue Paganini (£750), Musical Fidelity's X-Ray (£800), the Roksan Caspian (£895) or Naim's exciting CD3.5 (£1080). One of these four should deliver everthing you ought to crave in CD reproduction.

The second part of your question brings up some interesting top-

ics. Although in general record companies and the popular music business can be a difficult lot, they're actually quite dubious about taking the plunge with new formats. Like all other businesses, they're in it for the money. With new formats, they will only start making it if lots of people start buying it, and they will only start buying it if they have something to play it on!

*Realistically, it will be sometime yet before players are priced low enough to get this amount of people interested. So I would think that scuppering the current software output in favour of future software is unlikely, as the music-buying majority of the British public won't be able to play SACD or DVD-A discs for quite some time yet. **SP***



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RACKED WITH GUILT!

I've been putting off buying a rack for a few years now. It's one of those purchases that I've wanted to make more for neatness than any real hope of improving the sound. Last week I finally made the decision and bought an all-black Soundstyle rack that I'm extremely pleased with. It looks good and it's as solid as the proverbial rock.

My set-up has previously rested on many tables, draws and shelves. Its last resting place was a not-too-stable set of free-standing pine shelves, from Ikea I believe. Here is my annoyance. On the wobbly shelves the Sondek never jumped. On the rigid stand, if you walk near it, the needle jumps. The new rack is placed in a part of the room I had lined up for it. However I wasn't prepared for a loose floor board. My undoing! I'm in a flat so I can't just rip up the floor and have the whole thing redone. I'm going to experiment with orientation and positioning to limit the problem. It is not possible to place it where the shelves are at present. This is real pity as the sound when undisturbed is a significant improvement. I'm loathe to throw more money at the problem by buying Sorbothane feet or any other gadgets. I'll just have to put up with it for now.

Regards
Nick

Put up with it?! This is not the spirit of Hi-Fi World speaking! Before we look at your possible options, let's make the all-too-often over-

looked point, that a rack is only as solid as the surface it's standing on.

If your problem is just one loose floor board, I should think that a few pennies spent in the odds-and-ends bin at a timber yard or DIY store would yield enough battening material to spread the weight of the rack over some of the adjacent floorboards as well.

By the same token, but rather better, is my old favourite, the pink concrete paving slab. These are usually about eighteen inches square and cost about £2 each at Wickes. Assuming your floorboards are of the standard eight-inch width, a couple of these slabs will spread the effective footprint of your rack over at least three boards. Better than this, the undeniable mass of the concrete will impart further unwillingness to wobble to your rack.

*For those to whom the prospect of pink paving slabs in the sitting room seems monstrous, I can only state that I very rapidly got used to them - the colour is not strong enough to offend the eye - and that the real drawback I found was keeping my un-shod toes out of harm's way. This is something which has to be learned; there's little gain in saving pounds on a cheap stabilizing scheme only to have to blow it on a pair of industrial-strength, steel-clad slippers! **RMW***



Perhaps it's best to go to the wall with QTrax...

MATCHING PAIR

I decided over the new year that it was about time I improved the sound of my system which consists of a NAD 3020A amplifier, a Kodak PCD-265 photo CD player, which is only used for sound, and a pair of very elderly Wharfedale Denton loudspeakers. For some reason I phoned up and ordered one of your KiT88 amplifier kit rather than considering the other components first! Clearly both the loudspeakers and CD player could be improved upon. My musical taste is very varied and changes radically from time to time but currently I listen mostly to female vocal artists. I think I should have both a new CD player and speakers for the KiT88 amplifier but do not know where to start, I have a total budget of about £1000. I do not want to build a pair of speakers as I don't have room to carry out the work. How should I proportion the budget between the new components and what do you recommend, the room used is 12 ft by 24 ft ?

Yours faithfully
Robert Parkin

The KiT88 has plenty of drive and bass welly, so unlike a lot of valve amplification you don't need ultra-sensitive 'speakers to partner it. I personally would be tempted to spend a little more on 'speakers, as CD players are increasingly better at a lower price. You have a fairly large room, so a good floorstanding model such as Mission's 774 (£500) will do justice to the sound of the KiT88, providing an outlet for fast and tight bass with little coloration. Tannoy's Revolution r3s (£550) will also give a fine bass performance, with a clean open sound throughout the frequency range.

*On the source front, you could do a lot worse than the Rotel RCD-951, giving you the added bonus of HDCD should you wish, or Sony's dynamic CDP-XB930E. Both are excellent value at £300. Any of these combinations will give you some beer money left over from your £1000! **SP***



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Complaining neighbours? Nagging partner? No headphone socket? Check out MFs latest X-ternal headphone amp. Simon Pope did just that.

As Musical Fidelity are launching some more products in the A Series, you would think it would be safe to walk the streets again without being hit by another 'X' product. Well, don't leave your door too soon. Cue the latest addition - the X-Can v2. Under the 'X-ponents' banner, this is the improved version of the X-Cans, and was originally conceived as a NuVista circuit. And like the rest of the range, they've (almost annoyingly) got it right again. At £150, the V2 is £20 more expensive than its predecessor, but you get a lot of improvement for your twenty-quid.

In partnership with a pair of Jecklin Float cans (great sound, daft look), the X-Can v2 aims (and succeeds) in giving a totally neutral sound. Everything from Bloch's elegiac Schelemo to the Foo Fighters new album, via a little unaccompanied choral music was open and detailed. Space between voices and instruments was even more pronounced than usual through the floats, so that a truly out of the head sound was experienced. You have to remember that headphone listening is vastly different to



stereo 'speakers, and the v2s take one step further in making the two closer by bringing depth and breadth to the picture rather than merely blaring music into your lug holes! Highly recommended!

**Musical Fidelity Ltd.,
15/16 Olympic Trading Estate,
Fulton Rd.,
Wembley HA9 0TF
Tel: 0181 900 2866**

SUPPORTIVE STUFF

Simon Pope checks out a high-end hi-fi support system with sex appeal.

Firstly I must admit to being, initially, a bit of a 'rack cynic'.

And then I discovered that among the hoards of structures that are merely there to put your kit on (and a very good job they do too), there are a couple that really do make a sonic difference as well as merely looking cool. In other words: there are racks and there are *racks*. And Copulare make the latter!

Although the name implies that the manufacturer could be Italian (it could also imply a lot more to Latin scholars among you), this beautiful beast actually hails from the land of cuckoo clocks and naff gateaux - the Black Forest in Germany. Firstly it must be said that they are big, they take over your room in a way which signifies that hi-fi is important to you. A Copulare rack would even be the focal point in the Millennium Dome

(indeed, it might even raise the interest stakes). Racks, sexy? You'd better believe it. Copulare are great looking, with three



thick, sand-filled support legs topped with heavy machined-metal pucks. These are connected by thinner tubes, cross sectioned and supplied with spikes for resting however many (2-4) tiers of solid wood

support - finished in a unique striped marquee- you require. The phrase "well-built" doesn't really do them justice. As I discovered transporting the support system up the stairs to my flat, they would stay rooted to the spot in the midst of Hurricane Floyd.

They also do wonders for the sound. The predominant area affected, of course, is the bass. Everything is tightened up and delivered with punch and verve and the sound as a whole is more neutral and controlled. If someone would have told me that an equipment stand could do this to the sound a couple of years ago I would have replied "poppycock!" Not so now.

Of course, they're not cheap. A fully tooled-up 4-tier will set you back £1800, down to £950 for a two-tier. But if you've got the dosh and your willing to spend it on an equipment stand, look no further than the Black Forest!

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Swing LOW, Sweet CHARIO

Simon Pope cracks open the Barolo and spends some time with a pair of Italian beauties.

Along with the likes of Opera, Zingali, Diapason and many more, the Italian designers Chario (the 'ch' as in Chianti, incidently) take care in their cabinet work. The Academy Millennium 1s are no exception. No expense is spared in putting together the cabinet, components or drive units. The result is, as you would imagine not cheap, but compared to some rivals, very good value.

First, that gorgeous ergonomic-looking cabinet. Appearing to be moulded naturally by the wind and sea, it follows Chario's criteria of using solid walnut staves which are constructed to firm what looks like one solid piece of hardwood, such is the quality of the joints. The Academy 1 uses the same drive units as its bigger brother, the 2. These consist of a carbon fibre/paper bass and mid driver which employs a powerful rare earth magnet. This is coupled on the thick baffle with perhaps one of the finest treble units I have heard, a Scanspeak Revelator, which has been specifically modified for the Chario Millennium range. Inside the cabinet, the crossover makes use of Linkwitz-Riley techniques resulting in an excellent interaction between the units.

With all this labour-intensive work and expense that has gone into the design you'd be right to think that 1) they either work superbly or are 2) a bit of a let down. Gladly I can report to you that it's the former. I tested them with two different ends of the power scale. Firstly with a fellow Italian smoothy, the Audio Analogue Puccini SE and later with the 'big guns' of a Musical Fidelity A1001 with their own X-LP2 monobloc phono preamplifier.

After a little experimentation which confirmed that they sound better toed in fairly sharply and with their 'own' heavy wooden stands, first in the Caspian CD

player was the Corydon Singers getting their tonsils around the demanding motets of Anton Bruckner. The first thing I noticed about these 'speakers were their recognisable high-end characteristics



The Chario's cabinet work is among the best around

of smoothness, detail and - most of all - dynamic range. This recording ranges from 'sotto voce' whisperings right up to full blooded' plenty of welly', that well-known musical marking. At no point did the Millenniums become shrill or crude at climaxes - which is the acid test for 'speakers with choral music. Often it can become unpleasant listening (however glorious the music) not in this case, however.

Changing tact with Paul Weller's Stanley Road on CD, and Talvin Singh's OK on vinyl confirmed that the neutrality I'd discovered with the Bruckner disc stayed with studio-processed material. In the Weller CD, vocals were well positioned between the 'speakers and the sound staging was excellent - the drums being placed well back creating a natural three-dimensional sound. Both here and in the Talvin Singh album, the tweeters showed what they could do with cymbals, presenting them as sweet as candy and glistening like a Regimental Sergeant Major's steel toe cap.

One of the biggest surprises of the Academy's was their bass response. They can dig deep into the frequencies to bring

out the best in the low notes. Whilst it may not be the deepest bass response available from a pair of 'speakers, for their size, I don't think you get any better in the quality stakes. Cabinet coloration is virtually non-existent so everything you get is intended to be there!

I found that everything I chucked at them, from crappy mid-eighties mixes to demonstration-standard classical discs, from the rampant rock of the Foo Fighters to the graceful elegance of Schubert's chamber music was played with equal respect, making the Academy Millennium 1s the consummate musician. If you have a small listening room, enough cash, a bit of class and a good ear, they're just the job!

Chario Millennium 1 £1399

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WORLD VERDICT



Beautifully constructed with a sophisticated and neutral sound. Highly recommended.

Measured Performance see page 115

PANASONIC LF-D101 DVD RAM

Halfway house or easy upgrade? Noel Keywood investigates whether Panasonic's RAM is the way to go DVD.

Buy a stand-alone DVD player, like those we tested last month, and you can watch movies and play CDs. Buy computer DVD drive and you can watch movies on your computer,

"early in 2000" with a version able to write nearly twice as much data to a disc - no less than 9.4GB in all. So LF-D101 price may fall - to around £299-£350 Panasonic told me.

What does buying a computer DVD RAM drive like this offer in contrast to a stand alone DVD player? Let's talk DVD video first. To watch DVD (MPEG 2 compressed)

on the computer's processor and gives better results, especially with lower spec. computers. Some manufacturers, like Philips, supply a dedicated DVD card with their DVD drives, but not Panasonic, nor do they provide decoding software. This must be bought separately and Videologic offer DVD Player for £78 inc. VAT. Diamond Multimedia, ATI and Creative Labs also make cards for this purpose, at similar prices.



play audio CDs and use the drive as a CD/DVD ROM, all for less than a stand alone player. Costing £80 for a drive alone to £180 for a drive with a DVD decoder card, they look like unbeatable value.

Too good to be true? Computers are rarely as straightforward, as I found whilst reviewing Panasonic's LF-D101 DVD RAM drive, which not only plays DVD but can record to a RAM cartridge as well.

You pay more for a DVD RAM drive like this; the LF-D101 is commonly listed at £395 inc VAT. In return it offers a massive 5.2GB of storage, on a double-sided disc encased in a protective caddy. After just one year in the market, Panasonic have announced the 101's replacement

video you will need additional MPEG 2 decoding software, or better still, a DVD decoder card. Software decoding demands a lot of computing power to avoid jerky frames, loss of detail and coarse colouring; a Pentium II running at 350MHz being about the minimum for good results. Mediomatics DVD Express is one example; Panasonic quote Cyberlink Power DVD.

A DVD decoder card lightens the load

You do not face the problem of card installation with a stand alone player of course.

Panasonic place emphasis on the DVD RAM capabilities of this drive. It comes with 'WriteDVD!' software on a CD, plus a double-sided UDF formatted 5.2GB blank cartridge. A novel loading tray can accept the cartridge or a bare CD (i.e.

120mm/5in disc). The cartridge has a writable CD inside that can be removed and played on a DVD ROM in fact, a little mentioned option. The cartridge case acts as protection, improving durability and extending life, useful in an office where perhaps Panasonic hope a format like this could replace lomega's popular Zip (100MB/250MB), or even the Jazz (1GB/2GB). At 5.2GB DVD RAM has much greater capacity, and it is cheap at around £28 against a 2GB Jazz at £60. I suspect Panasonic have done themselves no favours by announcing a replacement within the short space of a year. Old discs may well play in new drives, but new discs will not transfer backward to old drives - an issue in an office where there are many machines in use, if not in the average home.

It was a surprise to find the LF-D101 conflicted with Easy CD Creator (v4) when the program was opened, if there was a CD or DVD cartridge in the drive. The analogue line had to be used instead for audio playback, the mechanism being run by a software controller such as Microsoft's 'CD player' or that supplied in Panasonic's own software. The drawback to this is that it provides only simple audio replay, eliminating digital manipulation. Panasonic UK said they had not experienced these problems; Adaptec eventually traced the fault - see below.

The LF-D101 outputs digital audio via SCSI and could be accessed by other programs, such as the excellent 'CD Copy', by Markus Barth (see mp3.com). As a work-around I used CD Copy to transfer digital audio files to the hard drive, open-

Eventually Adaptec in California identified the problem as a clash with the Software Architect drivers (three sai files in the iosubsys folder) supplied by Panasonic, sending a v1.4 update that cured the problem.

The drive's on-board DAC is specified for CD audio and will not handle DVD Audio (192kHz sampling rate) when it arrives. The drive can output 24bit/96kHz movie audio though - much higher quality than 16-bit/44.1kHz CD audio - if digitally connected via SCSI to a video card with 24/96 processing. The Panasonic is sensitive enough to read low reflectivity CD-RWs.

Out of the box Panasonic's LF-D101 DVD RAM drive offers instant mass storage, analogue audio playback and broadens a computer's media compatibility.



CD-R discs offer 650MB of storage for £1.50 or so, readable in any computer including a DVD-ROM drive, so CD-R has far broader compatibility. However, DVD RAM doesn't need to have a table of contents written before completion; it behaves like an ordinary computer hard drive in this respect.

I was most interested in the LF-D101's abilities as an audio drive and here it held some surprises. Panasonic supply a 50 pin SCSI-2 cable and an analogue audio cable. The LF-D101 uses SCSI-2 to communicate. It will work with Windows 95, Panasonic supplying the necessary software driver. Windows 98 Version 2 recognises it as a DVD ROM without loading this driver. It took no more than 15 minutes to get the 101 installed and running without difficulty, since I had a spare connector on my Ultra-Wide SCSI-2 line. If you do not have SCSI installed then a SCSI card will be needed (e.g. from Adaptec).

ing them with Easy CD Creator afterward. With the LF-D101 acting in effect as a CD ROM it transferred 49MB (one track) in 84 seconds, a healthy rate of 580kB/s, or 4x real time. This means a CD containing 40 minutes of music would transfer to the hard drive in a respectable 10 minutes.

The same 49MB again took 84 seconds to transfer into DVD RAM from my SCSI-2 connected hard drive, but just 35 seconds to transfer from DVD RAM back to the hard drive (i.e. 1.4MB/s), the latter figure being the sustained transfer rate quoted by Panasonic. This is a fast drive by today's standards; I didn't feel speed was an issue.

Because Easy CD Creator is one of the most popular audio manipulation programmes around it was unfortunate that the LF-D101 should clash with it. A Philips CDD3610 CD-R/RW writer and a Plector CD ROM both use the same SCSI line and transfer digital audio direct to Easy CD Creator without problems.

With DVD in the title I was a little disappointed it could not play movies straight away, unlike DVD ROMs supplied with an MPEG 2 card. The clash with Easy CD Creator was unfortunate too. Panasonic emphasize its role as a mass storage device and sounded disappointed I should question it in other areas. So there you are. It's best seen as offering cheap mass storage for the time being. Perhaps other aspects of performance will be improved in future models.

Panasonic LF D101 DVD RAM £395

**Panasonic UK Ltd,
Panasonic House,
Willoughby Road
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PRECIOUS LITTLE MONEY!

Precious Metals Cables, distributed by Picture The Sound, have new interconnects on the market that feature their own AirTight RCA phono connector. They say this standard of 'professional grade' hasn't been seen on entry level interconnects before. The AirTight Series Alpha retail for £25 per metre pair, with extra metres at £10.

A lot of money and time has gone into the research and development of the AirTight range. The design of the plug is a one piece and solder free. It creates a join which maintains constant impedance which Precious Metals say is not achieved with solder designs. It's a very simple but effective process of construction. The cable is prepared and then simply inserted into the plug and is 'crimped' into a hex shape that hermetically seals the join. The cable is kept in place by the use of two sprung jaws that cut into the

centre conductor so the electrical connection is sealed. All this just for 25 quid! To top it all Precious Metals chuck in a ten year warranty, such is their confidence in the product.

The main characteristics of the cable are a smooth and sweet treble. High percussion and cymbals have a 'glistening' quality that you usually only get from more expensive cable. This is matched by a tight and controlled bass that is also fast and exciting. But most noticeable was the excellent deep sound stage, which is a rarity at this price level. After using these for a couple of days and reverting back to my usual cable, I have to admit that the difference in sound was marginal. The price, however, isn't! These interconnects are simply excellent value for money.



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It's Saturday morning and I'm shopping at Whiteleys in Bayswater, West London, where there's a Virgin record store. Getting the basics in early on Saturday is one of those mechanical things for me; you can be in any state or all sorts of states, it just has to be done. Absent minded I wandered into Virgin and picked up a few CDs. I wasn't thinking about the price. "That'll be £34". For two CDs? Have I woken up yet?

"You're getting old, Noel, prices go up" I was told when I got home. That might have been true, especially when it comes to the cost of music. The music business has aggressively raised prices over the years and defended its action vigorously, even when the increase outstrips inflation. But at last all this is changing. On the internet at least, prices are half what I paid Virgin. Realising this, the Virgin group of stores, which includes Our Price records are demanding a price reduction of 20% from the music companies, on the grounds that they can't compete against internet retailers - 'e-tailers' - who are getting better terms, they claim.

Buying from the net I could have picked up those CDs mail order for around £18 all in. The price difference is enormous, so large that it is starting to cause serious problems for everyone in the business, from bands through to retailers. Prices should tumble and choice broaden, which I know will delight Hi-Fi World readers. The cost of a CD has always been a hot issue.

The big music companies will fight hard to maintain their position in the world, which is not insignificant. Music sales in 1998 amounted to £24 billion worldwide. This was shared by Polygram, Time Warner, EMI, Sony Music (formerly CBS), BMG (formerly RCA), Virgin and Universal. Time Warner are now merging with EMI, leapfrogging Polygram to become the number one company in size. There's talk that Sony music might tie up with German Bertlesman Music Group (BMG)

to further consolidate power. Looking at their sales and profit figures I can understand why the price of a CD continues to rise. Sales of CDs are static in developed markets like Japan, America and the UK. Profits are falling steadily, so up goes price yet again.

Surfing into CDNow made me regret my Saturday morning trip into Virgin. Pity really, because I've been buying records for a long time and looking around a record shop has always been an enjoyment. From my student days, when rushing out to buy a new Beatles album was a major event, to being mesmerised by Janis Joplin singing Ball and Chain, going into a record shop has been more than just making a purchase. It's one of those small delights that more than repays the effort if you come away

“ The music business has aggressively raised prices over the years and defended its action vigorously. . .

with a great new album. It's not an experience mail order can easily replace but CDNow prices are a clincher as far as I'm concerned. And if just 10% of purchasers decide likewise, Virgin stores warn, pretty soon there'll be no more record stores on the High Street.

Virgin are pointing the finger at the big music groups, claiming they are offering better terms to internet companies than high street retailers. Scrolling down through the U.S. 'Top 100' listed at CDNow (www.cdnow.com) I can see what they mean. Most are priced at \$12.58 - just £7.80. Virgin would be buying in at prices higher than these. It's not as if CDNow's Top 100 is a lost leader either. Whilst some albums from big names like Queen and Pink Floyd cost \$22 (£13.75) many classics from these same names are

offered at \$12.58. Buyers in the UK must pay VAT and carriage from a European warehouse, which bumps price up a bit, but CDNow remains competitive, especially if you buy in quantity. The company claims it is the largest internet music retailer, with a stock 500,000 titles. With offices around the U.S., a European warehouse and no fewer than 43 jobs advertised, CDNow already has clout and it's expanding rapidly.

The price differential between CDNow and a UK High Street store seems extraordinary. Why are the big music companies giving it such good terms, threatening traditional outlets? They will force consumers into the arms of some very large internet companies, not a situation that will benefit them, I would have thought. But who knows what story the sales graphs tell? CDNow started in 1994. Extrapolate six years of phenomenal growth forward and, as a record company executive you doubtless see a huge retailer able to expand the worldwide market for music by avoiding the costs associated with retailing and distribution. EMI claimed it could get rid of 3000 jobs by merging its distribution operation with Time Warner. By delivering into a few mega-warehouses, situated well away from busy and expensive urban areas, perhaps EMI and its rivals see even greater savings. Are they hoping to kill off record stores? It looks like I won't be visiting mine anymore on a Saturday. •



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A big hallo to those of you who've been counting the hours 'til there was room for my column to reappear. A more discreet hallo to those who were glad to see the back of it. Anyway, on with the motley and time for an incisive look at the world through sound-tinted ear-muffs.

The longer I look at the new audio technology, the more I wonder whether music will come unglued from reality. Is music now on its way, as never before, to becoming secondary to the technology which provides it? Is what we listen to about to become governed by the way it must be packaged?

Technology of itself seems to have a propensity for the trivial. In this respect, it is almost the opposite of Science.

Naturally, once the outline of a scientific discipline gains acceptance and mounts to the honour of Truism, there will be as many misapplication of the rules as there will be bulls-eyes.

In the Middle Ages, the re-discovery of formal logic, geometry and algebra seemed to offer a pattern for rationalizing the whole of the cosmos, if only the disciplines could either be bent to the rules or vice versa. Something of the same kind seems to me to be threatening music, taking away the elements of craft, art and performing skill and substituting a hybrid which any fool can do with the necessary time, technology and, for best results, money.

As an illustration, look at communications. Somehow one feels that the proliferation of the mobile 'phone and the internet would be a little more exciting if there was a bit more to say. Mobile 'phones are the Arabian Nights: Sinbad injured on a walking tour miles from anywhere can summon up the Genie of Help. I'm not so sure that the miracle seems quite so thrilling if it's just Sinbad ringing to say he's met Hagdad in the Bazaar and will be a bit late for his tea. Nation Shall Speak Peace Unto Nation, or Don't Forget It's Karaoke Tonight?

There is a sense of immense complication in pursuit of the trivial. This is

where, in my view, digital gets hold of the wrong end of the stick. I remember years ago visiting the museum of technology near Eindhoven, the centre of the Philips empire. One of the most telling exhibits was a then-and-now look at 'micro' processing. First came several cubic yards of valve flip-flops and critically poised switch circuitry. Stage two took up about the space of a tea chest; this was the transistorized version. Finally, under an outsize magnifying glass, was the microchip which performed the equivalent functions of either the valves or the tea-chest. As I noted, this was several years ago. A legion of these chips could probably dance on a pin-point by now.

As a demonstration of miniaturiza-

a step further and managed to convert the shapes back to sounds. All recording media before digital used patterns of some sort to store sound; whether it was the transverse waves of a gramophone record, the patches of more or less magnetism on recording tape, or the variations in opacity on light-sensitive film. Essentially, the process converts one sort of wave into another. Although this all sounds laborious compared with the silent action of a minuscule chip, it is in fact a far simpler process.

Analogue recording and reproduction is akin to taking a mould or tracing of a sculpture. Digital, on the other hand, works by grinding things to dust, writing down the positions of the grains according to a chosen degree of particularity, then reassembling the powder into a statue form in less time than it takes to think. Were it not for this speed, the whole caboodle would be seen in open day as the staggeringly complicated technique that it is.

Digital technology is the present and the future, but the process lacks aesthetic appeal. According to physics, in cosmic terms waves are 'It'. Digital technology is an exceedingly hard-working slave compound but t'ain't natural! •

” Nation Shall Speak Peace Unto Nation, or Don't Forget It's Karaoke Tonight...

tion, the Eindhoven display was impressive. The obvious question should be 'what does it do, and is it worth doing?' Once the notion of computation had been re-shaped to fit the old one-two, or rather nought-one, there was no stopping the process. This is the root of the entire analogue/digital divide. For certain things, digital is the only answer, a tool which can be shaped into a key for the universe. For £12.99 at Argos, I can buy a pocket calculator which makes my old seven-figure mathematical tables instantly redundant. For other applications however, it seems to me to be an extraordinarily laborious way of doing things.

Alexander Graeme Bell was one of the first to work on the notion that sound could be expressed as a shape, which he discovered via the medium of his diaphragm, needle and sooty glass apparatus. Making the marks on a more permanent medium (folded paper tape to begin with), Edison carried the process



Richard White

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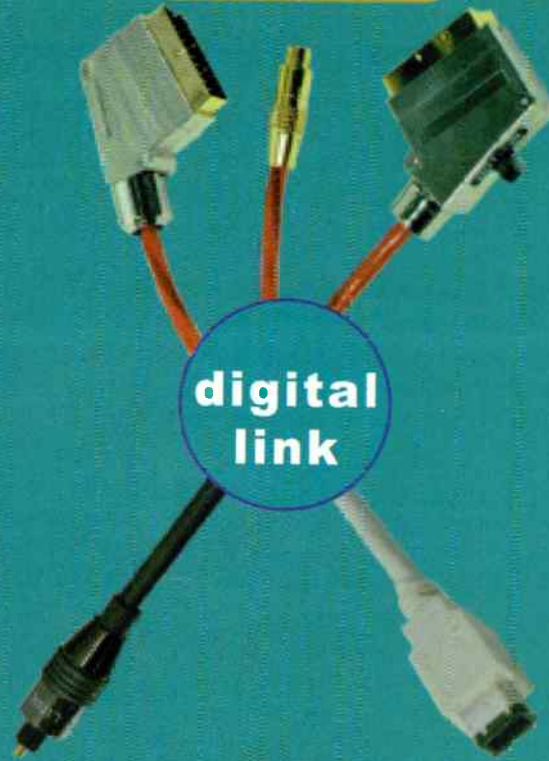
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All the instruments had tonal signatures and the loudspeakers clarity coupled with a realistic soundstage gave the impression of almost being in the Wignore hall, without the coughs and dropped programs of course. Simon Pope Hi Fi World



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



The Veritas 20 reproduced the sense of scale, instrument placement and depth with superb naturalness, while tonal balance was full and realistic. Certainly a big, generous sound. David Berrimau Hi Fi News

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With the seasonal sales well and truly over, and quieter times ahead for hi-fi retailers, it's time to take stock and see exactly what were the seasons movers and shakers. Continuing strong sales of amps, speakers and C.D. players came as no surprise. The sale of Compact Discs themselves may have peaked, but the effect doesn't appear to have hit the hardware side of things just yet. Equally less surprising was the continuing strength of MiniDisc which, combined with the gradual uptake of CDR, has completely demolished the cassette deck market. Sales of tape decks are now only marginally above record decks in the separates side of the business. This was the year of DVD too. Yet, from my point of view, this doesn't seem to be at the expense of C.D., as some had predicted. As soon as recordable units come down in price, it looks as though it will be VCR not conventional C.D. that takes a hammering.

This may all appear fairly predictable stuff, but one area of the market that proved a surprise was that of tuners. In percentage terms, tuners have never been strong sellers. Yet this year has seen no significant change to the sales pattern of separate tuners. This may not sound exceptional until you consider that, in its current form, it's a format whose future appears doomed. Are the public at large not aware of Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB)? The format is hardly in its infancy, with over 60% of the population now able to get a reception, and Radio's 1-5, amongst others, all broadcasting digitally. In addition extra sports and parliamentary channels are soon to be added and, in the future, there should also be news, travel, Asian, pop archive, and 'yet more' sport channels. Yet here's the catch. Take a visit to the BBC's online DAB site, and you'll read much about the future, but less of what's actually happening now. A look at the coverage map reveals that most of Scotland, Wales, and huge chunks of the east and southwest aren't even covered

yet. The statement that, "the BBC will be accelerating roll out along with market uptake", sounds rather ominous too. What happens if the "market uptake" just isn't there? Further more, many local stations haven't even been awarded licenses yet, with the schedule for awarding such licenses stretching late into 2001.

If it appears that little seems to be happening on the transmission front, the hardware side of things is equally languid. You can still count the number of manufacturers producing separate DAB tuners on one hand; Arcam, Cymbol, Tag Maclaran and Technics. Furthermore the cheapest offering, from Technics, is still priced at a rather stiff £500. The promise of a "semi portable", though,

” It strikes me that DAB has two major problems on its hands, and the public aren't daft enough not to be aware of them.

from the seminal manufacturer of portable radio, Roberts, in the autumn, may bring about an upturn in interest.

It strikes me that DAB has two major problems on its hands, and the public aren't daft enough not to be aware of them. The first, I'm sorry to say, is that of sound quality. Compressing a signal and sending a series of 0's and 1's via radio waves, may be fine for mobile phones, or even radio whilst on the move, but its results in a fixed environment are less than satisfactory. The MUSICAM compression system may sound like harmless marketing spiel, but it's a term that should strike horror into anyone passionate about music and dialogue over the airwaves. The BBC are quite blatant in explaining the system "chops out" subtle details that are "difficult to detect" over louder passages. Anyone reading this will know that it's these very details and subtleties that count in making a hi-fi "breathe" the music rather

than simply "process" it. So, the system hasn't had the warmest responses from the hi-fi elite, but what about the rest of the population? Sadly, most of us aren't that bothered about the ultimate reproduction of sound quality so MUSICAM will hardly raise an eyebrow down at Dixons.

Admittedly, for car or portable use, DAB would appear more convincing, yet even here, we can't rule out the possibility of the internet (mobile communication bandwidth permitting), entering the domain.

Personally speaking, I see DAB succeeding, yet its audience is going to far less than analogue radio's ever was. Such are the competing formats, and the state of uncertainty that I can hardly blame anyone buying a conventional tuner now. After all we've still got another 15-20 years to enjoy "difficult to detect" music and speech, before they switch all of the analogue transmitters off. Happy tuning! ●



Dominic Todd



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KITS HAVE NEVER

KiT88 VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT & KaT88 VALVE POWER AMPLIFIER KIT

Here is the amazing KiT88. The circuit is similar to that of the ever popular KEL34 with a few changes to incorporate the Tesla, JJ branded KT88 power tetrode. This is a pure Class A push-pull design providing 36 watts into an 8ohm load. Gary Devon, has come up with a gems of an output transformer (E/I), this combined with the KT88 offers a virtually unmatched result for a valve amplifier. Frequency response is 11Hz up to 75kHz, separation is 71dB, noise is 98dB, sensitivity is 400mV and a distortion of 0.03%. "As valve amplifiers go, the KiT88 is one of the best measured performances I have ever come across", says Noel Keywood. Jon Marks says, "The KiT88 pulled a series of surprisingly fast, meaty basslines out of its trickbag when dealing with Suzanne Vega's Nine Objects Of Desire album. As if this wasn't enough, the mid and treble were nice too - cym-

THE KaT88, THE POWER AMPLIFIER VERSION OF THE KiT88



£425

NEW!

bals had a deliciously natural, golden shimmer without sounding soft, and vocals were extremely transparent and crisply defined. KiT88 didn't hang around when it came to exploiting the virtues of its four output valves on numbers such as 'Leaves' and 'Suspect Sustain' from Cirrus' Land's End Jazz CD. Saxophone had a wonderfully smooth, realistic character, and acoustic guitar mixed speed with harmonic richness to very impressive effect. Asian Dub Foundation and Moloko showed no sign at all of the sluggish, woolly bottom-end and poorly-delineated bass beats that most valve amps are to blame for. Which makes the KiT88 an all-round, high-end bargain." Weight 16kg, external dimensions with valves are 30mm(w)x300mm(d)x190mm(h).

£440



KEL34 E&I VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT

The KEL34 E&I version is our second generation budget stereo integrated valve amplifier, providing a massive 40 watts of pure valve sound. With 4 line level inputs and one tape output. The KEL34 E&I is a simple and elegant circuit design using a 6AU6 pentode input valve, an ECC82 double-triode phase splitter and a push-pull pair of Tesla, JJ branded EL34s. The result is a typically sweet, open valve sound with atypical bass control and power. The KEL34 E&I will work its magic into 'speakers of average sensitivity too. Jon Marks says, "tonally the KEL34 E&I is a bit of a smoothie. It has a fast, dynamic sound, plucked guitar strings and bass drum enjoy crisp

leading edges and great impact. Clear imaging and spacious sound staging meant voices and instruments really jumped out of the loudspeaker boxes. Overall the KEL34 E&I is a beautiful power amp." At the price, this kit is second to none and will open up the benefits of valve amplification to a whole new class of audio nuts! Weight 12kg. External dimensions with valves: 33cm(w) x 27.5cm(d) x 18cm(h).

HD83 VALVE HEADPHONE AMPLIFIER KIT

The HD83 is our new headphone amplifier, a beautifully simplistic design using Mullard ECL83 valves, a triode and power pentode housed in the same envelope. It works directly from any source be it a CD, tape, tuner etc., or from an amplifier's tape out or pre-amp sockets. The circuit utilises high specification output E and I output transformers that will drive any headphone load from 16 ohms to over 300 ohms depending on how the secondaries are wired up. The HD83 is a single ended design with the power pentode wired up in triode configuration for that added purity and is as quiet as a mouse. For sound quality Jon Marks says, "The bass is punchy and controlled without becoming artificial, while treble has the crispness of the best solid-state, with the tonal purity, delicacy and speed associated with valves. External dimensions 18cm(w) x 30cm(l) x 8cm(h) weight 4kg.

£175



£315



KEL34 Facelift - If you want your KEL34 to look like the KiT88 this is what you need - £75.00

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KEL80 MONOBLOCK AMPLIFIER KIT

Following the success of our budget KEL34 40watt kit amplifier, we have come up with a 'bigger brother' design. The output stage utilises two pairs of TESLA EL34 pentodes in parallel-push-pull mode, allowing KEL80 to turn out 80 watts into an 8ohm load. Heading up the input stage we have the wonderfully linear Russian 6AU6 working into an American 5687 phase-splitter. KEL80's output transformers are 4ohm and 8ohm tapped. With an input sensitivity at around 380mV for full output, it will happily partner both passive and active pre-amplifiers. It is easy to assemble. Simon Pope says, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating and the KEL80 is a feast for the ears, with solid bass attack, lightening fast reactions, that emphasises musicality as well as power, at 590.00 GBP a pair, a definite valve winner. Each monobloc weighs 12kgs., external dimensions with valves: 14cm(w) x 8cm(h) x 43.5cm(d).

£590
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K5881 MKII VALVE AMPLIFIER KIT

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£394

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KLS10 GOLD SUBWOOFER



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

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KLS9 TWO WAY FLOORSTANDER



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KLS7 2 WAY CARBON-FIBRE DRIVER FLOORSTANDER

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£175

KLS12 is a versatile budget loudspeaker that delivers fine sound quality at a low price. It utilises Audax's HT210F0 woven fibre glass cone, mid/bass unit, beautifully married with the TW034X0, 34mm diameter doped fabric dome tweeter. Noel Keywood says, 'The KLS12 is a transparent, vividly detailed transducer with fine projection. It has tight well defined bass, which means it is best positioned close to a rear wall. Vocals possess a clean outline with an intense clarity.' At 89dB the KLS12 is easy to drive, thus, it is suitable for 20W and upward power amps. Internal volume = 34.1 litres

standmounter external dimensions = 58cm(h) x 24.2cm(w) x 34cm(d) floor stander external dimensions(with sand filled space cavity) = 58cm(h) x 24.2cm(w) x 34cm(d)

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KLS11 3 WAY DESIGN



NEW!

Our newest design is a wonderful three way bass reflex enclosure stand mounter. Another star performer, featuring the superb gold dome tweeter, the HD3P. This, married perfectly to a HM100Z0 midrange unit and utilising the deep full sound of the 10 inch PR24OZO bass unit. All units are from Audax. As both these units use high definition Aerogel cones they have similar sonic signatures, providing a deliciously gelled sound. Our KLS11 is a quality three way, with powerfull bass and midrange driver that ensures vocals are handled with high fidelity. The treble is both smooth and sweet. Sensitivity 88dB

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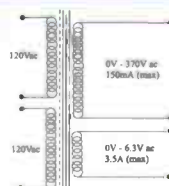
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Drive Units.....	KLS3-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£230	£200
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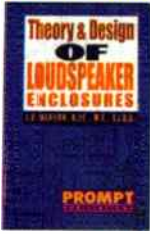
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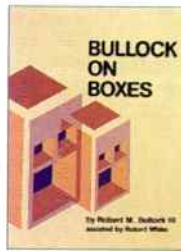
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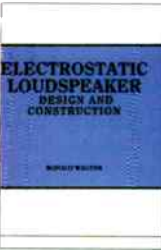
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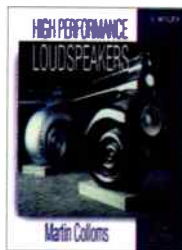
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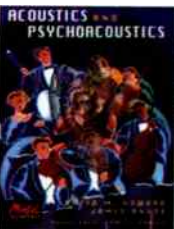
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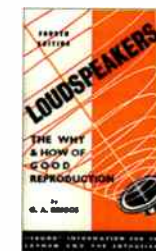
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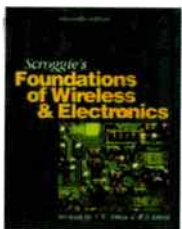


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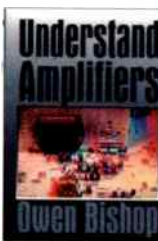
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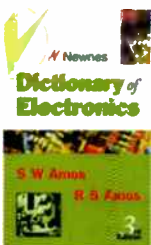
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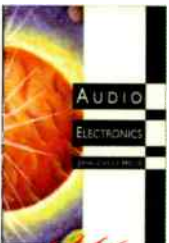
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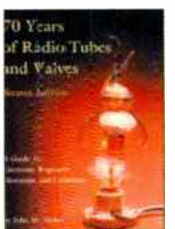
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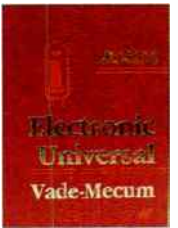
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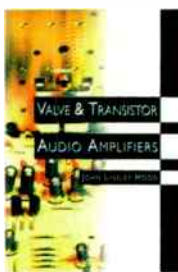
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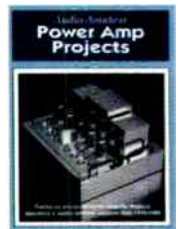
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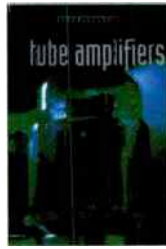


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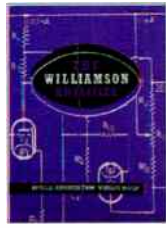


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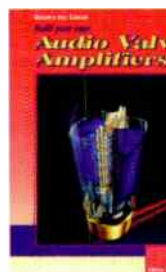
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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Aura LST 627.



Blue Room Mini Pod.

Under £300

Acoustic Energy AE100	£200	Jan 96	Reasonably neutral but ultimately lacklustre. Control of treble and mid-range poor.
Audio Gem Opals	£240	Dec 97	Partner the Opals with warm ancillaries and you get an involving sound. Avoid bright amps and sources.
Aura LSB-627M	£230	Aug 98	Energetic, bold and highly detailed, the Aura is one to consider for the budget-conscious.
Aura LST-627	£299	Oct 98	Like Aura's matching stand mounters, the 627Ms are lucid and controlled. Treble is brightish.
B&W 601	£200	Jan 96	Unrestricted and clean sound with satisfying musicality. An engaging subtlety not common at the price.
B&W DM302	£130	Apr 96	Clear open and detailed sound but balance too forward and weak bass.
B&W DM602	£250	Nov 96	Excels with taut hard-hitting bass with dynamic, uncoloured midrange. Metal tweeter bleaches out the treble.
Boston CR6	£150	Sep 98	With simple music, the CR6s work well, but not quite as well as the best of the competition.
Castle Isis	£230	Jan 96	A lively little animal, well worth the money.
Celestion 12i	£119	Feb 98	The 12is' powerful, confident sound belies a rather poor measured performance.
Celestion Impact 15	£200	Jan 96	Big presentation but a rather distant quality. Could sound boomy and confined.
Celestion Impact 23	£299	Nov 96	Sterling performance in the bass with speed and control. Good midrange projection.
Chario HiPeF 1000	£299	Feb 99	Quality construction and sound produce a very capable 'speaker. Open treble and firm bass for the size.
Eltax Liberty 3+	£150	Jan 98	A lot of loudspeaker for the money. Punch and slam in the bass but sometimes thin in the treble.
Eltax Symphony 6	£240	Nov 96	Although bright, the Symphony 6s score for clarity and power. Bass is fast and accurate.
Gale 2i	£140	Feb 97	Smooth, balanced performers that do a good job on any genre. Free from the nasties that afflict many at the price.
Gale Mini Monitor	£50	Apr 97	Not the last word in midrange or bass clarity, but gives real hi-fi results for a paltry £50.
GLL ICT100	£170	Nov 95	For their size and price they offer some super qualities, especially stable imaging.
Heybrook Heylette	£270	Jun 98	A mini monitor with more precision and dynamism than the size and price tag would suggest.
Heybrook Optima	£259	Oct 98	Capable all-rounders, the Optimas combine smoothness, insight and control to great effect.
Heybrooks HB1 S3	£269	Nov 96	Excellent imaging with clear treble and midrange. Bass slightly dry and boxy but would suit a smaller room.
Jamo CS5 Actives	£200	Oct 98	In spite of a few colorations, the Jamos are fine examples of budget active operation.
JPW ML510	£130	Jan 98	With greater transparency and a bit more get-up-and-go, the 510s could be leaders of the budget pack.
Kef 60S	£200	May 96	The 60S is open and detailed but coloured too.
Kef Coda 7	£129	Apr 95	Rhythmic push and tuneful bass are the plus points of these small standmounts.
Kef Coda 8	£200	Jan 96	Breezy presence, good dynamics and a sense of fullness. Not the utmost in clarity, some box colouration.
Kef Coda 9	£299	Jul 96	Strong bass can get out of control, as can treble. This tends to overpower the midrange.
Kef Q15	£199	Feb 97	Impressive bass and a sweet clarity make the Q15s 'speakers that'll put a smile on any audiophile's face.
Kenwood LS90UK	£129	Jul 98	The LS90UKs have dry bass and limited tonal colour, but staging and imaging are superb.
Linn Sekrit	£298	Apr 96	Well-behaved and with a decent tonal quality.
Mission 700	£130	May 98	The 700s are easily outclassed by Mission's own superb 731 Pros at a £10 premium.
Mission 731	£129	Apr 95	An initially impressive, upfront sound but ultimately a little uninvolved.
Mission 731 Pro	£139	Jul 97	Music makers with a clean, punchy sound. Real value for money.
Mission 731i	£130	Nov 96	Mission's babies are a truly worthwhile improvement on the original 731s.
Mission 731LE	£150	Nov 95	Excellent sound puts the competitors in the shade. Well built and pretty too!
Mission 732i	£200	Aug 97	If you've got £200 with 'loudspeaker' written on it, then the 732i should be on your shopping list.
Mission 77i	£170	Jul 98	Superb stand mounters of real refinement and musicality. A touch bass light.
Mission 772	£230	Apr 99	Civilised standmounters which lack nothing in control, finesse or transparency.
Monsoon MM-1000	£200	May 99	A novel multi-media two-satellites-and-sub which nevertheless demands to be taken quite seriously.
Mordaunt-Short MS20i	£200	Jan 96	Very tight bass and an all-round big sound. Some sharpness in the treble but assertive and clear.
Nad 801	£100	Jun 97	Impressive bass with midrange clarity are pluses. Prominent treble stops the 801 from challenging the best.
Paradigm Mini Monitors	£230	Aug 97	The Paradigms have a generally enjoyable sound but treble is sharp and midrange recessed.
QLN 122	£270	Jun 96	Solid bottom end will drive a large room well, but they're a bit bright too.
RDL RA Labs Mini Ref	£99	Jul 95	Engineering is not tip-top, but with a smooth system they will produce a clear and open, if bright, sound.
Revolver Purdey	£200	Jan 96	Rather small sound for a big cabinet. Absence of deep bass hard to forgive.
Rogers LS1	£149	Feb 96	Clear, bright and open but with weak bass. Best used close to or against a wall.
Rogers LS33	£250	Nov 96	Detailed and clear with a forward midrange. Could be a little rough on vocals; bass extension is limited.
System Audio 1005	£299	Aug 96	Excellent all-rounder that provides a real open window into almost every genre of music.
Tangent Monitor 11	£200	Nov 97	The Tangents' bass has attractive speed and impact, matched with smooth treble and open midband.
Tangent Monitor 2	£60	Jul 96	Good imaging as well as control. Tweets a bit too much but more than line for the money.
Tannoy Mercury m1	£120	Jun 98	The best at the price and capable of embarrassing many more expensive 'speakers.
Tannoy Mercury m2	£140	May 97	For £140, you get a 'speaker with transparency and enjoyability unmatched at the price.
Tannoy Mercury m3	£240	Nov 97	Even overall balance and taut secure bass, if not the deepest ever. Slightly lightweight and uninvolved.
Tannoy R1	£199	Nov 98	Worth an audition if you need to balance a bright source and amp, but treble lacks clarity.
TDL NFM 1	£120	May 97	Bright treble is partially balanced by taut, well-integrated bass, but outclassed by the competition.
TDL Nucleus 1	£60	Apr 97	Great, incisive, detailed and revealing, especially in the bass.
W'dale Active Diamond	£180	Mar 99	Clear value introduction to active. The sound is deep and powerful but could be a little coloured for some.
Wharfedale Valdis 300	£150	Jul 96	Can work well if partnered to give weighty bass and smooth treble.

£300-£799

B&W CDM1SE	£600	Apr 98	Tuneful and confident, these 'speakers are well suited to Pop and Dance music.
B&W DM305	£350	Mar 97	All the ingredients for listening fun are mixed into the DM305. Overall presentation could be more cohesive though.
B&W P4	£600	Mar 95	Good-looking solid 'speakers with great spirit and tenacity but with a dry treble. Not fans of classical music.
Blue Room Minipod	£400	Jan 97	Arresting style allied to an engaging sound makes the Minipods attractive. Best with smooth amps and source.
Carlsson OA 50.2	£585	Dec 98	Acoustic music gels nicely. More artificial pieces sometimes don't work so well.
Castle Avon	£699	Dec 96	Taut, dry bass and lucid midrange but need matching to warm ancillaries to avoid sounding bright.

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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

£300-£799			
Castle Harlech	£799	Aug 96	Bass power and extension will impress but overall sound is uneven and rather sterile.
Castle Kendal	£450	Mar 98	The Kendals have great clarity but need coupling to warm ancillaries.
Castle Severn II	£579	Jul 98	Apart from some hardness in the tweeters, the Severn 2s are accomplished all-rounders.
Chario Hiper 1	£399	May 95	Music makers through and through with a great feel for rhythm and dynamics.
Chario Lynx	£549	Apr 99	The Lynxes are superbly built but their rising bass and treble suit home cinema more than hi-fi.
Dali 450	£700	Feb 96	A powerful and rich sound from these competitively priced floorstanders makes them worth a recommendation.
Epos ES12	£495	Oct 96	Strong, punchy bass allied to detailed and articulate midrange and treble.
Heybrook Heylios	£339	Mar 97	The Heylios stand out for their bass depth, dynamics and sound staging. Overall balance prefers Classical to Rock.
Heybrook Heylo	£389	Oct 95	Posses a neutral, fast and dry sound. A good match for soft sounding systems.
Jamo 307	£300	Apr 95	Delicate, detailed sound, albeit with rather imprecise imaging. Will work well on a bookshelf.
JPW ML910	£300	Nov 97	Not perfect but they make music fun. Quality, power and extension, the Milleniums are worth a listen.
JPW Ruby 2	£395	Oct 98	Once allied to warm electronics, the Ruby 2s mix insight with plenty of involvement.
Kef LS3/5A	£599	Jul 95	Partnered with the Rogers AB1, this is a substantial marriage.
Kef Q35	£350	Nov 97	Very accomplished midrange and treble but the dry in the bass. For Rock fans the upper bass speed is appealing.
Kef Q55	£499	Aug 97	The Q55s look rather expensive at £500 with their 'boom and tizz' presentation.
Kef RDM1	£499	Oct 97	The RDM1s soundstage well thanks to their Uni-Q drivers. Can be uninvolved because of a lack of scale and impact.
Linn Tukan	£389	Dec 95	Highly musical standmounters that give similarly priced floorstanders a great deal to worry about.
Meridian A500	£750	May 95	Very polite and many will appreciate their civility. Deep powerful bass.
Mission 733	£300	Apr 95	Captivating floorstanders that bring music to life - what good hi-fi should do.
Mission 734	£430	Sep 95	Engineered for low price and showroom appeal rather than absolute sound quality.
Mission 751 Freedom	£350	Apr 97	Charming little stand-mounters with a sweet, warm, musical sound.
Mission 752 Freedom	£578	Jan 97	Dynamic, punchy, and musical yet refined like few at the price. Bass lacks a little depth.
Mission 774	£500	Feb 99	With the right ancillaries, the 774s have a clarity and lack of colouration still rare at the price.
Mordaunt-Short MS25i	£300	Nov 96	Sweet sounding metal dome tweeter although the dry bass and rather plasticky midrange work against it.
Musical Technology PM15	£474	Jan 99	Sophisticated, neutral sound and fine musicality put the PM15s near the head of the class.
Near 10M	£500	Jan 96	A thin and hard sound but precise with it!
Neat Critique II	£445	Jan 99	Deserving 'speakers with good looks and build. Can fail to shine with over-polite equipment.
NHT 1.3	£389	Aug 95	Very crisp sounding 'speakers best suited to smaller rooms.
Opera Prima	£495	Feb 99	The Primas offer a taste of the high-end at a sensible price. They are more fans of Classical than Rock though.
Ortoton ConCorde 6	£329	Oct 95	Good value floorstanders with clean enjoyable sound - not quite supersonic, though.
Poik PSW150	£500	Jul 97	The PSW150 adds depth to a system but can sound obvious at times.
Proac Tablette	£600	Aug 98	Amp-sensitive and slightly boxy in the lower treble, the ProAcs are still highly musical.
Rel Q Bass	£350	May 96	Needs care in setting up but this subwoofer offers serious quality bass for not a lot of money.
REL Q100E	£500	Apr 98	Another capable sub from REL that boosts bass and improves sound staging.
Rogers AB 1	£499	Jul 95	When used with the Kef LS3/5a this sub delivers the goods, beyond a doubt.
Roksan RokOne	£595	Feb 97	Musically involving 'speakers that many will enjoy, but a little unrefined at times.
Sequence 400	£329	Apr 96	Good at orchestral scale but coloured in the midband.
Soundcraft Absolute 4P	£799	Oct 97	The Absolute 4Ps excel in all areas except for the rather bright, hard treble. Bass is exceptional.
Spendor 2030	£599	Jun 96	Smooth, focussed and coherent in their delivery with deep, taut bass extension. Not the most spacious sound.
Systemdek 165	£400	Feb 96	Dry and clean sound, but can become hard and confused when pushed.
Tannoy Precision P10	£300	May 98	Though very even in their performance, the P10s lack ultimate clarity and punch.
Tannoy Profile 633 plus	£300	Nov 96	Weighty bass and rhythmic detail work well on dance. Less satisfying with classical music. Firm imaging.
TDL RTL 4	£650	Feb 95	Easy going with plenty of detail and timbral richness. Better with classical fare.
TDL T-line 2	£550	Jan 97	Midrange and treble have good tonal colour, detail and speed. Bass is slow and blurred.
Technics SB-M300	£350	Nov 95	A great sound with solid bass from a compact and well priced 'speaker.
Technics SB-M500	£450	May 96	Clean, dry and taut with good imaging and sound staging. More neutral than Mission's 752s but less euphonic.
Triangle Comete TZXe	£475	Jan 95	Quite pleasant, inoffensive sound but others costing less can offer more.
Wharfedale Valdis 500	£300	Oct 95	Good for adding scale and power to a weak system or budget separates.



JPW Ruby 2.



Soundcraft Absolute 4P.

£800-£1499			
Audionote E	£1450	Mar 95	Big, bulky and ultra-sensitive with quick pace and a well balanced sound, but not without flaws.
Audiovector M1 Sig.	£1479	Aug 98	The M1 Sigs may be a little laid-back, but they have a pleasant and involving sound.
Audiovector M2	£1499	Jun 98	The M2s are marred by a boom 'n' tizz presentation that suits Heavy Metal but not much else.
B&W CDM7	£999	Feb 98	With warm ancillaries the CDM7s produce a weighty, open sound. Bass could be faster.
Castle Howard S2	£1099	Mar 96	Fantastically deep and tight bass but some treble sharpness requires careful matching.
Celestion A2	£1499	Jun 98	Focus is not a strength, but bass extension and even tonality are. Metal tweeter can be bright.
Chario Academy One	£1199	Dec 95	Musical realism and a great real-wood finish make these 'speakers enjoyable, if not perfect.
Diapason Karis	£1250	May 99	Small cabinet precludes the deepest bass, but a sweet little act for all that. Seriously imaging abilities.
Epos ES22	£1185	Jun 98	Aside from a slightly cool balance, the ES22s shine. Dynamics, bass depth and control are tops.
Event 20/20BAS	£829	Sep 98	Warm, detailed and well-endowed in the bass, the Events lack only a touch of overall control.
Harbeth DPM1 Active	£849	Sep 98	Now HNB's Circle Actives, these loudspeakers mix the best of pro and domestic to produce first-class results.
Harbeth HL Compact 7	£1329	Jun 96	Dry and analytical but truthful with it. A first class monitor ideally suited to acoustic or classical music.
Harbeth HL K6	£975	Dec 96	Clean, musical and classy - Harbeth have done themselves proud again!
K&R Torino	£895	Jan 97	The Torinos' stylish sound won't shame any system. That powerful bass does need space to breathe properly though.
Kef Reference 1	£995	May 95	Beautifully fluid and integrated mid band and treble but can be slow, with a little loss of bass control.
KEF Reference 2	£1499	Jan 95	Handles rock and classical with equal aplomb, with the ability to reproduce detail that flummoxes many other models.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



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ANALOGUE	WAS	NOW	STATUS
LUXMAN PD445, SME III, Westrack Super build and sound quality	?	495	s/h
LUXMAN T-50 Lab Reference Tuner Hope I get to keep this myself!	?	495	s/h
Michell Gyro SE/ mod RB300 No s/h or rival comes close	940	795	new
DIGITAL			
Audio Note DAC-4 Signature Upgradeable to DAC-5 for £1,850 but why bother?	9,990	4995	ex-dem
Audio Meca (Pierre Lume) Transport Audio Synthesis DA-X DAC Both items mint, very cheap	?	1995	s/h
Mark Levinson No 39 Owner going home cinema. Near offer may be accepted	4,995	3995	s/h
Mission DiscMaster + DACMaster With PSX-R external PSU	2,100	795	s/h
PassLabs D1-DAC Months old, mint, amazing	5,250	2250	s/h
Pink Triangle da Capo Premium DAC 20 bit (1307)filter, 5400 upgrade to 24 bit	3,500	1495	s/h
Trichord DAC Just in	1,250	495	s/h
AMPLIFIERS			
conrad-johnson Premier 7B Final version of this classic Exemplary phono, all-tube pre-amp.	11k	4995	s/h
Graaf GM-200 OTL Mint, under 2 years, 2x 200w Worthy partner for 13.5B!	8k	3995	s/h
Gryphon S-100 Danish power with poise, truly Marvellous, far above the crowd	5975	2,500	s/h
Mark Levinson 380 Pre/334 (125w) Unique opportunity, with full Five-year warranty	9,500	6,900	ex-dem
PassLabs X-2 pre/ X-ONO Two box phono and line pre-amp Bal + true transistor single end	3,995	2,750	s/h
Sony Esprit TA-E900 pre-amp and TA-N 900 monoblocks Mint, box, manual, bargain!	12000	3,995	classic
SPEAKERS			
Infinity Reference 1b All-time US classic Upgraded & silver wiring	n/a	3,500	classic
Martin Logan Aerius Mint, under 2 years old	2,199	1,199	s/h
QUAD ESL63 - 2 samples Classic cult, affordable!	3,500	995	s/h

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CABLES DIRECT

In 1996 AudioSource advertised their high-end interconnects direct from factory. You can still "Try an £800 cable in your system for 28 days ... and keep it for £125!" Designer cables suffer from high research costs, and you pay for the prestige packaging, printing, magazine reviews, freebies, dealer profit and VAT on top.

Now we've signed up with America's JPS Labs. We heard the rest, we got the best!! Similar no-nonsense pricing in USA, we are not a middleman distributor. We sell at US domestic prices + VAT (plus a surcharge for UK mains plugs on their budget AC cord).

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Product of extended research into Conductivity and Contamination. Our top interconnects are OFC (not plated) microscopic-strands (130 per wire), bi-wire with separate OFC earth drain even on single-ended (RCA) stereo interconnects; industry lowest R, C, and H values; low leakage semiconductor. Low crosstalk by mylar foil and geometry. Twinned tin/silver solder for combined density and adhesion. Custom 3-T (time, temp, and twinned solder for audio transparency). Custom phono plugs machined from solid and levered centre pin, pincer earth grip, direct gold plating; interior pre-flux cleaned, exterior contacts enhanced. CONTAMINATION: triple passive screening achieves the industry's highest value of 85% against EMI and RFI, flat ribbon OFC earth braiding drained to source, in single-ended (RCA) cables; custom phono plug reflects interference; fluxing and cleaning minimises diode effect. Two further custom "C" points: anti-Corrosion coating stabilises HF skin effect, prolongs performance! And Cable Conditioning memory-aligns copper crystals for optimum burn-in. Full spec and a selection from our users comments available by post, e-mail, and maybe one day on our website.

JPS-LABS

Direct from the USA at domestic prices, we have been appointed exclusive UK direct dealer, bypassing the concept of national distributor in the age of the global market. Concentrating efforts on technology rather than marketing, JPS-Labs have a unique alloy combined with materials and techniques honed over ten years the characteristic sound is to breathe life into your system. On receipt of the dem stock library we dropped a JPS "loom" (AC cord, interconnect and speaker cable) into a known system, and the goose bumps and emotional swelling instantly banished our commercial fears. Much life was indeed breathed into the system. Of all AC cords tested, the JPS-Labs came out tops; we like the company so much, we couldn't buy it but became their UK distributor. There is literally nothing to touch their dedicated AC cords for analog, digital and power (amps) devices.

AUDIO NOTE

Legendary Stereo Interconnects (silver iliz not plated) 0.5m/ 1.0m:

AN-S with AN phonos	£89/139
AN-V with AN phonos	£129/199
AN-Vx solid silver plugs	£309/499
AN-Vz solid silver plugs	£799/1099

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Petros Blue Stereo Interconnect	
RCA plugs only	£40/ 48
+ Bal XLR or RCA	£52/ 58
+ST XLR or RCA	£62/68
Additional metre per pair	£25
+ST Digital XLR or RCA	£26/35

JPS-LABS

Stereo Interconnects 0.5 / 1.0m:

Single-ended, RCA to RCA:

The Ultra Conductor	£69/ 89
The SuperConductor+	£179/219
SuperConductor-2 WBT	£499
Fully-balanced, XLR to XLR:	
The UltraConductor 1m	£179
The SuperConductor+	£449
SuperConductor-2	£899

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Contact Cleaner	£15
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MADRIGAL

CZ Gel RCA or Bal 0.5m	£319
CZ Gel RCA or Bal 1.0m	£419
DIGITAL (1m, one piece):	
MDC-2 Fatboy RCA	£295
MDC-1 Balanced XLR	£295

MIT

STEREO INTERCONNECTS 1m:

MITerminator 3 Interconnect	£89
MITerminator 2 Interconnect	£129
MIT ProLine Balanced 1m	£249
Mi-330 Series Two	£299
Mi-330 ProLine Balanced	£495
MH-330+ Series Three	£499
Mi-330 SHOTGUN	£699
Mi-330 SHOTGUN Balanced	£849

DIGITAL (1m, one piece):

MITerminator 3 (RCA)	£ 99
MIT Digital Reference (RCA)	£320
MIT ProLine D.R. (XLR)	£695

FAVOURED AC CORDS

Audio Note Zero 2m	£25
BCD (Italy) shielded 1m	£95
1.5m, 2.0 m	£135/ £175
CAD (Wales) Candour	
1m/ 2m	£19/24
Conqueror 1m/ 2m	£46/62
JPS-Labs (USA) GPA UK 2m	£119
Analog UK 2m	£249
Digital (UK) 2m	£249
Power Lead UK 2m	£349
Kaptovator (UK) 2m	£999
LFD (England) Hi-amp 1.25m	£80
PC-OCC amp cord 1.25m	£85

MAINS BLOCKS

CAD Candour 4 way/6 way	£35/£55
CAD 4 way/ 6-way 1.0m	£64/ £94
4 way/ 6 way 2.0m	£79/110
s/plated fuse MK plugs	£3
Einstein 8-way analog/digital	£199
LFD 6-way/ 2.5m HI-amp lead	£250
Stands Unique 4-way plug	£10
With anti-surge	£20

AUDIOPHILE FURNITURE

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Audio Note

AN-D £9 per metre per channel; £18 bi-wire	
AN-L £29 per metre per channel; £58 bi-wire	
AN-SPa £150 per metre per channel	
AN-SP levels x and z: details on request	
Plugs or spades normally £3 each labour incl.	

JPS-Labs

Ultra Conductor 6/ 8ft	£130/ 145
Bi-Wire options 6 / 8ft	£230/ 255
SuperConductor+ 6/ 8ft	£649/ 749
Bi-Wire options 6/ 8ft	£749/ 859
SuperConductor-2	£1399/1699

MIT Audio Products

MITerminator 4 (8/10ft)	£119/129
Bi-Wire option (8/ 10ft)	£249/265
MITerminator 2 8/ 10ft	£239/260
Bi-Wire option 8/ 10ft	£399/425
MH-750 Series Three	£750/850
Bi-Wire option	£850/950
MH-750 SHOTGUN	£995/1150
Bi-Wire option	£1199/1350

Prices exclude interchangeable plugs from a wide choice of bananas, spades, etc.

Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

£800-£1499

Kelly KT3	£1199	Apr 98	The KT3s go very loud very easily but they don't possess the most even response.
Klipsch Heresy II	£1150	May 99	Horn and infinite-baffle hybrid with power to spare. Phasing and frequency accurate beyond belief.
KRK V8	£995	Sep 98	Ultra-detailed and revealing, the V8s are true pro more than domestic transducers.
Magneplaner MG 0.6 SE	£1370	Mar 95	Very clear detail and separation, but just fails to produce a fully 3-dimensional sound.
Magneplaner MG12/QR	£1200	May 99	Lightness of touch and clarity in trumps. Needs powerful amplification for 77dB/W/m. Not a valve speaker.
Mirage 890i	£1075	Oct 95	An easy going, open and natural sound makes the mirages an attractive proposition.
Mission 754 F5	£1299	Sep 96	Articulate and informative sound with fine imaging and tight, deep bass.
Mordaunt Short 860	£1450	Dec 95	Fast, tight and informative, but a poor tweeter casts a grey shadow.
Musical-Tech. Falcon	£955	May 96	Give a big sense of scale on rock and jazz but not subtle and even enough for the critical classical listener.
NEAR Soundmast	£1199	Aug 95	An interesting, musical floorstander that's good value even at this price.
Origin Live Sovereign	£1225	Jun 98	The OLs have transparency and detail in considerable amounts. Bass can be loose though.
PT Ventricle	£896	Aug 95	Smooth and refined floorstanders that some listeners will find captivating.
QLN Signature	£1499	Mar 96	Super sound staging, openness and detail. Well worth seeking out.
REL Stadium 2	£995	Aug 95	Excellent bass performance means that this subwoofer is no toy.
Roksan Ojan 3	£1000	Jan 98	Unusual speakers with great rhythmic capabilities and bass. Could be more transparent.
Ruark Paladin	£1099	May 95	The Paladins possess a detailed and expansive soundstage but also a rather dry character
Spendor 2040	£899	Oct 96	The tweeter works well but a recessed midband and one-note bass are the Achilles heels.
Spendor FL8	£1275	Jun 98	The FL8s are warm, mellow performers which prefer Classical to Rock.
Tannoy D300	£1000	Apr 97	Impressive bass extension and control with precise imaging make the D300s a snip at £1000.
Totem Model-1 Sig.	£1250	Sep 97	Good but the move from standard to Signature has taken speed and punch out of the Model 1s
UKD Callas Gold	£995	Jun 96	A rich and open sound, extremely musical if not strictly accurate. Great bass extension for their size.
UKD Divina	£1390	Jun 95	Not the most neutral speakers but they are extremely smooth with an overall coherence to the sound.
Veritas 7	£1000	Jun 99	Combine neutrality and detail with fluidity and sophistication.



Magneplaner MG12/QR.

£1500-

Audiovector 6	£4600	Jun 95	If you have enough room and money the 6s are capable of a highly musical, involving performance.
BKS 107 MkII	£1500	Dec 98	The 107 Mk2s may look slim but they have a solid sound and are fabulously revealing.
Cadence ES	£3500	Sep 95	Interesting design that incorporates an electrostatic tweeter. An impressive but inconsistent performer.
Celestion A3	£1800	May 97	The A3s are quite simply superb. All you'll need to enjoy them is a large enough listening room.
Epos ES25	£1505	May 95	An extremely coherent and focussed sound; these are true audiophile speakers. Captivating with classical music.
Harbeth HLS6	£1999	Mar 97	Glassy clarity, bright treble, with bass that comes alive when given welly. Expensive though.
Heybrook Octet	£1800	Jul 98	The Octets are smooth, laid-back floor standers. Lack speed and transparency.
Jamo Concert 11	£2000	Dec 97	A worthy bigger brother for the Concert 8s, with a fast, transparent and even sound.
Jamo Concert 8	£1500	Jun 97	The Concert 8s are superbly clean and transparent. Their nature will show up any source shortcomings.
JBL S2600	£3500	Jul 96	Smooth, detailed and spacious with scale, dynamics and imaging. Capable of producing a real performance.
Kef Reference 3	£2000	Nov 95	For superb reproduction within large rooms, the 3s are a force to be reckoned with.
Kef Reference 4	£3099	Oct 96	Superb bass and near-electrostatic soundstaging make these involving speakers a bargain.
Living Voice Auditorium	£1500	May 99	Their strengths suggest a Classical speaker but they suit electronic compositions better. Rich tone but loose bass.
Proac Studio 150	£1500	Mar 99	They may be musically engaging but the ProAc's brightness suits them best for smooth valve amplification.
Slate Audio Stormforce	£8000	Feb 99	The best home for a reflex-loaded Tannoy dual-concentric, but they don't come cheap!
Spendor SP7/1	£1970	Jan 95	Gorgeous looking. Listening becomes an enjoyable experience, full of surprises from subtleties.
Spendor SP9/1	£3400	Apr 96	One of the clearest and most expressive loudspeakers you'll ever find for a large room. Easy to drive, too.
Tannoy AMS8	£2702	Aug 96	Bold and powerful with solid bass, clearly focussed midrange and delicious treble. Well worth tracking down.
Tannoy D900	£3999	Sep 97	£4000 may be a lot to pay for a pair of speakers, but the Tannoys deliver to great effect in all areas.
Technics SB-M1000	£1500	Nov 96	Materially excellent value. Sound clean and extended but can lack involvement.
Thomas Transducers Brio	£4750	Feb 95	Capable of producing a captivating performance of lifelike proportions with a great air of naturalness.
Thomas Virtuoso Gold	£3395	May 98	Impressive horns that combine lightness of touch with power and clarity.



Jamo Concert 8.

Integrated £ Year Verdict

under £300

Alchemist Maxim	£299	Mar 96	Fluid and musical but upper bass is a little dry. Useful phono stage with but with a little sibilance and ringing.
AMC 3025	£150	Nov 96	A lot for very little money - sweet sound and good build make the AMC 3025 a great starter amp.
AMC 3050A	£170	Feb 98	Offers plenty of power for the money but sound quality is not class leading.
Arcam Alpha 5 plus	£250	Oct 96	Good with efficient loudspeakers but generally needs more power and control.
Arcam Alpha One	£230	Jan 99	In a smooth system with a warmish bias the Alpha One makes a strong case for itself.
Aura VA80	£279	Apr 95	Excellent value for money and will get the best from any component. Needs a separate phono stage.
Aura VA80 SE	£250	Mar 96	The Aura has a smooth, civilized sound with fine detail. Bass punch really rolls along. Good phono stage.
Cambridge A1 MkIII intg	£100	Jul 98	Involving and finely detailed, the Cambridge pushes forward the boundaries for inexpensive amps.
Denon PMA 250SE	£160	Feb 97	A mix of control, delicacy and detail allows it to excel with any music.
Denon PMA 425R	£230	Sep 96	Good drive, punch and an open soundstage, but suffers from confusion plus a thin midrange and treble.
Denon PMA 450SE	£280	Oct 96	Big and brutish but unfortunately bland with it. Something of a blast from the 1970s-80s past!
Harmon Kardon HK610	£180	Jun 95	Thorough-going down to earth liveliness. Bright but clean which gives appealing vivacity.
Harmon Kardon HK620	£280	Oct 95	Not quite a giant killer, the Harman is nevertheless a good solid budget buy.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Nu-Vista 300 power amplifier



X-P100 X-AS100 pre/power amplifier



X-A50 also available X-A200 monoblock power amplifiers



X-A1 also available X-A100R integrated amplifiers



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Integrated £ Year Verdict

under £300

Musical Fidelity E11	£299	Feb 98	A very capable integrated with a smoothness and warmth predisposed to classical rather than rock.
NAD 304	£239	Apr 95	Fine quality bass but rather lackadaisical as regards timing. Phono stage moderate. Needs careful matching.
NAD 310	£130	Jan 95	Good detail and a spacious open sound gives acoustic music and the majority of rock superb clarity.
NAD C320	£200	Apr 99	Younger sibling of the famous 3020 with many of its virtues to boot. Pre-eminently balanced and natural.
Pioneer A103	£130	Mar 95	Luxuriant presentation doesn't compensate for the tendency to un-rhythmic effects. MM phono stage.
Pioneer A300X	£230	Apr 95	Another highly capable all-rounder although a touch sterile sounding for some tastes.
Pro-ject 7	£259	Apr 95	On a budget, the Pro-ject has strong merit, including an excellent phono stage. Not for all systems.
Rotel RA 970BX	£250	Oct 96	Fresh sound with sharp attack. A slight midrange emphasis can make certain music sound rather forward.
Rotel RA 931	£150	Dec 98	For the money there's no faulting such a gifted performer.
Sony TAF446E	£250	Aug 95	bright clear and detailed, but needs a touch more refinement to prevail.
Technics SU A700 mkII	£250	Jan 97	A smooth unassuming sound misses out on the subtlety which brings music to life.

£300-£799

Affordable Valve EL34	£600	Feb 00	Low feedback integrated with plenty of slam. Not the ultimate in refinement but very good value for money
Alchemst Axlom	£300	Sep 95	Musically rewarding; deserves serious audition. Great British hi-fi on a budget.
AMC 3150A	£329	Nov 98	Not the most musical amp ever but good value. The tone controls and balance adjustment will appeal to some.
Arcam Alpha 6+	£350	Jan 96	Full and smooth sound, unfortunately with loose bass.
Arcam Alpha 9	£500	Dec 96	Excellent value. A detailed and open sound gives great atmosphere to all types of music
A. A. Puccini SE	£595	Dec 97	All the main ingredients like rhythm and dynamics present and correct. Natural smoothness and transparency.
Audio Analogue Puccini	£595	Sep 97	Excellent sound quality outstrips the competition at up to £1000.
Audiolab 8000A	£500	May 95	Manages the rare feat of sounding powerful and lithe at the same time. Bass taut but not the last word.
Audiolab 8000S	£700	Dec 97	Powerful hefty sound which doesn't blench when driving awkward loads.
Benchmark Roynon SIA 1	£680	Aug 96	Too thin and crisp which makes prolonged listening fatiguing.
Cyrus 3	£500	Oct 96	Highly refined and detailed performance with a clear well-proportioned soundstage.
Cyrus Straight Line	£398	Nov 98	A good, honest bit of kit with a fine musical sound and no glaring vices.
Densen Beat	£650	Dec 97	If a musical adrenaline rush is what you seek, fine. Listening in bulk, rather clinical and cold sounding.
Edmund ESI 10	£400	Apr 99	Solid build and a big sound make the ESI 10 worthy of audition. Not perhaps the transparent at the price.
Hofli Audis	£750	Jun 98	Powerful and refreshingly pure, a sound investment.
Kenwood KA-7090R	£400	Apr 98	Excels with sound staging but lacks subtlety and tonal colour.
LFD Mistral	£499	Jun 97	An extremely enjoyable, lucid little amplifier that really gets to the heart of the music.
Marantz PM-66 KI-S	£400	Nov 97	An enjoyable and rhythmic sound but may be too lean for some bass-light 'speakers.
Monrio MJ	£695	Jan 97	An engaging musical performance; sweet overall sound. Doesn't cope with difficult loads so well.
Moth 30 Integrated	£320	Jul 95	A big open sound sets the Moth apart at this price. Low powered, though. Distinctly amateurish looks.
Musical Fidelity X-A1	£480	Dec 98	Two boxes don't form a pre and power in the X-A1 but the result is nevertheless a winning combination.
Myrrad T-40	£399	Nov 98	Couple the Myrrad with a warm system and enjoy. Possibly a little lightweight on the Reggae & Rap side.
Nad 317	£470	May 97	With 80 watts on tap, the NAD has power aplenty but is rather dynamically limited and ultimately uninvolving.
Naim Nait	£500	May 95	Rather monochromatic with midband emphasis and slightly dry bass. Good imaging but smallish soundstage.
Oralle SA 100	£449	Jul 96	Clean, open, active sound. Smooth and detailed with good punch too. One of the best at the price.
Pioneer A-300R Precision	£400	Aug 97	A bargain at £400 pure and simple. Outclasses the competition in every area.
Pioneer A400X	£300	Oct 96	Complements all sorts of music with power and confidence. Outstanding value for money.
Quad 77	£595	Feb 95	Although classically orientated, the Quad will rock too. Precise and stable imagery and fidelity to tonal values.
Roksan Caspian	£695	Jun 97	Mixes the best of solid state and valve worlds (without valves!) to produce a seductive sound.
Rose Scion	£615	May 97	Great packaging and super sound make the Scion a winner.
Sonnesteer Campion	£579	Jan 96	Highly detailed and smooth sound. Worth searching out.
Sony TA-FB920R	£300	Feb 99	Partnered correctly to counterbalance its forwardness, the Sony offers a fast, rhythmic presentation.
Teac ABX7R	£700	Jun 96	Big and powerful sound, but a little unsubtle with it.
Technics SE-A900 MkII	£300	Mar 99	Nominally a separate pre and power, but the pre can't work alone. Exciting but unsubtle.

£800-

Audionote Sorb Se	£1999	Mar 95	Needs the right loudspeaker but a good musical presentation is in there somewhere.
Copland CSA 14	£1099	Apr 96	A sweet and subtle sound. Fine midrange; transparent and open with vocals.
Densen DM 10	£1299	Jun 95	Dual mono construction gives strong stereo separation. Brutal resolution of detail but not the clearest ever.
Exposure Super XV	£800	Oct 95	A stringy-sounding transistor amp for rock. Build and finish could be better and price lower.
Gamma Rhythm	£2499	Jul 96	Partnered with sensible loudspeakers of good bass depth, the Rhythm is capable of impressive performance.
Lavardin IT	£3200	Apr 99	Has clarity in spades and an extremely rare tonal purity. Outclasses many transistor alternatives with ease.
Mckintosh MA6800	£3735	Sep 95	A mighty confection of power, facilities and style, and it sounds good to boot.
Musical Fidelity A1001	£2499	Jun 98	Awsome power and seismic bass. A very good all-rounder with super-clean sound.
MVL Integral A2	£850	May 99	An excellent performer with any music. Adept at handling subtle details. Difficult to beat at the price.
Shearman Phase 2	£800	Apr 97	Even-handed performer deals confidently with music regardless of genre. Not as smooth as the best.
Sonic Fronteers Anthem	£1295	May 98	A characteristically competent and musical integrated. Prefers fairly efficient loudspeakers though.
Sonnesteer Alabaster	£900	Oct 97	Excellent high-end integrated with a real love of music and plenty of poke.
Teac AB X10	£1000	Sep 95	Very strong all round performer with excellent build and finish. Verging on the expensive though.
Unison Res. Simply 845	£2950	Mar 98	Allied to all the right 'speakers will handle all musical genres with smoothness and power.



Audio Analogue Puccini.



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Pre-amps £ Year Verdict

under £300

AMC 1100	£150	Mar 99	Tone controls cannot be defeated and the sum total is a little metallic but value in spades.
Creek OBH-11SE	£199	Apr 99	A very lucid, natural headphone amp which scores as highly on acoustic and Classical as it does on Rock.
Creek OBH-12	£200	Jul 98	Only poor cosmetics mar the Creek. Sonically it's a gem.
Moth 30 Passive	£149	Mar 99	Won't win prizes for best build but a flexible effort for a passive. Somewhat dry presentation overall.
Musical Fidelity X-Cans	£130	Mar 98	If you haven't yet experienced the world of quality headphone listening, the X-Cans is the way to start.
Musical Fidelity X-Pre	£200	Jan 98	A smooth, sweet and musical performer.
Musical Fidelity X-Tone	£120	Mar 99	Easy-to-use stand-alone modern tone control with subtle effect. Rather a bargain.
Project 7	£259	Feb 95	Immensely enjoyable and listenable, a rare mixture of sophistication and fun.
Rotel RC-971	£150	Mar 99	Five line-level inputs and tone controls make for a flexible unit. Partnered by the RB-971 power amp, very good value.
Technics SU-C1000MkII	£299	Apr 98	Needs slightly more taut bass and a less grainy midrange to bring it up with the best.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

£300-£799

Audio Analogue Bellini	£475	Apr 98	Organic and transparent. Free from transistor hardness.
Aura CA200	£749	Mar 97	A smooth and sweet sound devoid of roughness.
Crimson C5610C	£440	Nov 98	The phono stage is the main area of weakness. Can sound a touch muddled at times.
Croft Epoch	£600	Jun 96	A fine sounding preamp, but the phono stage is weak in the bass.
Cyrus Pre	£650	Feb 96	Pre-amplifier has plenty of facilities, but sounds a little unexciting and 'conventional'.
Heybrook Signature II	£549	May 97	Impressive smoothness and tonal colour, transparent as well.
PM Audio Lab L1S	£650	Dec 95	This valve pre-amp is very good value indeed.
Rothwell Indus.	£499	May 99	Passive pre of box-of-switches, whichever way you look at it the Indu is stylishly finished and well conceived.
Sumo Athena 31	£767	May 96	More valve-like than transistor in sound; highly competent if not spectacular.
Talk Hurricane 1	£500	Jun 97	Flexible with a strong controlled sound, but won't suit all tastes.
Technics SU-C1000	£350	Feb 97	Good when mains powered, even better running on its batteries. One to consider at the price.
Thorens TTA2000	£550	Jul 95	Poor sound quality and engineering let this pre-amp down. Pricy too.
Unison Res. Feather 1	£795	Aug 98	Warm but still exciting, it is only let down by a slightly recessed midrange



Musical Fidelity X-Tone.

£800-£1499

Audiolab 8000Q	£999	Jun 95	Highly recommended for its blend of operational sophistication, build and sound quality.
Etalon Preamp II	£1095	Feb 98	Smooth, even and transparent. Well worth the outlay.
John Shearpe Phase 6	£895	Sep 96	Matched with a smooth amp and speakers the Phase 6 is capable of a transparent and rewarding performance
Linn Wakonda	£900	Apr 98	In terms of musicality and involvement it falls short.
Meridian 502	£1295	Dec 96	Transparent, detailed sound with good tonal range and very natural presentation.
Musical Fid. Nu-Vista	£1200	Sep 98	A truly competent pre-amp whose high-end sound comes with a very reasonable price tag.
Naim NAC102	£999	Apr 97	This even-handed performer images well and deals confidently with music regardless of genre.
Quad 7741	£850	Jul 96	Bright and detailed, but phono stage is inadequate at this price.
TAG McLaren PA10	£850	Nov 98	Justifies its price with a very musical and revealing performance.
XTC Pre-1	£1000	Nov 96	This pre-amp is highly detailed and spacious.

£1500

Audiovalve PPP30	£1995	Mar 95	A bright and lean approach to the valve sound.
Canary 601 MkII	£1600	Apr 99	Very musical, very revealing. A credit to the valve tradition with considerable kick in reserve.
Chord CPA 1800	£1774	Mar 98	Has it all - detail, transparency, slam and rhythm. In a word excellent.
Final Music 5	£1500	Feb 99	Partner for the Final Music-6 power amp. Battery powered.
Focusrite Red 4	£2345	Feb 96	Smooth and detailed sound. Not as clinical as some professional amps can be.
Galactron Pre	£1630	Nov 95	Smooth, but dull balance makes it suitable for bright systems.
Marantz 7	£3500	Mar 97	Superb, combines delicacy and power, especially with a vinyl source.
Michel Orca	£1650	Oct 98	With its Panasonic pot, the Orca reaches new standards of transparency and involvement.
Unison Res. Mystery 2	£1750	May 98	Offers finesse, control and clarity for a very reasonable outlay.



Chord CPA-1800.

Power amps £ Year Verdict

under £800

AMC 2200	£150	Mar 99	Super value separate with first-rate sound staging. Midrange subtleties sometimes suffer but at this price ...!
Arcam 9P	£400	Dec 96	A detailed and open sound gives great atmosphere to all types of music.
Arcam Alpha 10P	£600	Jul 98	This power amp lags behind the best of the competition, and the build is flimsy.
Audio Analogue Donizetti	£575	Apr 98	As smart as an Armani suit, they sound powerful in a natural, organic manner
Aura PA100	£749	Mar 97	A smooth, sweet powerful sound free from the rough brightness that afflicts many solid-states.
Creek A43	£399	Mar 99	Shows what a skilled designer can do, even when hooked up with a passive pre. A very realistic approach.
Cyrus Power	£449	Feb 96	The Cyrus Power is simply impressive in all respects.
Linn LK100	£650	Apr 98	Well built, but judged purely on a musical basis they fall short.

AUDIO ANALOGUE

In just a short while, Audio Analogue has won plenty of admirers. When Hi Fi World tested the *PUCCHINI* Special Edition, they gave it their top star rating with the words

"Excellent sound quality ensures the *Puccini* S.E. outstrips the competition at up to £1,000". And the influential USA magazine *Stereophile* (Dec.98) praised its "harmonic richness, stunning purity of tone and sheer musicality". To top that,

the basic £475 *PUCCHINI* won Hi Fi Choice's Best Buy for amplifiers in an up-to £1,000 group test (Feb. '98). In their words: "This is a first-rate budget amplifier that looks and sounds like an altogether more costly model. Check it out". The *BELLINI* preamp and *DONIZETTI* power amp fared equally well. Ken Kessler in Hi Fi News (Jan. '98) had this to say. "A new benchmark in the value for money stakes". Now, we're proud to introduce you to the

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Prices shown are those at the time of review

Power amps £ Year Verdict

under £300

Linn LK240	£750	Aug 97	The LK240 plays tunes exceptionally well, tonal colour and image precision are not its fortes though.
Meridian 505	£795	Aug 97	Crisp, clear images are set in a broad spread between the 'speakers but the 505 lacks stage depth and grunt.
Monarchy SM-70	£595	Jan 99	The Monarchy is a smooth, warm amp most at home with 'speakers that are easily driveable.
Moth 30 Power	£249	Mar 99	Refined approach with the lighter acoustic music but lacking a little in overall clout.
Moth Stereo 60	£549	Dec 95	This power amp unfortunately suffers from sharp sounding treble and poor depth.
Musical Fidelity X-A50	£500	Jan 98	Very smooth, sweet and musical performers, not over-analytical but very involving.
Quad 77/67	£600	Jul 96	With good punch, speed and attack its not bad at all but can be a little uninspiring.
Rotel RB-971	£225	Mar 99	70 Watts a channel helps give lucid presentation with deep sound staging. Perhaps on the bright side.
Shearne Phase 3	£689	Apr 97	The Phase 3 possesses impressive clarity, detail and dynamics.
Talk Tornado 1	£500	Jun 97	A flexible power amp with a strong, controlled sound, but won't suit all tastes.
Technics SE-A1000	£400	Feb 97	Smooth, warm sound has plenty of grunt when needed and is very enjoyable to listen to.
Thorens TTP 2000	£500	Jul 95	Its best feature is the key on/off switch, otherwise its a case of poor sound quality and engineering.

£800-£1499

Chameleon Ruby	£995	Jan 96	Well specified and powerful, but dry and short of life. Suits Rock on bass-heavy 'speakers.
Chord SPM 400	£1325	Mar 98	This amp has it all - detail, transparency, slam and rhythm. In a word, excellent.
Crimson CS630C	£800	Nov 98	These monoblocs have a tonal richness and bass speed rare amongst powerful amps.
Croft Series V	£800	Jun 96	Fast, clear and detailed sound will win friends in both the transistor and valve camps.
Delph Da Capo	£1469	May 95	Quality bass and a clear midband but the treble can be harsh at high volume.
DPA 200S	£1245	Jul 93	Serious audiophile product at an affordable price. Well constructed, pleasant to use and fine sounding.
Galactron Power	£1200	Nov 95	Smooth sound but dull balance make the Galactron suitable for bright systems.
HD Audio Duo	£1185	May 95	Not dissimilar to the Audiolab monoblocs, the sound has a sweet top and amazing clarity.
Heybrook Signature II	£1051	May 97	Not quite as transparent as it could be but impresses with its smoothness and tonal colour.
Meridian 557	£1400	Dec 96	Great control and dynamics allied to seductive smoothness. A rare combination of power and delicacy.
Musical Fidelity X-A200	£1000	Aug 98	Hugely powerful and controlled, the X-A200s are still superbly musical.
MVL Integral A2	£895	May 99	An excellent performer with any music. It is hard to imagine the A2 being beaten at the price.
Myryad MA120	£1000	Apr 96	The sound is a somewhat acquired taste and a little rough in places.
Omak Jewel One	£899	Jul 95	A lot of amplifier for the money. Big, warm, sweet sound places it ahead of most.
Quad 707	£800	Jul 97	The 707 embodies a rare blend of grace and power in its sleek grey casework.
Rothwell Rubicon	£949	May 99	Low on power at 8 watts but fairly musical for all that. Good resolution of detail and texture.
Sumo Polaris III	£898	May 96	More valve-like than transistor in sound; highly competent if not spectacular.
TAG McLaren 60P	£850	Nov 98	Fully justifies the cost with a very musical and revealing performance.
VRR Adur	£1495	Jun 95	Lovers of light piano-based fare and Baroque music will appreciate this amp's delicacy.

£1500-

Audiovalve LC8	£1995	Mar 95	Eschews the traditional lavish tube sound for a brighter and leaner approach.
Canary 301	£3055	Nov 98	The 301 puts the 300B's traditional virtues to good use in a push-pull design that will drive most loudspeakers.
Cary 300B SE	£3975	Feb 95	Cary have a winning amplifier that is a prime example of how a 300B can sound.
Etalon Ampli	£2925	Feb 98	Very natural, substantial presentation with lots of power on tap.
Final Music 6	£1500	Feb 99	Battery powered amp puts convincing scale and three-dimensionality into suitably sensitive loudspeakers.
Focusrite Red 5	£2057	Feb 96	Powerful, smooth and detailed sound. Not as clinical as some professional amplifiers can be.
Gamma Aeons	£4999	Apr 97	Sound quality of these monoblocs is impressive but marred by a rather obvious hum. Build could be better.
Marantz 9	£8000	Mar 97	These monoblocs are superb, producing a beguiling performance of great control and verve.
Michell Alecto	£1989	Oct 98	The new Alecto is crisper, cleaner and more controlled than earlier incarnations.
Orchid RC750	£6600	Aug 96	A powerful grip on usic, but articulate and detailed too. A rare combination.
Shearne Phase 1	£1999	Oct 94	Good sound quality and an impressive tonal balance.
Sugden Symetra	£1550	Oct 96	The Symetra monoblocs impress with their grip. They run hot and sound warm.
Tube Technology Genesis	£2599	Jun 94	Valve monoblocs that produce explosive bass, midrange as clear as a bell and shimmering treble.
Unison Res. Smart 300B	£4250	May 98	Powerful, neutral sounding amps thanks to their modified 300B valves, but a little expensive for the same reason.
Unison Res. Power 35	£1525	Aug 98	A great compromise between delicacy, power and practicality. Very musically satisfying, too.
Vadis S15	£2350	Jul 98	The S15's purity and clarity are impossible to beat for the money. Bass is not brilliant, but still better than most.
XTC POW-1	£2000	Nov 96	This power amplifier is smooth and seductive, although a little pricey.

CD Players £ Year Verdict

under £300

AMC CD8	£150	Oct 97	The CD8 is free from grain but can sound too polished at times.
Cambridge CD4SE	£200	Feb 98	Natural and very life-like, the CD4SE embarrasses many pricier players.
Denon DCD-425	£150	Apr 97	Crisp, up-beat player which is inconsistent in its overall presentation.
Denon DCD-635	£180	Feb 98	Rhythmically slick and dynamic, the Denon errs to the cool side of neutral.
Denon DCD-835	£280	Nov 98	Warm and smooth, the 835 is laid-back rather than in-your-face.
Grundig CD3	£240	Sep 94	Great for simple Jazz and Folk, but soft bass slows things down.
JVC XL-V230	£157	Jan 99	Slightly muddled in the bass, the '230 isn't the most rhythmic of players.

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CD Players £ Year Verdict

under £300

Kimwood DP-3080	£180	Feb 98	One of the best budget all-rounders there is. A shade treble-heavy.
Kimwood DP-3010	£180	Jan 99	A fine performer. Lacks only some of the spirit of its predecessors.
Marantz CD-63	£249	Jun 94	Upholds the Marantz tradition of lively CD players.
Marantz CD-67	£270	Nov 96	Fine vocal projection and treble. Bass is deep if not that tight.
NAD 510	£200	Oct 95	Hard to criticise at the price, with a typically smooth, fluid NAD sound.
NAD 520	£170	Jan 99	Warm and smooth, this is a cultured player. Can be over-civilised at times.
Philips CD721	£130	Feb 96	Not the most accurate machine, but holds its own at the price.
Pioneer PD-100	£140	Feb 95	Rolled-off treble limits detail. Light bass retains foot-tapping ability.
Quad 87	£?	May 93	One of the top players at the price with great speed and grip.
Rotel RCD-948BY	£230	Oct 94	Controlled and invigorating player albeit a touch sterile.
Teac CD-P3450SE	£200	May 97	Refuses to become flustered. Can lack emotion as a result, though.
Teac CD-P3500	£249	Nov 92	Like many of its contemporaries, the Teac is too smooth to shine.
Technics SL-PG400A	£100	Jan 99	In spite of a bias towards bass and treble, this machine remains a bargain.
Technics SL-P5570D	£200	Feb 98	Typical Technics' bright and bassy sound. Prefers Dance and Rock.
Yamaha CDX-440	£200	Mar 95	Mature, laid-back machine drops points for inferior timing and imaging.
Yamaha CDX-500	£230	Feb 98	Detailed, refined but not particularly engaging or exciting.
Yamaha CDA-593	£180	Jan 99	Lean and up-front, the Yamaha is Involving on Rock but can sound rough.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

£300-£799

AAC CDM7	£340	Jun 96	Very musical outfit which gains sweetness with optional valve output stage.
Arcam Alpha 7	£320	Jan 97	Superbly-designed, instinctively musical player destined for success.
Arcam Alpha 8SE	£599	Jun 98	The 8SE builds on the strengths of the standard 8 with HDCD filtering.
Arcam Alpha 9	£799	Dec 98	Apart from its tonal brightness, the Alpha 9 is a very capable machine.
Audio Analogue Paganini	£749	Apr 99	Effortless, wholly musical delivery. The Paganini does for CD replay what its stablemate Puccini does for amplification.
Audio Innovations Alto	£449	May 96	Grainless treble is detailed but the Alto misses that vital emotional spark.
Audio CD70C	£450	Jul 93	High measured distortion mars the treble and bass is dry.
Cyrena CD43	£499	Oct 98	A competent player with a musicality that will seduce any music-lover.
Cyrena IAD 1.5	£398	May 99	Great detail and imaging with intimate music. Classical and Jazz suit the 1.5 best but Rock can sound harsh.
Cyrus IAD3	£598	Dec 96	Lacklustre with Classical, dramatic and lively on Dance and Rock.
Design CD-1350A2	£350	Jul 98	Clean and precise, the Denon lags only in warmth and openness.
Harman/Kardon HD730	£300	Aug 96	Strong on dynamics and drive, but lifeless treble can dampen music.
Linn MkIII	£798	Apr 95	Tonally hard but possesses many, if not all, of the Linn rhythmic strengths.
Marantz CD-33 KI Sig.	£500	Sep 96	This is a rare player, greater than the sum of its parts.
Marantz CD-63SE	£350	May 95	Taken as a whole, the CD-63SE is one hell of a CD player. No digital nasties.
Myryad T20	£600	Dec 98	With its brightness balanced by warm ancillaries the T20 will win friends.
Orion CD100a	£650	Mar 97	Clean and tidy on electronic music. Not so good with acoustic material.
Pioneer PD-5904	£400	Sep 96	Fluid midrange leads a dry bass and tonally-limited treble.
Rotel RCD-948BY	£375	Dec 94	Fast, clean sound verges on the clinical at times.
Rotel RCD-971	£350	Sep 98	Refinement is a plus point, but lack of vitality holds the Rotel back.
Rotel RCD-975	£450	Sep 96	Tuneful, pungent bass are the pros, flat sound staging and tone the cons.
Sony CDP-X3000ES	£500	Mar 98	Neutral, dynamic and stylish but not quite up with the best.
Sony CDP-XF300E	£300	Mar 97	In spite of fine sound staging and clarity, the Sony fails to involve.
Teac CD-5	£350	Jan 96	Clean and dry, the Teac is rather sterile compared to the competition.
Technics SL-P5840	£450	Sep 95	Not the last word in bass control. Midrange is more persuasive.
Thule CD100	£600	Apr 99	A very smooth and refined player with the added bonus of good detailing. Can lack rhythmic bite at times.
Trichord Genesis	£549	Sep 96	Warm and bassy, but extremely natural. Not the most consistent player.
Trichord Revelation	£799	May 97	When it's good, it's very good indeed. Can get confused on dense mixes.



Sony CDP-X3000ES.

£800-£1499

Audio 8000	£1000	Dec 96	Sweet treble and full midrange give the 8000CD a lucid sound.
Copland CDA 266	£1199	Feb 99	Perhaps lacks the last ounce of strength on Rock, nonetheless has winning all-round ability.
Cosmos CDP12	£1279	Dec 97	Its warm, musical sound plus HDCD compatibility are a strong combination.
Cyrus dAD-7	£899	Jan 95	Up with the best at the money, the Cyrus simply sounds 'right'.
DPA Renaissance	£895	Jun 95	Breathaking imagery and dynamics. Not strictly accurate, but who cares?
Harman/Kardon HD7725	£800	Jan 94	Construction is price-correct, but not the excessively relaxed sound.
Haybrook Signature	£989	Oct 97	The Haybrook loses out because of its rough treble and lack of clarity.
Helix Xara	£950	May 98	It's not cheap but the Xara scores for firm bass and exciting presentation.
LFD Mistral	£999	Nov 97	The Mistral is outclassed in areas like pace and bass depth.
Marantz CD-17	£800	Mar 96	The CD-17 has a presentation which excels in musicality and lucidity.
Marantz CD-17 KI-S	£1300	Sep 97	The KI-S has a valve-like smoothness and clarity.
Meridian 503	£875	May 95	Characteristically dry Meridian balance which could do with more emotion.
Musical Fidelity X-Ray	£800	Feb 99	Bright, clear and well-built, the X-Ray's transparency can be hard on poor recordings.
Pink Triangle Numismat	£1099	Apr 98	This very natural one-box fully justifies its £1000 price tag.
Quad 77	£850	Nov 95	Competent, entertaining machine with neat styling and remote.
Russian Caspian	£895	Aug 97	The Caspian is a gifted player well worth its asking price.
Supra SDT-1	£850	Mar 93	A superb all-rounder with particularly convincing rhythms.
Teac VRDS-10SE	£850	Apr 96	Draws you into the music. Soundstaging fine but treble is a little bright.
Teac VRDS-25	£1300	Aug 96	Solid build doesn't make up for sound which lags in integration and detail.
UTC CDP-1	£1250	Dec 97	Rhythmically satisfying, but can sound hard in the wrong system.



Marantz CD-63 KI-S.

CD Players £ Year Verdict

£1500-

Anthem CD1	£1600	Mar 98	Sweet sound and numerous features make the Anthem fine value for money.
Burmester 937	£5460	Sep 94	Amongst the best with its belt-drive transport.
Marantz CDM7000	£2635	Dec 95	Unmatched quality from CD at a high but fair price.
Meridian 508.24	£1995	Jul 98	The 508.24 is one of the top performers at its price.
Naim CD2	£1998	Apr 97	CD2 excites at the expense of subtlety. More at home in a Naim system.
Pink Triangle Litural	£2099	Feb 98	One-box player with sound capable of mixing it with the best.
Teac CD-X1	£2300	Jun 92	You'll either love or hate this machine's great flair and confidence.



Roksan Caspian CD.

Turntables £ Year Verdict

Under £800

Cleanaudio Solution	£750	Feb 99	If you seek powerful presentation with musicality over absolute finesse, this could be the answer.
Linn Bak	£400	Sep 94	Definitely a turntable for devotees of attack and strong bass lines. Not strong on imaging.
Marshall Gyrodisk SE	£775	Apr 99	Great sound, superb build and excellent upgradability make the 'spider' a wonder at the price.
Michael Myers	£539	Jan 94	Silent and beautifully made, with transparent reproduction.
NAD 532	£200	Nov 94	Based on a Rega Planar 2. Both pleasant to use and look at with a mature sound, all for £200.
Pink Triangle Taranella	£575	Oct 97	Simply the best at the money. Combines PT's customary transparency with real authority.

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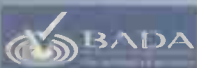
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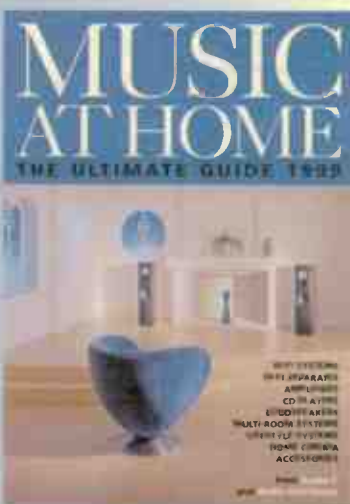
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Prices shown are those at the time of review

Turntables £ Year Verdict

Under £800

Project 1.2	£200	Jun 97	A bargain at £200 with its substantial and involving sound.
Project 6	£350	Dec 93	Involvement and rhythm are priorities. Highly recommended.
Project 6.1	£435	Sep 94	The 6.1 gives a very full, strong sound. A very exciting deck.
Systemdek 202	£500	Aug 96	Clear and precise sound through midrange and treble puts it up with more expensive rivals.
Systemdek KK300	£415	Sep 94	Detailed sound stage and broad imaging with a good, even range of tonal colour.
Systemdek MK2	£450	Jan 93	Combined with an SME 309 it achieves great results, with a massive sound stage.
Thorens TD166 Mid	£405	Sep 94	Tonally smooth with a warm midrange, but a little too laid back.
Thorens TD180	£180	Feb 95	A good, basic budget bargain.
Thorens TD200 Mid	£199	Jun 93	Superbly lucid and clear midrange, but lower reaches are a little lightweight.
Virtual Reality Reson 6.1	£600	Nov 95	With fine detail resolution, transparency and a neutral balance the Reson rs1 represents super value.
VW Junior	£500	Oct 97	The Junior is a very good deck indeed, with an assured and involving sound.

Turttables £ Year Verdict

£800-

Alphason Symphony	£1860	Nov 92	The Symphony has to be one of the best the British can offer. It's expensive, but a true sophisticate.
Michael Orbe	£1950	Apr 95	Fast and detailed with crisp sheer treble and clean, deep bass.
Opus 3 Continuo/Caritas	£900	Oct 95	Solid as a rock and almost as heavy, it's a satisfying performer, but not quite the best.
Origin Live Oasis A	£950	Dec 98	Nice looks and a good sound, but can be bettered on price.
Origin Live Oasis B	£2250	Oct 98	The Oasis-S is a cool, lean but very transparent performer thanks to battery power. Up against strong competition.
Pre-Ject Perspective	£900	Aug 98	Aesthetically, the Perspective is a winner, but better sound can be had from cheaper decks.
RT Anniversary	£2390	Oct 96	With its battery supply and ultra-quiet DC motor, the Pink displays great accuracy and neutrality. A top-flight deck.
Roksan Xerxes X	£1295	Jan 97	An undoubted bargain and class leader in all areas with a precise, confident and well-balanced sound.
SME Model 30	£2500	Oct 92	This is a deck for those with a substantial record collection who demand the best. Exemplary sound.
Technica SL-1200 LTD	£1000	Apr 97	Looks expensive at £1000, but don't let that put you off the capable standard version.
William Demach	£1775	Jul 96	Gives a technically excellent rendition but fails to really communicate the emotion in music.
WVA Benedich Full Circle	£2000	Mar 98	Offers clarity in abundance with a natural ease. Looks gorgeous too.

Phono stages £ Year Verdict

Under £500

Creek OHS 852/OHS 2	£160	Nov 97	One of the best MC phono stages on the market at the price
Creek OHS 850/OHS 1	£110	Nov 97	Smooth and truly musical, exceedingly worthy entry-level phono stage.
Denon DP Dena-DP-02	£350	Sep 97	A beautifully made, fine sounding device that looks great too.
EAR 8-AP	£340	Oct 94	Very fine phono stage with precise imagery and a bargain at the price.
Lohmann Black Cube	£395	Oct 98	Capable of involvement, neutrality and insight usually the preserve of stages three or four times the price.
LFD Mikrok	£299	Sep 97	The most lucid and musical budget phono stage around - a true audiophile bargain.
Mosconi Fidelity X LP	£130	May 99	First-class inexpensive phono stage. MM and MC inputs catered for. Low on distortion, high on clarity, build legendary.
NAD PP1	£40	Sep 98	At this price the NAD is an accomplished all-rounder. Slowish bass will suit leaner systems though.
QED Discoverer	£35	Jan 97	A bargain. Beguilingly musical presentation, with more than enough detail and power for a mere £35.
Rolod RC-8700X	£130	Nov 94	Combine with a good cheap line level integrated and it will show you how good vinyl can be.
Sedley Sedley MC/MM	£399	May 98	The Sedley combines transparency and fine dynamics with excellent rhythmic ability.

£500-

Anthem Pre 1P	£899	Aug 98	Despite a sizeable price tag the Anthem offers a smooth, lucid sound and superb build quality.
Audio Innovations PC	£749	Feb 96	Fantastic bass and super insight make this one of the best phono stages around.
AudioLab 800/PPA	£800	Oct 94	Instruments can have a somewhat flat perspective, but excellent clarity
DPH DSP 2000D	£495	Oct 94	Could be too forceful for some, but with excellent detail and extremely powerful bass.
Kilshaw Perception	£525	Oct 94	Extremely impressive results, especially with MM cartridges.
Linn Linn	£850	Oct 97	Maries beautifully into the Linn family, but not too hot with other components.
Michael Leo	£528	Oct 94	Gives a thoroughly cohesive picture of a recording with a very tight and rhythmical bass.
Michael Leo HH	£850	May 93	Perhaps too good for some record collections. Extremely revealing.
Roksan Artefact/eaD50	£945	Oct 97	Doesn't worry about genre, it just gets on with the job of making music in an enjoyable way.
Sedley Sedley Phono 1	£2000	Apr 96	Expensive, yes, overpriced, no. The Phono 1 is a superb all-round phono stage.
Urban Simply Phono	£495	Mar 96	Liquid sound with great dynamics, but a little hissy and muddled too. Beguiling, but not perfect.

Cartridges £ Year Verdict

Under £200

Clemtudio Alpha	£130	Apr 99	Tends to sound quite hard at the top but imaging and detail are good. Best in a warm system.
Denon DL103H	£110	Aug 97	First manufactured in 1963, it sounds mature and sure-footed rather than over the hill.
Denon DL110	£65	Mar 94	May be a little soft-natured for some. Splendid dynamics and an even tonal balance.
DNM Mica	£185	Feb 98	Better Goldring's 1042 without difficulty. MC quality from an MM.
Goldring 1042	£90	Jan 93	One of the best MMs at the price with strainless delivery.
Goldring 1012GX	£80	Jul 93	Great with Rock music, the 1012GX is the best value low-price MM.
Grand Prix/Silver	£119	Apr 97	Good tracking and inoffensive sound, but somehow lacks sparkle in any department.
Linn K3	£58	Sep 94	Rhythmic bite compensates for a lack of vibrancy in music (MM).
Ortofon NAD	£100	Jan 93	Smooth operator and very good value for money (MM).
Ortofon MC15 Super II	£110	Mar 95	In the right system, can be masterful with its dry and accurate response.
Ortofon MC15E	£170	Sep 95	A considerable achievement that adds true verve a pizzazz to the MC15 Super II
Roksan Conus Black	£120	Jan 93	Light and dry presentation with good presentation (MM).
SME Shure III	£185	Sep 97	If you like the V15 you'll love the Brazen. Works well with an SME 3009.

£200-

Cartridge Man Music Moving Iron	£549	Feb 99	Good price, high output and a winning musicality make this Moving Iron cartridge the one to beat.
DNM Linn	£1300	Jan 99	A Goldring make-over that tracks well and sounds good. Pricey, though.
DNM Rika MM Cartridge	£255	Jun 98	This betters the Mica, has super-MM virtues.
Dynavector DV20X-H	£299	May 99	Delightfully musical sound makes the Dynavector a very strong contender in the budget MC stakes.
SMT H5T4	£850	Oct 96	Solid bass and smooth, musical sound make this rare MC cartridge worth the money.
Goldring Easel Vx	£495	May 97	Has fine midrange clarity, but is bettered in other areas by cheaper competitors.
Linn Aklye	£1200	Dec 97	Linn fans will love it but it's up against strong competition.
Ortofon	£489	Jun 95	Sumptuous sounding cartridge that borders on the bass heavy but has a good feel for music.
Linn Lydian	£649	Jun 95	Extremely smooth, civilised MC with no obvious weaknesses.
Ortofon Jubilee	£1250	Mar 99	Detailed, musical and sure-footed, the Jubilee goes a long way towards justifying its elevated price tag.
Ortofon MC25P	£225	Sep 95	Delightfully sweet, musical sound with added refinement on FL that takes some beating.
Ortofon MC20 Supreme	£450	Jun 95	Involving yet refined presentation but some could feel it's slightly coloured.
Ortofon Rotational	£1000	Apr 96	A top quality MC with superb tonal quality and excellent imagery.
Shure V15VMS	£295	Mar 97	Warm, dynamic rendition of music with great detail and impact (MM).
Transfiguration Spirit	£1000	Jul 98	A balanced all-rounder that misses out only on the last ounce of detail and bass weight.
Van Den Hul MC10	£840	Jun 95	The MC10 is very hard to fault. A honey, pure and simple.
VDH Grasshopper IV	£3750	Dec 95	Allows music to flow with superb fluidity and reveal things which were previously unheard - at a price!



Pink Triangle Tarantella.



Sonic Frontiers Phono 1.



van den Hul Grasshopper.

Tone arms £ Year Verdict

Hadcock GH 228 SE	£595	Dec 98	Construction won't worry SME but its sound quality will unsettle a lot of the competition.
Origin Live RB3750/RB380	varies	Nov 97	These modified arms are a considerable improvement on the originals
EME 300	£689	Jan 93	Tight, neutral sound with good tonality, but lacks the IVs pace and precision.
SME IV	£828	Mar 92	Sexy chassis and staggering engineering along with potent performance earn it a place in audio history.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Tuners £ Year Verdict

Under £300

AMC TT	£130	Jul 97	Although it has a tempting price, its sound quality is poor compared with its rivals.
Arcam Alpha 7	£230	Mar 97	An attractive, smooth sounding tuner that won't break the bank.
Cambridge T500	£180	Feb 99	The T500 is one of the most gifted tuners under £500; a very accomplished all-round performer.
Marantz/Kardon TJ 950	£200	Jul 96	Sound quality is generally impressive. Let down by a rather constricted sound stage, but still good value.
Kenwood KT-2080	£130	Feb 97	Smooth, even balance allows the KT-2080 to convince with whatever it's receiving. £130 well spent.
Marantz ST-57	£150	Oct 97	The ST-57 is a smooth, warm tuner but lacks a little clarity and transparency.
Mission Crystal FM7	£299	Apr 94	Musical, communicative and extremely detailed and a steal at the price.
MAD 412	£190	Jun 96	A remarkably musical, natural sounding tuner. Unbeatable at the price, or even twice the price for that matter.
Onky T411	£160	May 94	A competent machine, but time has taken its toll on the sound quality.
Rega Radio	£230	Jan 95	Sounds on the whole more than its price, but in other respects it isn't especially competitive.
Real RT-930AX	£175	Aug 94	The RT-930AX is a glowing little bargain. real quality at a very realistic price.
Sony ST-5A9ES	£250	Apr 97	The Sony is worth every penny of its asking price. If you're a fan of radio this is one to go for.
Silly ST-SE700	£180	Aug 97	The ST-SE700 is one of the best at this price. LW reception is a welcome bonus.
Technics ST-CT-350L	£140	Jun 95	Not a bad buy at all and a very good fit for budget and mid-price systems.
Yamaha TX380 RDS	£200	Feb 95	If you want something for casual listening with superior aesthetics, this might be the one for you.



Hadcock 228 SE.

£300+

Adcom GFT 355 2	£395	May 93	Quite musical but does not rejuvenate the waves! Good solid performance but less than luxurious.
Bismarck 801	£4347	Nov 94	This is not a cheap tuner, but its cheaper than buying a radio station, which is the only possible alternative.
Crack T43	£399	May 98	A great little tuner. This is the one in the price bracket.
Danon TU 510	£400	Mar 98	A stylish, well-built tuner which has a detailed sound but needs careful partnering
Fanfare FT 1	£1350	Mar 95	Whether it's sweaty disco or symphony hall, the Fanfare comes up to scratch.
Kenwood KT-625Q	£300	Oct 95	A good value, excellent sounding rds tuner, but lacks full EON facilities
Linn Kramlin	£1645	Mar 92	Commendable basic performance but, considering the price there are limitations.
Magnat Dynalab FT131A	£749	Apr 92	Worth auditioning but bass rather dry and light.
Marantz ST-17	£600	May 99	Knock-out build quality and rich velvety sound. Poor-signal mute a bit too enthusiastic.
Morden 504	£660	Mar 96	A clear, natural sound with good punch. Has strong rivals at the price, but acquires itself well.
Micromega Tuner	£700	Jul 95	An unusual design from Micromega that's well built but sonically unrewarding and expensive.
MAD 302	£330	Jul 94	Well worth auditioning, even if you've never previously considered a receiver.
Naim NAT 03	£499	Sep 93	Soft and pure, especially across the midband. Speech very well reproduced plus solid weighty bass.
Nakamichi BT3S	£350	Dec 94	Looks good, but the sound quality isn't really worth the asking price.
Pioneer F-50ARDS	£300	Dec 98	One sole mark against the class-leading transparency is its slightly dry character.
Pioneer F-50AFD1	£350	Nov 95	Well engineered and competent tuner, but a little uninspiring.
Rotel Michi HMT 0	£895	Mar 94	This classy looking tuner can hold its head up high amongst the best tuners at the price.
Real RT-930BZ	£500	Apr 95	The price of twenty concert tickets, and for that you can listen as if you were there. A bargain.
TAG McLaren T20	£1100	Mar 99	Extremely well built with a lucid if slightly dry sound. The only real drawback is the high price.
Technics TTT-2303	£500	Dec 97	An otherwise competent tuner is let down by a rather processed character.



Rotel Michi Tuner.

Cassette £ Year Verdict

Under £300

Alwa AD-F980	£150	Apr 98	No Dolby S, but three heads and two capstans make the Alwa a bargain.
Danon DRM-500	£160	May 96	Good enough for the price and no worse than the competition.
Danon DRM-610S	£230	Aug 95	Top sound quality with ferric and chrome makes this deck a steal.
Grundig GF4	£250	Jan 95	Fair on pre-recordeds, OK when recording, but speed stability isn't great.
JVC TD-V662	£300	Sep 98	Only the lack of Dolby S conspires against the otherwise excellent JVC.
Kenwood KX-5080S	£200	Jan 97	Stable transport gives fine results on metal and chrome. Rough on ferrics.
Mad 613	£230	Jan 96	Decent playback and good recording when used carefully.
MAD 614	£270	Sep 95	Excellent electronics are let down by a low-grade transport.
Rotel RD-908RX	£230	Oct 95	A solid, competent machine which is reasonable value for money.
Sony TC-K311	£150	Dec 93	Auto-tuning is mediocre and the general results are unexceptional.
Sony TC-K496	£170	Jan 93	A mix of average heads and electronics doesn't make for happy taping.
Teac V-610	£100	Apr 97	The V-610's performance matches its price well, but audiophile it isn't.
Teac V-608	£150	Sep 94	Satisfactory for in-car recordings, but the low price shows.
Yamaha KY-580 SE	£250	Sep 97	The '580 lives up to its SE tag with a fine performance in all areas.

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Linn Karik CD Player (1YR warranty)	(1597.00)	£895.00	TAG PPA20 Phono Pre Amp (2Yr G/tee)	(1499.00)	£1095.00
Linn Numerik DAC S/H (1YR warranty)	(1200.00)	£799.00	TAG PA10 Pre Amp (2YR warranty)	(849.00)	£599.00
Linn Keilidh inc Stnds (Blk) S/H (2 Yr G/tee)	(985.00)	£445.00	TAG PA20R Pre Amp (2YR warranty)	(1499.00)	£1039.00
Quad 606 Power Amp S/H	(750.00)	£459.00	TAG 60P Power Amp (2YR warranty)	(899.00)	£599.00
Naim NAC 72 Pre Amp (2YR Warranty)	(767.00)	£569.00	TAG 100P Power Amp (2YR warranty)	(1099.00)	£799.00
Naim NAC 102 Pre Amp (2YR warranty)	(1110.00)	£835.00	TAG 125 Mono P/Amps pair (2Yr G/tee)	(2398.00)	£1999.00
Naim NAP 140 Power Amp (2YR warranty)	(793.00)	£589.00	Pioneer 515 DVD Player (NEW)	(399.00)	£299.00
Naim NAP 180 Power Amp (2YR warranty)	(1122.00)	£839.00	Roksan Attessa CD Player S/H	(1390.00)	£549.00
Naim NAP 135 P/Amps pair (2YR warranty)	(3510.00)	£2590.00	Rega XEL Speakers (BLK) (WOW!)	(1040.00)	£479.00

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Panasonic DVD.



Sharp 722 portable.



Sonic Frontiers 3.

Cassette £ Year Verdict

£300-

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Aiwa AD-S950	£300	Feb 95	Vice-free playback is mirrored by impressive recording.
Denon DFS-610	£300	Jan 92	On the right tapes, the Denon repays with delightful sound quality.
JVC TD-V1010	£400	Sep 92	Disappointing on replay but recording is another kettle of fish altogether.
Kennwood RX-7000S	£330	Dec 94	Convincing all-rounder except for heavy-handed noise reduction.
Nakamichi 1.5	£500	Jan 92	The Cassette Deck 1.5 has no rivals in its ability to recreate a realistic performance.
Nakamichi DR-1	£780	Jun 93	Not perfect but as close as you can get for the money.
Nakamichi DR-3	£300	Mar 93	Unfortunately keeping the price down keeps performance below Nak's norm.
Onkyo TA250	£350	Oct 94	Top transport but the electronics aren't on a par.
Pioneer CT-95	£1000	Mar 97	On chrome and ferric, the '95 is smooth and natural. Not so good with metals.
Pioneer CT-5500S Precision	£340	Feb 99	Three heads, ease of use and high quality make the Dolby S equipped Precision a strong contender.
Pioneer CT-S740S	£430	Jun 96	Complex but superb in every important area.
Sony TC-K611S	£330	Feb 94	Muffled on pre-recordeds but pulls out all the stops on recordings.
Teac V-6030S	£550	Nov 97	Solid build and solid sounds. Top-notch at the price.
Teac V-8000S	£650	Aug 95	One of the highest quality Dolby S decks available.
Technics RS-AZ7	£300	Jul 96	Excellent bass but mid and treble lack dynamics. Auto-tunes poorly on metal.

DVD £ Year Verdict

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Denon DVD-3000	£700	Aug 98	The Denon is a fine performer with CD and better still with 24/96.
Denon DVD-5000	£1500	Mar 99	Build is second to none. Sound is very solid convincing, but not as musical as the 3000.
Panasonic DVD-A100	£700	Jul 98	The A350 wipes out the CD-only competition at the price and threatens players up to £2000.
Panasonic DVD-L10	£1000	Nov 98	Isn't cheap, but it's an outstanding portable and a capable domestic device.
Sony DVP-4715	£700	Aug 98	The Sony is warm and smooth but lacks clarity and precision.

Minidisc £ Year Verdict

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Denon DMD-1060	£300	Sep 98	With its uncoloured and natural approach, the Denon is digital done right.
Dashnig Oera GMD	£199	Apr 99	Well-tailored CD/MD pairing and a doddle to use. Sound quality is spot on for the price.
JVC XM-228	£230	Sep 99	Well-built recorder. Good but not exceptional as Minidisc improves generally.
Kenwood DMF 9030	£500	Aug 99	An excellent tool for home recording; combines convenience, superb sound and a fair price.
Kenwood DM-7090	£500	Apr 97	If your heart was set on a Nakamichi cassette, have a listen to the Kenwood instead!
Kenwood DM-9000	£500	Jan 98	One of the best MD machines to date but CDR has the sonic edge.
Kenwood DM-5000	£330	Feb 99	Analogue recordings are especially good. Lack of digital recording level is a small setback.
Kenwood DMC-07R	£330	Mar 98	This portable offers fair performance on the move but isn't the last word in sound quality.
Sharp 722 portable	£230	Aug 99	Flash looks with solid build. First-class portable with domestic potential, but it isn't cheap.
Sony MDS JE300 MD	£300	Feb 97	Impressive sound and unmatched convenience make an excellent buy.

Headphones £ Year Verdict

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Ergo Model 2	£140	Mar 99	Wonderfully lucid and transparent panel-like sound.
Iron II Phase II	£100	Mar 99	Clarity and openness are their traits, rather than slamming bass, but still good value.
Sennheiser HD 580	£200	Nov 98	In the company of a smooth, warm system the 580s can shine.
Sennheiser HE60 V10	£1000	Feb 95	Electrostatic that set a class standard and can put a case for chucking out your power amp and 'speakers.
Vivanco FMH-680II	£80	May 98	Have a lot of potential but basic operating problems have to be cleaned up first.
Vivanco SR650	£50	Nov 95	Excitement that is rarely heard in headphones, but have a little trouble with heavy orchestral loads.

CD Transports £ Year Verdict

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Audicleb 8030 CDM	£1249	Aug 94	Distinguished by a wide array of facilities, thoughtfully designed and high quality.
Cyrus Disc Master	£1800	Jul 94	Smooth and cohesive. The Disc Master looks good and comes with the Dac Master within the price.
DPA Enlightenment	£695	Mar 95	Solid and lifelike sound with Rock music and full bodied on Classical.
Kenwood DP-X9070	£530	Feb 92	Superb build for the money and a very musical sound. Benefits greatly from clocking.
Micromega Duo	£3435	Apr 93	Excellent build quality and a sound quality to match.
Mosconi DT-40A	£1595	Jun 94	Isn't cheap but has a solid dependable sound with a big, powerful presentation.
Parasound C/BD-2000	£1695	Jun 97	The belt drive is an interesting idea but the Parasound is bettered by cheaper transports.
PT Central	£1440	Feb 95	Heart-stopping speed and impact contribute to what is an exceptionally good machine.
Rotel RDD-980	£450	Jul 96	Good, clean dynamic sound with a neutral and pure midrange tone.

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CD Transports £ Year Verdict

Sonic Frontiers 3	£6999	Sep 98	A handsome machine both sonically and aesthetically. We love the camera aperture-style loading system.
Sonic Frontiers SFT-1	£2295	Aug 96	Top flight machine with an easy, musical and enjoyable sound, for those that can afford it.
Teac P-30	£2500	Jun 97	Costs a lot of money and sounds nothing short of superb.
Teac VRDS T1	£499	Feb 95	Enjoyable player with good insight. Good finish and keen pricing make it a thoroughly good buy.
Thorens TCD 2000	£900	Jun 96	A soft and warm sound will please vinyl lovers, but it's not the last word in detail.
XTC CDT1	£1200	Apr 96	A warm and musical sound with a taste of high-end refinement and detail.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

CD Convertors £ Year Verdict

Alchemist TS-D-1	£300	Jan 99	Smooth, natural and relaxed on the ear, highly persuasive with acoustic material. A bit soft on Rock and Dance.
Arcam BB500	£750	Aug 97	Smooth and accurate treble and easy-going rhythm. Measured and engaging; good value too.
Audio Note DAC	£900	Aug 97	Treble roll-off serves to remove some of the music's sparkle; lags behind the group leaders somewhat.
Cambridge Dacmagic	£150	Jun 95	Instant upgrade for a budget player but out of its depth with in a properly designed hi-fi CD player.
Chiro DSC 900 DAC	£1700	Dec 98	The Chord combines smooth composure with musicality and transparency. Fort Knox build and priced to match.
Creek OBH-14	£239	Jun 99	Combined DAC and passive pre-amp; at the money there is no competition.
DPA Enlightenment dac	£795	Mar 95	Powerful, taut bass and remarkably solid higher frequencies. A nice touch with acoustic music especially.
DPA Enlightenment	£825	Aug 97	An engrossing listen with good manners to boot. Never uninvolved or lacklustre, plays with realism.
DPA Little Bit 2	£300	Nov 95	Don't be misled by the name - it's the budget convertor to have. Impossible to criticise for the money.
DPA SX512 DAC	£8000	Jun 98	A real smoothie for high-end conversion. Given the right transport, an outstanding sound is on the cards.
Marantz Sinoquette PSU	£895	Aug 97	If detail is high on your list of priorities, with a more forceful, hard-edged presentation, this looks like a very good bet.
Midiman Flying Calf	£109	Feb 99	A great little DAC which simply can't be beaten at the price. A bargain in all areas.
Midiman Flying Calf	£300	Jun 98	First-class as a DAC; doubles as an ADC for archiving to CDR - great value.
Monarchy Audio Delux 1B	£595	Aug 97	Never offensive; its multi-bit convertor packs a mighty bass punch. Useful analogue volume control.
Monarchy Delux 1B	£795	May 95	Delicate brightness does a lot to open out music and create a sense of space.
Musical Fidelity X-24K	£300	Jan 99	Crisp, detailed and dynamic, the MF is a genuine music maker, if a touch hard and bright at times.
Musical Fidelity X-DAC	£300	Nov 97	Outstanding value for money. Excellent sound in the usual attractively styled package.
Orville DA188	£399	Jun 95	Nicely built using quality components, with a lively sound. Solid bass, tidy midrange and crisp treble.
Pink Triangle Da Capo	£1400	Feb 95	Old hand at the game. One of the first HDCD-compatible convertors still a fine piece of gear.
Pros Audio	£699	Nov 95	A fine musical performance makes this idiosyncratic CD convertor worth searching out.
RDP 90K	£450	Jul 96	An affordable route into two-box players. Good, clean dynamic sound with a neutral and pure mid-range tone.
Sonic Frontiers DAC kit	£240	Jan 95	Easy and fun to build, competitively priced and delivers fine sonic results.
Son Front Processor 3	£7000	Sep 98	An awful lot of money - use it forever. Quality which can outlive any amount of cheaper purchases.
Sonic Frontiers Transdac	£699	Jul 95	The transdac has a smooth and focussed sound, but partnered with the Ultra Jitterbug looks expensive.
Thorens TDA2000	£700	Jun 96	Partnered with the TCD 2000, produces a sound that is certainly focussed, detailed and spacious.
XTC Dac	£1200	Apr 96	A taste of the elegantly smooth, slightly laid-back sound - the epitome of American good taste.



Midiman Flying Calf.

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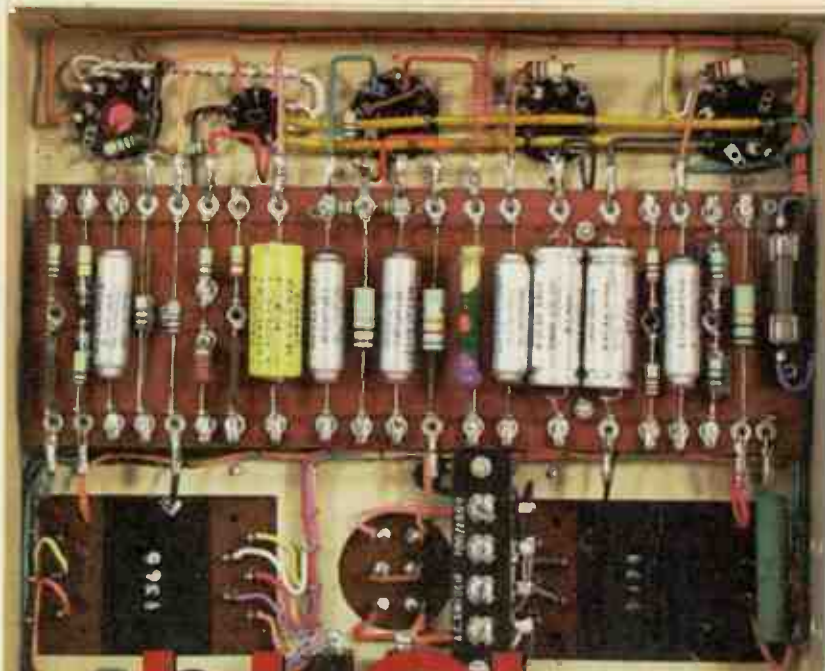


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CDT 20R CD Transport£1499.00
DAC 20sl£1249.00
T20 Tuner£1099.00
PPA 20sl Phono Preamp	..£1499.00
60isl Integrated amp£799.00
60iRvsl Integrated remote	..£999.00
PA10 Preamp£849.00
PA20Rsl Remote Preamp	..£1499.00
60Psl Power Amp£849.00
100Psl Power Amp£1099.00
125Msl Monoblock Amp	..£1199.00

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World Classic

Cassette

Nakamichi (various)
Yamaha TC-800GL

See main Guide

Early classic in serious cassette. Its ski-slope looks got it a cult following once it had ceased to be simply ugly.

CD Players

Meridian 207
Pioneer PD-91

Beautifully-built two-box with pre-amp stage. Very musical although not as refined as modern Bitstream gear. No digital output. Built-to-last player with easy upgrade routes for modifiers. Not knockout as it stands but get one cheap and have a go!

Amplifiers

Leak Point One, TL12 & TL10
Leak Pre-amps
Leak Stereo 20
Leak TL12+
NAD 3020
Quad 33
Quad II
Sugden A21
Technics SE-A5 Mk2

Ancestors of hi-fi, consequently expensive nowadays. As with all vintage stuff, overhauling is de rigueur before use. Line of 'good for their time' pre-amps. Use of EF86 pentode for high gain rules out ultra performance. Not the highest-fi. Excellent workaday classic. In good order the 20 will not disgrace itself. Various upgrades are available from specialist repairers. Plentiful monobloc equivalent of Stereo 20. Reasonably inexpensive and a tweekers' dream. Genuine hi-fi on a budget. You can't argue with success! NAD's budget integrated gave thousands their first taste of hi-fi and remains great value. By no means a bad job and value for money. With its matching 303 pre-amp makes a good introduction to audio classics. One of the all-time classic mono amplifiers. Unusual circuit but it works; beautifully. 22 pre-amp not up to today's standards. Seventies transistor integrated has an eminently likeable smoothness and musicality. Limited inputs via DIN sockets. Nice transformer and electronics, shame about the casework. With tweaking, this 150watter can sound sweet.



Leak TL12 Point One.

Loudspeakers

Klipschorn
Leak Sandwich
Lowther PM6A
Magnepplanar SMGa
Mission 770
Quad ESL57
Tannoy GRF & Autograph
Wharfedale Super 8 RS DD
Yamaha NS1000M
TannoyYork, Lancaster etc.

Not exactly plentiful or cheap but a splendid beast. For efficiency they have seldom been equalled. Space hungry! Rather warm sounding big infinite baffle but cheap with it. With reasonably powerful amp can sound quite satisfying. High quality full-range driver; still manufactured. High sensitivity, as fitted to many classic horn designs. Touch dry in the bass but a technological 'speaker with genuinely musical abilities. Usual warnings re: dipoles apply. Father of the 77 range which continues to this day. Well mannered with a warm sound and a kind load to amplifiers. Unrivalled. Properly serviced there is nothing like 'em. Their natural presentation may make them caviar to the general. Folded horn monsters which certainly sound good if you have the space. For Tannoy vintage see HFW November 1998. Ideal experimenters' driver. High sensitivity ~14,000 Gauss magnet and extended frequency range. Inexpensive too! Hi-tech favourites of the Japanese and Americans. Viewed more warily in the UK but can give excellent results. Many similar models of infinite baffle or reflex design. Not the last word in tautness but the drivers work well in modern cabinets.

Vinyl

Acos Lustre
Alphason HR100S
Ariston RD11
Garrard 301 & 401
Goldring Lenco 88 & 99
Haddock 228
Linn Axis
Michell Focus One
Shure M75
SME 3009 IIS
Thorens TD124
Thorens TD150
Trio L-07D

Very honest piece of kit, well made and easily adjusted. Vinyl beginners could do very much worse. First class arm, up to present-day standards. Buy carefully, though, as there's no service available now. A one-time king of turntables very similar to the Linn LP12. Now deposited but worth a look at the right price. Legendary and fairly plentiful. Excellent back-up available; many different custom plinths available. High quality. Great deck for the kitchen table enthusiast. Garrard fans won't look at 'em but cheap and capable. Servicing available. Recently out-classed by Haddock's updated 228 Special Edition but a proper hi-fi arm for all that. Makers still service. Uncomplicated, lower-price version of the famous Sondek. Considerably less expensive than some of its stablemates. 20 years and still going strong. Early runner in the 'modern' turntable cycle with a first class arm. Factory servicing available. Recent line-contact improvements have left the M75 behind but the wide range of needles make it a handy tool. Everlasting classic tone-arm. Spares permanently available from SME. No longer the last word but peanuts second-hand. Best classic deck ever? Judging by the prices they fetch it's possible - 78rpm too! Mid-price deck with a keen following. No real difficulty with servicing - novices may find the suspension system unnerving. Knockout heavyweight from 1980 with stainless bearing and 11lb platter! Not a give-away and beware! - spares scarce.



Thorens TD124.

Tuners

Leak Troughline (original)
Leak Troughline II & III mono
Leak Troughline III Stereo
Marantz ST-8

Interesting ornament but no longer hi-fi. Bandwidth limited to 88MHz to 100MHz only. Arguably the best-sounding tuners ever. Adaptation for stereo easy via phono multiplex socket. Excellent tuner with indifferent stereo decoding circuit. Best when adapted to use modern outboard decoder. Possibly the ultimate Tardis console, including an oscilloscope for checking the strength of signal. Expensive even now.



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	Our Price	Original Retail Price
Exposure V Active x over (3 Way)	£ 295.00	*£ 995.00
EAD 7000 Transport	£ 795.00	*£ 2495.00
Magnum P200 pre amp	£ 795.00	*£ 1895.00
Gale 401	£ 150.00	*£ -
Micromega amp	£ 495.00	*£ 1295.00
Micromega Tempo P	£ 495.00	*£ 1250.00
Alchemist Kraken	£ 250.00	*£ 580.00

New in This Month

POWER AMPLIFIERS		
Chord SPM 600	£ 1095.00	£ 1680.00
Linn Klouts	£ 1495.00	£ 2000.00
Musical Fidelity A3 Integrated	£ -	£ -
Restek Integrated	£ 795.00	£ 1100.00
Quad 77 Integrated	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Acuphase E203 Integrated	£ 795.00	£ 1695.00
Jadis JA30 Monoblocks (latest)	£ 3795.00	£ 5180.00
Sirius D200 (Silver)	£ 2750.00	£ 3500.00
Cary 572 SE Monoblocks	£ Dem	£ 2350.00
PRE AMPLIFIERS		
Chord CPA2200 pre-amp	£ 1595.00	£ 2298.00
Audio Research SP11 mk II Black	£ 1895.00	£ 4K+
SPEAKERS		
Meridian DSP5000 Rosewood	£ 2750.00	£ 3600.00
Wilson Grand Slam mk II	£35,000.00	£80,000.00
Mission 753 Rosewood + base	£ 495.00	£ 900.00
Monitor Audio Studio 50 SE Piano Black	£ 2500.00	£ 4000.00
Proac Resp 1 SC	£ 895.00	£ 1400.00
B & W 603	£ 395.00	£ 550.00
AV COMPONENTS		
C.D PLAYERS & DACS		
Meridian 508 - 24 bit	£ 1295.00	£ 1995.00
Meridian 566 - 24 bit	£ 795.00	£ 1095.00
Oracle CD2000 Transport	£ P.O.A.	£ 7299.00
Theta DATA 2/ Progen III	£ 3500.00	£ 6500.00
Musical Fidelity A3 CD	£ -	£ -
TURNTABLES/ ANALOGUE/ VARIOUS		
Goldmund Ref Turntable	£ 8995.00	£30,000.00
Sonic Frontiers SP1 Phono	£ 895.00	£ 1500.00
Arcam Alpha 10 Digital Tuner	£ 595.00	£ 800.00
Air Tangent 2B Arm	£ 1995.00	£ 5000.00
Oracle Mk V Turntable	£ P.O.A.	£ 4199.00

Power Amplifiers

Electrocompaniet AW120 DMB	£ 1695.00	£ 2695.00
Jeff Roland Model 5	£ 2750.00	£ 4500.00
Mark Levinson 333	£ 4500.00	£ 8500.00
Audio Note Neiro (as new)	£ 9995.00	£16,500.00
Graff 50/50	£ 1650.00	£ 2150.00
Graff GM 200	£ 4950.00	£ 7900.00
Plinius SA 100	£ 2850.00	£ 3450.00
Mark Levinson 335	£ 6500.00	£ 7500.00
Cello Performance 2 Monoblocks (4 chassis)	£ 9995.00	£20,000.00
AVI S2000 MA Stereo	£ 495.00	£ 850.00
Krell KAS 2 Monoblock	£ 9995.00	£18,000.00
Jadis JA500	£ 7995.00	£21,000.00
Boulder 102 AE	£ 2650.00	£ 3400.00
Audio Note P1 SE	£ 500.00	£ 950.00
Jadis JA 80 Monoblocks	£ 4995.00	£10,000.00
Audion Golden Knights	£ 1995.00	£ 4000.00
Jadis Defy 7 mk III	£ 3250.00	£ 4790.00
Micromega Tempo 2 Integrated	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Krell FPB 600	£ 6995.00	£12,900.00
Krell KSA 250	£ 2750.00	£ 6700.00
FM Acoustics 611X Resolution Power	£14,995.00	£22,000.00
Lamm M1 Monoblocks (100W)	£ P.O.A.	£ P.O.A.
Krell 50S	£ 1995.00	£ 3690.00
Exposure XII psu	£ 495.00	£ -
Musical Fidelity F19	£ 2250.00	£ 4000.00
Audio Research D130	£ 1395.00	£ 1850.00
Audion Silver Knights	£ 1295.00	£ 3000.00
Musical Fidelity XAS 100 (X-dem)	£ 699.00	£ 799.00
Sugden Stenfort SF60 Integrated	£ 350.00	£ 550.00
Quad 405	£ 225.00	£ -
Counterpoint SA12	£ 795.00	£ 1400.00
YBA 3a pre/ power	£ 1295.00	£ 2400.00
VTL 125	£ 1795.00	£ 3500.00
Exposure Super VIII	£ 550.00	£ 800.00
Exposure VIII	£ 450.00	£ 700.00
Copland CSA 28 Phono, remote Integrated	£ 950.00	£ 1299.00

Pre Amplifiers

Audio Research LS5 mk II	£ 2250.00	£ 5700.00
Krell KBL	£ 995.00	£ 4000.00
Audio Research LS9	£ 1995.00	£ 2500.00
Graff GM 13.5	£ 1850.00	£ 3750.00
Cello Audio Suite + master supply	£10,995.00	£28,000.00
Cello Audio Palette + master supply	£ 9995.00	£25,000.00
Jeff Rowland Consumate + Phono (3box)	£ 3995.00	£ 8000.00
Meridian 541 Dolby Surround	£ 650.00	£ 1095.00
F M Acoustics 266 Resolution	£10,995.00	£17,000.00
Musical Fidelity F25	£ 795.00	£ 1500.00
C.A.T. SL1 Ultimate	£ X-DEM	£ 5750.00
Croft Super Micro A mk 3	£ 495.00	£ 1000.00
CAT SL1 Sig mk III	£ 2995.00	£ 6900.00
Musical Fidelity X-P 100	£ 699.00	£ 799.00
Meridian 562 V	£ 695.00	£ 995.00
Exposure XIV/ IX	£ 1495.00	£ 3000.00
Audio Research LS3B remote	£ 1495.00	£ 2700.00
Exposure XI pre XII psu	£ 795.00	£ 1500.00

Quality Speakers

Audio Physics Virgo	£ Dem	£ 3400.00
Linn Isobarks	£ 595.00	£ -
Martin Logan Aeriis	£ 1295.00	£ 2288.00
Apogee Caliper Sig	£ 1295.00	£ 4000.00
Acoustic Energy AE1 + Stands Piano Black	£ 795.00	£ 1600.00
Martin Logan Quest	£ 1895.00	£ 4000.00
Sound Lab A3	£ 4995.00	£12,000.00
Sonus Faber Grand Pianos	£ 1495.00	£ 2000.00
Acoustic Energy AE2 Signature Piano Black + Stands	£ 1995.00	£ 2995.00
Cello Stradivian Grand Master (Rosewood and Piano Black)	£22,000.00	£60,000.00
Audio Static DC1+ (Audi Silver)	£ 2750.00	£ 4250.00
ATC SCM 50A Rosewood	£ 2850.00	£ 5000.00
REL Stadium Sub	£ 595.00	£ 950.00
Wilson Audio MAX	£24,995.00	£33,000.00
B & W 801 Series 2 (Black Ash)	£ 1895.00	£ 4000.00
Apogee Stage	£ 995.00	£ 3000.00
Wilson System V.1 (Black)	£10,500.00	£18,000.00
Rogers LS3/ 5A Black (NEW)	£ 575.00	£ 798.00
Rogers AB1 Sub (NEW)	£ 395.00	£ 598.00
Rogers LS55 (New)	£ 330.00	£ 430.00
Alon Adriana (New)	£ Special	£10,000.00
Alon V mkIII	£ Special	£ 5500.00
Meridian M 2500 Sub	£ 1095.00	£ 1600.00
A.T.C. SCM 1000 SL Active Speaker	£ 4500.00	£ 7000.00
Jamo SW3105 active sub	£ 495.00	£ 800.00
Orelle Swings	£ 795.00	£ 1200.00
Dynalab 2.8 Ref (New)	£ 695.00	£ 1200.00
Audio Physics LIBRA	£ X-DEM	£ 5000.00

CD Players & DACS

McCormack DAC	£ 450.00	£ 995.00
Micromega Duo 3.1	£ 995.00	£ 2000.00
Audio Alchemy DDE 1	£ 95.00	£ 200.00
Meridian 200 Transport	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Wadia 860 x (24/96)	£ 6500.00	£ 7500.00
Cambridge Dac Magic	£ 150.00	£ -
Mark Levinson No 39	£ 4250.00	£ 5000.00
Forsell Air Ref Transport mk II	£ 4995.00	£ 8000.00
Mark Levinson 30.5/31	£11,500.00	£24,000.00
Krell KPS 25s	£13,995.00	£19,995.00
Quad 77 CD Player (Quadlink)	£ 495.00	£ 700.00
Genesis Digital Lens	£ 1095.00	£ 1900.00
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Meridian 563 dac 20 bit	£ 495.00	£ 950.00
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Audio Alchemy DDS 2	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Musical Fidelity X-Ray (X-Dem)	£ 699.00	£ 799.00
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Lyra Parnasus	£ 995.00	£ 2000.00
Linn LP12/ LVIII Lingo Cirkus K9	£ 1095.00	£ 2000.00
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Revox B77 (3 / 7 _case + reels) like new	£ 595.00	£ -



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PROJECT 6.1 TURNTABLE	XD	£499	£299
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SONIC FRONTIERS LINE 3 PRE	XD	£5000	£3499
SONIC FRONTIERS LINE PRE	XD	£5000	£3499
SONIC FRONTIERS PHONO 1	XD	£2000	£1399
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THORENS TD10 TURNTABLE	XD	£199	£145

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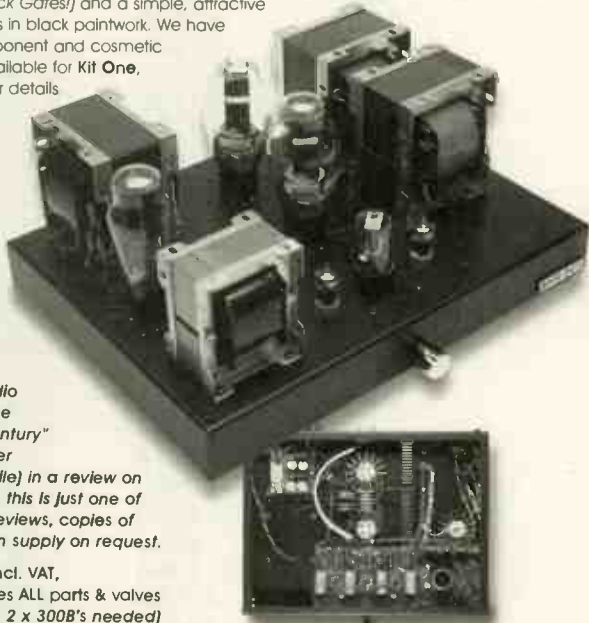
Audio Note Kit Amplifiers -

Power-Amp Kit

The Audio Note Kit One *(Illustrated)*

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

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



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

Price: £799 incl. VAT, which includes ALL parts & valves (yes, also the 2 x 300B's needed) but not postage/packing which to UK customers is £12.00.

KIT ONE ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-001

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

Audio Note Loudspeaker Drivers & Kits

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

Audio Note Circuits, Valvedata & Basic Technical Information

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

Audio Note Quality Output Transformers

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

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

Mid-price range Top quality with specially selected components.

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

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

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

Audio Note Mains Transformers

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

The Audio Note Kit Two

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

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

KIT TWO ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-002

The Audio Note Kit Three

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

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

KIT THREE ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-003

The Audio Note Kit Four

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

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

KIT FOUR ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-004

Audio Note Driver, Interstage & Pre-Amplifier Output Transformers

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

Audio Note Paper In Oil Signal Capacitors

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

Audio Note Paper In Oil Tin Foil Signal Capacitors

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

Audio Note Paper In Oil Copper & Silver Foil Signal Capacitors

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

Audio Note Acid & Chloride Free Silver Solder

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

Audio Note Cables & Wires

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

Audio Note High Quality Stepped Attenuators & Switches

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

Audio Note High Quality Valve Bases

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

Audio Note Resistors

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

BEYSCHLAG - HOLCO - SHINKOH Tantalum Film Resistors

AUDIO NOTE 1/2 Watt Tantalum Resistors

AUDIO NOTE 1 Watt Tantalum Resistors

AUDIO NOTE 2 Watt 1% Tantalum Resistors

AUDIO NOTE Precision Carbon Film Resistors

ALLEN BRADLEY 1 Watt 5% Carbon Film Resistors

Components & Valves

Pre-Amp Kit

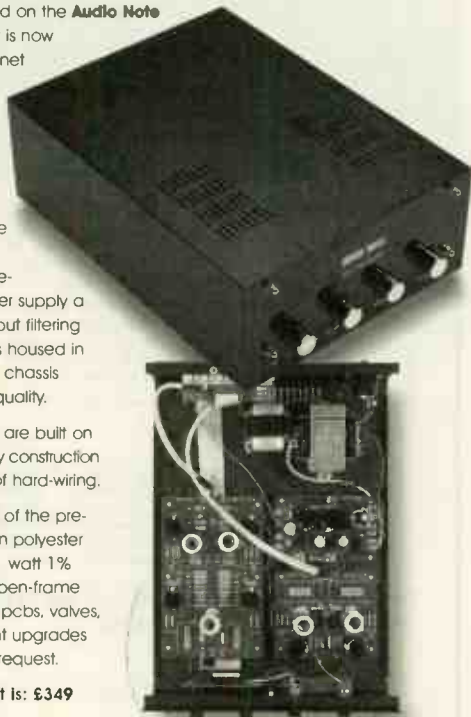
The Audio Note Pre-Amplifier Kit (illustrated)

A complete kit loosely based on the **Audio Note M7** Tube pre-amplifier circuit is now available. The moving-magnet compatible phono stage consists of a cascade input, with passive RIAA equalisation and anode-follower output using the 12AX7/ECC83. Line buffer/amplification for the four line inputs consists of an ECC82 configured in parallel anode-follower mode. For the power supply a valve rectifier and choke-input filtering are employed. All circuitry is housed in a non-magnetic aluminium chassis giving the very best sound quality.

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

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

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



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

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

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

Audio Note Cerafine Powdered Ceramic Electrolytic Capacitors

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

Audio Note Potentiometers

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

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

Audio Note Moving Coil, CD Line & Input Matching Transformers

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

Stock Clearance SALE

In anticipation of the arrival of the new in-house made Audio Note copper foil paper in oil signal capacitors, we are pleased to offer a **60% discount on current list price** on all Tobias Jensen made paper in oil aluminium, tin and copper foil signal capacitors.

Offer strictly limited to availability, while stocks last.

Minimum Order
4 pcs single or mixed values or £20.00.

Audio Note Selected Audio Valves

Our valves are selected from the best available sources and are tested to the same stringent standards that we apply in the production of our own amplifiers. They fall into two categories, standard production items and rare, mostly NOS (*New Old Stock*) valves which are no longer in production. We have compiled a special list of the NOS items, which is available against a stamped self addressed envelope, if you live outside the UK send US \$2. You should be aware that the valves on this list are NOT cheap, but we have stock of original GE, RCA and United Electronics 211, both standard versions and reinforced anode type for the US airforce, 845 Westinghouse, VT25/10/10Y, VT62/801A, WE300B, 6X4300A, Mullard GZ34/CV1377, Tungsol 5U4G (best sounding 5U4G we have ever heard!), Chatham 5R4WGY and many others.

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

Call us today for more information and catalogues on the following numbers:

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

All other enquiries relating to Audio Note products should be addressed to their head office: Audio Note (UK), Unit C, Peacock Industrial Estate, Lyon Close 125-127 Davigdor Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 1SG
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SE's can play bass!

BorderPatrol 300B SE Power Amplifier



'It (the BorderPatrol) makes tranny amps sound thick and earthbound with its superb transparency and fleetness of foot. It doesn't quite match good tranny bass but it does a far better job than any other SE I've heard. What's more you get the purity of midrange and treble that such amps are renowned for. Add to this superb high frequency extension and you've got some idea of its prodigious capabilities.'

'The BP isn't just about power, it's about the ability to reproduce music with its timbral and dynamic elements fully intact. You tend to take good tone for granted with tubes but when it's created with so little colouration as it is here, you can fully appreciate its beauty and richness. The 300B, when used with this much attention to detail, appears to add no colour of its own and combines the skill with lightning speed, removing any sense of electronic colouration.'

'By going to town on the power supply, however, the BorderPatrol puts pay to the notion that SE's can't play bass.'

Jan On Kennedy Hi-Fi Choice Jan 1999

The BorderPatrol 300B SE is a state of the art single-ended power amplifier that uses a single output valve for each channel, zero negative feedback, inter-stage driver transformers and a heavy-duty external power supply that contains no less than three independent valve rectified choke input filter power supplies. Clear and fluid with effortless dynamics and powerful, tight bass this is a milestone product that combines the traditional qualities of single-ended operation with real low frequency performance.

The BorderPatrol 300B SE: £3995.00 and £4495.00
with Western Electric, 300B valves



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We have the following ex demonstration and secondhand equipment for sale:

- Complete Quad 77 series system. CD, tuner, pre and power amps plus remote. Absolutely mint. Boxed. S/H. £1500.
- Accuphase P450 power amp. Absolutely mint. Boxed. £2250.
- Musical Fidelity X-50 monoblocks. Mint. Boxed. S/H. £235.
- Acoustic Energy AE109 loudspeakers. Mint. S/H. £225.
- Linn Sondek LP12/ Ittok/ re-tipped Asaka. Black. Just Cirkused! Virtually mint. Boxed. S/H. £650.
- Musical Fidelity Nu Vista pre amp. Absolutely mint. Boxed. S/H. £1095.
- Threshold ST300 power amp. Mint. Boxed. S/H. £695.
- Audion Golden Knights. 9w single ended 300B monoblocks. Absolutely mint.Boxed. £2500.
- Audion Silver Knights. 20w push pull 300B monoblocks. Virtually mint.Boxed. S/H. £1150.
- Conrad Johnson PV10a (special edition) Old design with balance control.Mint. Boxed. S/H. £650.
- Conrad Johnson MV55 power amp. Mint. Boxed. Spare valves. S/H. £1050.
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- Muse Model 1B subwoofer. S/H. £1800.
- Graaf GM20 OTL power amp. Stunning. Mint. Boxed. S/H. £2200.
- Gamma Aeons 211 valve monoblocks. Virtually mint . Boxed. Spare valves.S/H. £2500.
- Mirage MS3i loudspeakers. Mint. Boxed. S/H. £1500.
- Exposure Pre XIX and PowerXVIII amp combo complete with a 1m balanced interconnect cable. Mint. S/H. £795.
- Teac P500 and D500 CD transport and dac combo. First class condition, S/H. £495.
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Audiomeca Mephisto CD transport	£2400	£1050
Audio Research D240 Mk.II	£3500	£1195
Audio Research CD2	£3399	£1995
Audion Black Shadows 845 valve monoblocks	£4000	£POA
Audion Silvernight 300B monoblocks	£2250	£POA
Chario Academy 1 solid walnut (ex/d)	£1299	£800
Chario Academy 2 solid walnut (ex/d)	£1649	£1100
Copland CSA 14 Int. Amp	£1195	£650
Genesis Gen 400 spks (ex/d)	£4000	£2499
Genesis Gen 500 spks in Built Active Bass (ex/d) SUPERB	£11000	£6499
Krell Kav 300I	£2495	£POA
Krell KSA 80 pwr. amp	£3498	£1495
Krell KSA 250 pwr. amp	£6700	£2500
Krell KSL pre amp	£2298	£995
Krell MD 10 CD Turntable	£7990	£2995
Krell Studio DAC	£4450	£1695
Linn Keilidh spk.	£750	£650
Monitor Audio 703 PMC	£800	£400
Macintosh 7106 6ch. THX pwr. amp	£4000	£1999
Nakamichi CRIE Cass		£150
Proac Response 4 spks	£12000	£4995
Quad 66 pre + remote	£850	£450
Quad 34+FM4+306+rack		£600
Sonic Frontiers SFD II Dac (Ex/d)	£5300	£3995
Tannoy D700	£2500	£1250
Tube Tech. Unisis Sig.Int.	£2300	£1250

Wazoo integrated amp from Bow Technologies now on Dem

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BEARD P35 MKII power amp	
BEARD P500A PREAMP	1000
CROFT V POWER	300
CROFT MICRO 1st Version	200
CONCORDANT EXCELSIOR phono pre with psu	1500
CONRAD JOHNSON PVS PREAMP with phono	
EDISON 12 power amp 12 watts class A	200
GAMMA RYTHM INTEGRATED latest version	2500
GAMMA AEON MONOBLOCKS latest version	5500
LUMLEY M75 monoblocks 75 watts	
MELOS 333 two box line pre	3000
MORE FIDELITY 300B stereo power amp	2200
ORANGE VALVE PRE with Phono	
RADFORD STA 25 RENAISSANCE	
RADFORD RENAISSANCE SC25 Pre Amp	
SONIC FRONTIERS SFS 40 POWER AMP	2000
TRILogy 948 Stereo power amp.	2000
VTL 50 WATT MONOBLOCKS	
CONCORDANT QUAD IIs	

TRANSISTOR AMPS

ATC SCA2 with phono and remote	3000
AVI S2000MP preamp	950
AUDIOLAB 8000C pre grey colour	450
AUDIOLAB 8000A BLACK	200
CYPRUS pre/power	1100
CYRUS STRAIGHT LINE integrated amp	400
CYRUS surround sound processor	700
CYRUS two	650
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CRIMSON 610C/630 MONOBLOCKS chrome finish	1400
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DPA DSP200S pre amp	800
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EXPOSURE VII pre mm/mc with psu	
EXPOSURE SUPER XVII POWER AMP	
HARMON KARDON PA2200 Pre/Poweramp	
HEYBROOK C3/P3 Pre/Power	1400
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As above but with phono boards	1700
LINN MAJIK	800
LFD MISTRAL PHONOSTAGE	300
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MOTH 60 WATT power amp wood finished mint boxed	650
MUSICAL FIDELITY E100	700
MUSICAL FIDELITY MA50 MONOBLOCKS	850
MUSICAL FIDELITY A2	500
NAIM NAC 32 " "	
NAIM NAIT ONE " "	
NVA passive pre	350
NAIM snaps	
NAIM 42.5/110 OLD STYLE	
NAIM NAC128	
NAIM NAIT 32/140 OLD STYLE	
PASS LABS ALEPH 2 MONOBLOCKS	6200
PASS ALEPH P LINE PREAMP	3800

PIP TWO PREAMP serviced last year	2000+
PLINIUS SA 50 new class a power amp boxed	2800
PS AUDIO TWO PLUS C power amp	
QUAD 34/306 grey 400 will split	200 each
QUAD 44/405 2	400
QUAD 77 int no remote	700
REGA LUNA	550
ROTEL RC 872/ line pre	800
SUGDEN OPTIMA 200 line integrated	2100
SUGDEN C1285L PRE/P28 Power	900
Toca 22 class a power amp	800
	1900

LOUDSPEAKERS

ALIANTE LINEA (sonus faber electas clones)	2500
ATC SCM10 black boxed ex dem	1080
AUDIOPLAN KONTRAST MARK 2	2800
AUDIO NOTE ANJ tweaked	500
Audio Note ANE factory seconds new boxed	1520
AUDIO PHYSICS TEMPO5 with Essex digital equalizer	4000
APOGEE MINIGRAND with active crossover bi-amping essential	8500
BANDOR BANDORA in light oak	1350
CADENCE ES mk I	3500
CASTLE SEVERN mk I floorstanders	579
CASTLE 1515 in Yew	260
CELESTION 5000 with ribbon tweeters	700
IMPULSE H2	2250
JAMO CONCERT 8 cherry	1500
JR 149 round version of ls3/5a	150
KLIPSCH LA SCALAS, black, deluxe, boxed	2500
KEF 103.2	140
LINN KANS MK I	200
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CAMBRIDGE T55 silver fm tuner	75
FERROGRAPHS SFM1 FM Tuner	75
LEAK TROUGHLINE III STEREO	80
MERIDIAN 204 tuner	120
NAIM NAT101 TUNER with psu	350
NAKAMICHI 700 tritracer	450
QUAD FH4 tuner	200
REVOX B77 2 track one owner from new, full service history	250
REVOX A77 several available serviced	200-250
YAMAHA tl fm tuner black analogue tuner	100

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CYRUS DISCMaster/DACMaster transport/dac	500
KENWOOD DPX9010 TRANSPORT ONLY	1750
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PIONEER DVL909 DVD player!	500
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PS AUDIO REFERENCE LINK / Pre combined	5500

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AUDIO NOTE TT2	425
AUDIO NOTE IO v II Petr Quortrup's own example	2000
AUDIO NOTE ans2 step up tx	400
ALPHASON RD11 electronic with arm	200
CLEARAUDIO EVOLUTION TURNTABLE with parallel arm & beta cartridge	1650
HADCOCK CH228 ARM	1000
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LINN LP12 valhalla, linn arm board	300
LINN LP12/ PINK LINK	650
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LINN LP12 VALHALLA/BASIK PLUS/P	77
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REGA PLANAR 3 WITH RB200	120
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TRANSCRIPTORS HYDRAULIC REFERENCE with orig arm, all excellent with brush etc	350
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Please note orig prices are approximate, I can't be bothered to look them up

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GOERTZ M1 centre stage 5m bananas	200
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SME 3012 arm	185
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PS Audio DELTA 250, 250 watt monoblocks	3500
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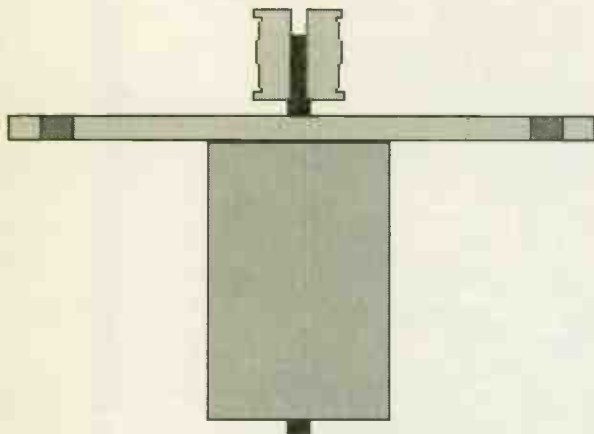
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COMMON GROUND MAGAZINE



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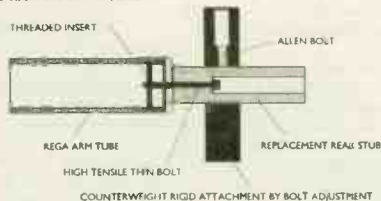
HI-FI WORLD, FEB 1999

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"I have to say the Rega modifications turn this humble arm into a real Giant killer: Gone is the rather grey, sterile sound of the cooking Rega. Instead, tonal colour is fresh, dynamics have great speed and impact, and the sound stage is huge." HI-FI WORLD SUPPLEMENT NOV 97 (structural modification to a RB250) WHAT HI-FI Sept 98 gave this modification a 5 star rating.

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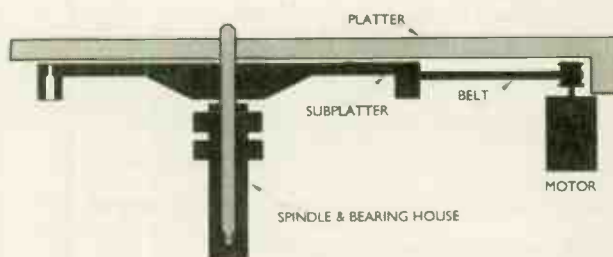
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"the standard came up with crystal clear images set in a broad sound stage"...
"With all these goodies in place, the standard would give turntables at the £1200-£1400 mark a hard time."
HI-FI WORLD SUPPLEMENT NOV 97

"is exceptionally easy to build and professional in both sound quality and appearance"

HI FI NEWS SUPPLEMENT NOV 97



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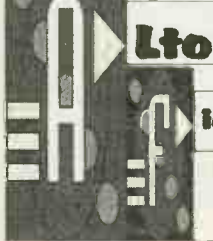
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Prices refer to new/mint condition and sealed

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CD PLAYER/DAC

C.E.C. TL2 Belt Drive as new £ 1,350; **AUDIO NOTE** DAC 4 bargain £ 2500. **AUDIO ANALOGUE** PAGANINI £ 650.

MORE SYNERGY

I have referred recently to the most important Synergy between amplifiers and speakers, but another can happen with CD players. I probably come across this less frequently as I usually use my old AVI CD player as the front end anyway, as my other favoured Mephisto/Pulsar combo are temporarily indisposed. However a customer asked me the other day what speaker I would recommend for the Audio

Analogue Puccini amp for around £500, and as I had recently received two new speakers which I hadn't had time to listen to on Puccini, I would do some tests and let him know. The AVI CD was off in Scotland so I used the also recently arrived EMC-1 CD player by Electrocompaniet (£2250). Both the new speakers (Alon Rascal and Ruark Epilogue) sounded fine but the shock was when I put on the AVI Bigatron's, which have always sounded great with an all AVI front end, but now sounded remarkably close to my dear old Ruark Accolades (£2700), now, sadly no longer available. Alright the bass wasn't as extended, but for someone who can't manage a big speaker, here was a superb sound, on all types of music for £3600. Another combo which worked well was my Nakamichi DVD player playing CD's through the Harman Kardon AVR65 AV amp and the little Epilogues, referred to above. Surprisingly good music making from an AV setup. Meanwhile the Alon Rascal's also sound great with a normal AVI front end, but the extra bass afforded by monoblocs does help here. A very open and detailed speaker, with a typical big Alon sound; they also work great with AVR65 on home cinema - Zorro had never sounded as good as it did the other night!

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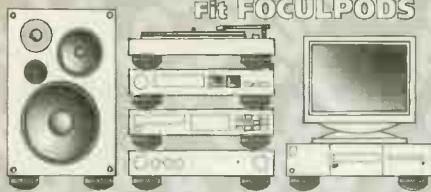
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Audiophile - January 1994

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Hi-Fi Choice - January 1994

CHOICE VERDICT

Sound Quality
 Value for money

...a marked improvement was obvious from the first few bars of REM's Automatic for the people album.
Hi-Fi News & Record Review - March 1994

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Audio Video - December 1994

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HI-FI NEWS: Ken Kessler: 'What I think we're witnessing here is Tim De Paravicini's finest moment and that's scary, when you consider that even his disasters are better than most designers' triumphs!'

WHAT HI-FI: Verdict *****

Leading French magazine Diapason voted the V20 Amplifier of the year. To hear what all the fuss is about phone now for a personal home demonstration

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Small but perfectly formed MC3

MC3
Producing the very best from vinyl has long been a black art and it's no wonder with so many permutations involved. Most people agree that Moving Coil cartridge design is technically superior than the Moving magnet but demands much more from it's ancillaries, especially the phono stage.

E.A.R./Yoshino have just launched the MC3 Cartridge Transformer with a band width of 3Hz-100kHz, facilities for a wide range of quality cartridge outputs and twin isolated earth terminals for maximum noise reduction.

The MC3 captures all the subtleties from the most complex recording without resorting to thrusting or spitting it out. Its extreme clarity and graceful presentation makes for a superb vinyl experience. **ART DUDLEY:** Leading American hi-fidelity critic.

I'm impressed with the MC3, and from a musical point of view, I think it's worth every penny of the price. Those of you who have tube-based systems & can afford it should pester your local dealer until he lets you take one home and try out Value/Quality *****

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Musical Fidelity X-41 2x50 Watts Int. Amp. NEW N/A	479.00	299.95
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Musical Fidelity HA-50 Class A Mono-Block 12 x 50 Watts MINT / Bozed(Superb)	1000.00	450.00
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Nakamichi RX-202E Auto-Rev. MINT	1000.00	449.95
Arva ADI-640 3-Head / 2-Motor Etc. MINT	300.00	119.95
Technics RSR-545 Direct-Drive / HD-Pro etc. VGC	250.00	99.95

	Equivalent New Price	Sale Price
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Sony SS-111 Monitors MINT (Superb Mid-Base)	800.00	350.00
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Linn Hets / Ku-Stone Strands Black Ash / VGC	300.00	169.95
Linn Indes Black Ash / MINT / LINE NEW	350.00	189.95
Arcam Delta Two Black / B-wire / VGC	350.00	169.95
Base 301 T.M. Omnidirectional VGC	200.00	139.95
Tannoy R-1 MINT / AS NEW	129.00	79.95
Kel Coda 7 MINT / AS NEW	N/A	199.95
Moortaan Short Festival III MINT	700.00	299.95
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Sequance Model 300 MINT / AS NEW	200.00	129.95
Wharfedale Modus 2 MINT / AS NEW	160.00	79.95
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Revo Lines / Brakes MINT	700.00 +	119.95
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	Equivalent New Price	Sale Price
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Mission DAD-5 Remote DAC-5 VGC	400.00	249.95
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Micromega Stage One Full Remote / Digital out etc	50.00	229.95
DPA Renaissance 24-Bit Remote / Deltran Sync-Lock MINT	450.00	595.00
DPA Enlightenment DAC Digital to Analogue Converter MINT	450.00	425.00
Hannar: Karbon HD-7500 Remote VGC	350.00	549.95
Denon DCD-635 Remote VGC / Bozed	180.00	109.95
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Musical Fidelity X-Rity (24/96) (Superb Player) NEW	799.00	699.00
Philips CD-830 Remote VGC / Digital Out (Specially Musical)	400.00	129.95
Musical Fidelity X-24K DAC 24-BIT Digital to Analogue Converter	N/A	300.00
Audio Alchemy Ozic-In-The-Box MINT / AS NEW	23.00	149.95
Philips CDD 210 (Interactive) Remote MINT (Ideal X @)	480.00	59.95
Mid Modem 1000 VGC / Digital Output	310.00	149.95
Murantz CD-67 Rem. MINT	250.00	169.95

	Equivalent New Price	Sale Price
WINTL		
Project Perspective / Arm / Ortolon OM-40 M.M. MINT / AS NEW	1140.00	599.95
Project 0.5 / Ortolon OM-10 GC /		170.00 95.00
The Source LT 2w 3-D P.S.U. Arm Itok LY II Audio Technica		
ATF3 Moving-Coil MINT / Manual / Etc/Superb Sound / Looks	1800.00 +	695.00
Linn Soudek LP-12 / Basic Arm / Grace SHM-E M.M. Valhalla / Arromosa / VGC	1540.00	399.95
Linn Armboard (Cut for Grace) VGC N / A		10.00
Mission 775 SH (Cream). Not the Base but the colour..		
774 Arm / Ortolon VMS-20EII M.M. Cartridge VGC N/A	3.995	£299.95
Monacor SP-8 M.M. Phono-Stage / P.S.U (Brilliant Value) NEW	N/A	26.95
Musical Fidelity KLP (The One At This Price) M.M. / M.C. Phono-Stage NEW	N/A	130.00
Musical Fidelity X-1P MINT / Bozed	130.00	89.95
Musical Fidelity XLP-2 Mono-Block Phono-Stage / X-PSU NEW and Superb (M.M. / M.C.) (Switchable Impedance)	N/A	499.90
Q.E.D R-232 / Arm / RATA RP-20 M.M. Cartridge GC	200.00 +	69.95
Revolver Rebel 6w Arm / AT M.M. Cartridge MINT £129.95	N/A	99.95
Grace G-707 Tonearm VGC	N/A	99.95
Audio Technica AT 1005 II Tonearm VGC	N/A	69.95
Quad 34 Moving-Coil Disc Module VGC / Bozed	N/A	30.00

OTHER ITEMS

	Equivalent New Price	Sale Price
A selection of our ever changing offers for sale (all fully guaranteed)		
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Tamaha DSP-E1000 Remote Pro-Logic Processor / DSP VGC	700.00	249.95
Sammy DVE 709 Player VGC	300.00	199.95
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B&W 210E15 Shielded Centre-Speaker MINT	200.00 +	489.95
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Jamo Shielded Centre-Speaker VGC	80.00	39.95
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Apollo Wall Stand For Turntables Etc.	N/A	39.95
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Isos 100X103 Studio Incon 1/2 Metre Silver-Plated (Excellent)	100.00	59.95
Isos 101 Incon 1 Metre Silver-Plated	100.00	59.95
A Few Left! Best to Reel Tapes (21/2) Please Phone for details (21/2" only left)	N/A	Various P.O.A.
B-Tech BT 9280 Stereo Headphone Amp. C/W Tone / Volume /overload /P.S.U NEW (Excellent Value)		39.95

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH
B&W 802 Series III 300 watts
4 way monitors
NEW PRICE £3000.00 AA PRICE £1495.00

COMPACT DISC PLAYERS/TRANSPORTS/D.A.C.S.

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OTHER ITEMS

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Meridian M33C centre/active	775	495
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Michell alecto monos	2000	1350
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Mission 302 speakers. Good condition	£49
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Target stand 3-shelf. W20" X 18 3/4" X 19 1/16"	£59
Quad FM3. Mint. Boxed. instruction	£149
Technics Class A A1 hi-fi cassette deck. Dolby BIC. HX. No	£75
Arva X1750 tuner. Unused. Boxed. Dual w/Alc	£175
Decca London Gold cartridge. Rebuilt cartridge man	£35
Supex 3018 tone arms. Various. From	£60
Leak Troughline 2 & 3 Mono Spkrs. From	£95
Minum (Microsonic) FM tuner. Sounds great	£149
Fro-KT8801. synthesiser tuner. AM/FM. Black	£75
Wooden sleeve for Quad 330/313	£30
Rogers Ravensbourne 2 tuner in wood case	£35
Stipes 901 super MK cartridge. Like used	£149
Technics SL-PS67DA cd player with remote. Good	£80
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Avanti Beam Tube BM611 AM/FM tuner. Serviced	£150
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Target stand 3-shelf. W20" X 18 3/4" X 19 1/16"	£59	Technics SL-PS67DA cd player with remote. Good	£80
Quad FM3. Mint. Boxed. instruction	£149	Adjustable Bias control. Good condition	£80
Technics Class A A1 hi-fi cassette deck. Dolby BIC. HX. No	£75	Avanti Beam Tube BM611 AM/FM tuner. Serviced	£150
Arva X1750 tuner. Unused. Boxed. Dual w/Alc	£175	Leak Troughline stereo fully realigned & serviced	£175
Decca London Gold cartridge. Rebuilt cartridge man	£35	Quad 34 moving coil multiple. Mint. Boxed	£40
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Measured Performance

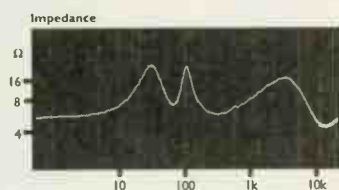
loudspeakers

CASTLE RICHMOND

For a small loudspeaker the Richmond is relatively sensitive, producing 87.5dB Sound Pressure Level from one nominal watt on input (2.8V). Since impedance varies around 8Ω across the audio band, the nominal figure turned out to be just this value. Gentle slopes to the impedance curve signify low-ish reactance and energy storage, so overall the Richmond is an easy enough load and it will go louder than most rivals at any particular volume control setting.

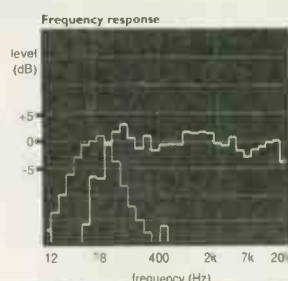
Frequency response is a little uneven by today's standards, but it stays within a few dB from 100Hz up to 18kHz all the

same. Our third octave response shows there's a midrange hump, likely to strengthen vocal projection and clarify enunciation. A roll-off in upper treble may usefully soften CD treble, the lift back at 16kHz probably not being too apparent against the forward midband. A small amount of bass speaking, common and necessary in small loudspeakers, will



liven the bottom end. The port is tuned high, to 70Hz, but extends bass output down to 35Hz (-6dB).

The Richmond works well and will go loud with little power. It's well tailored for small systems. NK



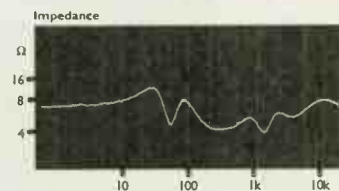
CHARIO ACADEMY MILLENIUM

The Academy has an almost academically flat frequency response, our analysis shows. A small crossover suckout at 5kHz will soften the sound just a little, but not with any great loss of apparent detail. The tweeter has a small peak that may add just a little hiss or spit, but again the effect will be small, if discernible at all.

Absence of smooth low-frequency lift is likely to make the Academy sound a little dry if it is mounted on a stand away from walls. It is probably best placed within a few feet of a rear wall. Forward radiation from the bass driver rolls off smoothly at low frequencies, a sign of

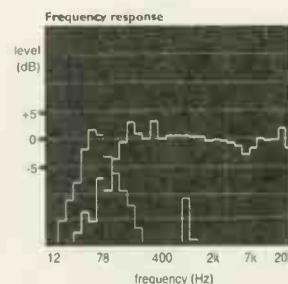
good damping. The port peaks narrowly at 50Hz, extending output down to 40Hz before rolling off. The Academy should sound fast in its bass, since it covers note fundamentals but not general subsonics.

Sensitivity was mediocre at 86dB, especially in view of the fact that impedance is low. A muscular amplifier is needed, the only saving grace being the load is



primarily resistive and will return little energy to the amplifier.

The Academy Millennium will sound dry and possibly a bit bright. It needs a powerful amplifier for good results. NK



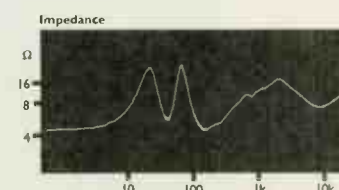
KLIPSCH KG 3.5

Although the KG3.5 has normal bass reflex loading, Klipsch like to give their 'speakers horn type properties. Amongst other things this means high sensitivity. The KG3.5 produced a very high 92dB sound pressure level from one nominal watt of input power. Since it has an overall impedance of 7Ω the nominal watt is in fact a true watt, so the K3.5 is very efficient. It will blow your head off with just a few watts, so amplifiers more powerful than around 60W are unnecessary.

Being a fairly amenable resistive load across most of the audio band, the KG3.5

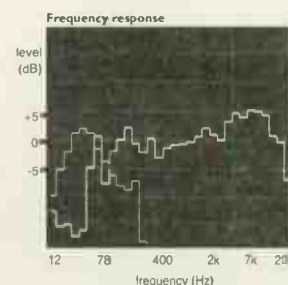
is easy for amplifiers to drive. At bass frequencies the port introduces massive phase swings, but this is the case with all reflex loudspeakers.

The port is tuned high, to around 40Hz. It extends output down to 20Hz, so the KG3.5 goes low enough all the same.



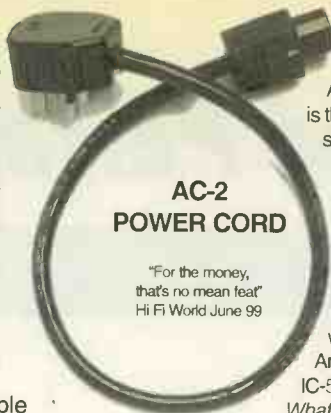
A steady climb in treble output will make the 'speaker sound very bright.

The Klipsch KG3.5 is not as accurate and balanced as smaller models we have tested. NK



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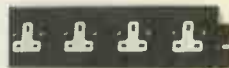
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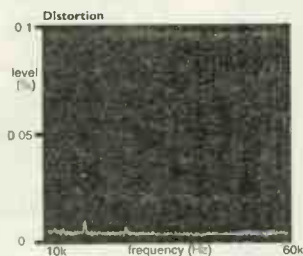
WORLD AUDIO DESIGNS ACTIVE LOUDSPEAKERS

The desktop power amplifier for these active loudspeakers produces 12W per channel. With a sensitivity of 86dB/watt from the loudspeakers themselves they will give 97dB SPL at 1 metre from 12W. Desktop monitors invariably sit close to a listener, within 1 metre, so there's plenty of volume available, since anything over 95dB is very loud.

Frequency response stays within a few dB from 80Hz up to 16kHz, up to monitor standards. With no sign of a crossover suckout or phase problems between the two drive units the 'speakers will convey a lot of detail. They are accurate.

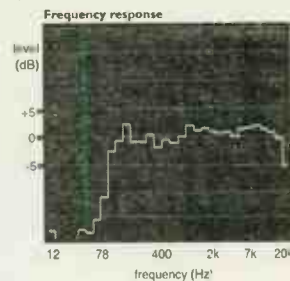
Bass has been well damped to suit positioning on a desk, close to a rear wall. Reflecting surfaces provide natural emphasis. Low frequency response has been tailored to keep bass sounding tight and well balanced.

The amplifier delivers full output from



350mV in, well within the output capabilities of computer sound cards. Distortion measures 0.01% and bandwidth is wide at 5Hz-160kHz.

These little monitors are very accurate and their desktop amplifier has enough power to make them go loud. They are proper hi-fi computer monitors. NK



amplifiers

A.A. PUCCHINI SE

The Pucinni SE has excellent power supply regulation, enabling output power to almost double to 95W into a 4Ω load, compared with the 50W it can deliver to an 8Ω load. The Pucinni should have good bass slam as a result. It will handle demanding low impedance loudspeakers too. Power output is sufficient for good volume in the averaged sized room.

There was a fair amount of distortion. I measured 0.45%, a very high figure, just below full output in the mid-band. This is probably due to lower feedback than usual, in an attempt to open out the sound. At these levels distortion may well add some coarseness to treble.

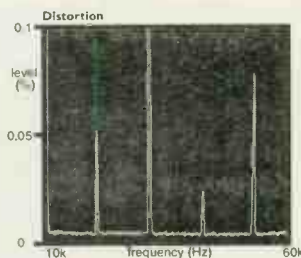
Both the CD input and the Phono input are band limited to 22kHz, to

reduce transient distortions. The disc stage reaches down to a low 6Hz but has a steep cut-off below this frequency. However, warps will still be a problem at times.

The Pucinni SE has high distortion. It may well benefit in some respects, but could also suffer too. It's best listened to carefully. NK

Power	50W
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	4Hz-22kHz
Separation	71dB
Noise	-101dB
Distortion	0.1%
Sensitivity	300mV
dc offset	0/0mV

Disc (MM)	
Frequency response	6Hz-22kHz
Separation	52dB
Noise	-80dB
Distortion	0.1%
Sensitivity	3.5mV
Overload	90mV



DENON 350SE

The Denon lacks tone controls but it has plenty of power, plus a good reputation. Denon's expertise shows in the phono stage, which at -79dB is very quiet. Low frequency response is extended, but not so far as to provide full gain for warps. Gain drops below 14Hz to reach -3dB at 8Hz. Accurate equalisation gives good tonal balance from LP.

Power output measured 72W into 8Ω, rising to 110W into 4Ω. Bandwidth with CD was wide, distortion low and sensitivity normal at 200mV.

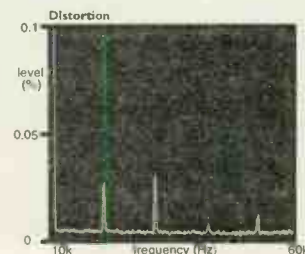
The Denon produces little distortion, even at high frequencies. Equal amounts

of second and third harmonic are unlikely to be irritating.

The PMA-350SE is a well-honed design that measures well, but it is much simpler than effective rivals from Sony and Marantz. NK

Power	72W
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	7Hz-87kHz
Separation	72dB
Noise	-94dB
Distortion	0.025%
Sensitivity	200mV
dc offset	1/3mV

Disc (MM)	
Frequency response	14Hz-94kHz
Separation	64dB
Noise	-79dB
Distortion	0.03%
Sensitivity	3mV
Overload	140mV



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MARANTZ PM4000

Coming from an arm of Philips, I was not surprised the Marantz was the only amplifier to comply with European requirements on disc stage equalisation. It has a warp filter that rolls off gain at exactly 40kHz, as specified by the IEC. It also had a roll-off above 40kHz. Equalisation across the audio band was accurate and noise low. The stage will give LP lighter sounding bass than most, but will suppress cone flap from warped discs.

The CD input was also band limited, running from 7Hz to 34kHz. Steady-state distortion was just about non-existent at low power outputs, unusual in a solid-state amplifier. The Marantz will likely have clean and smooth sounding treble.

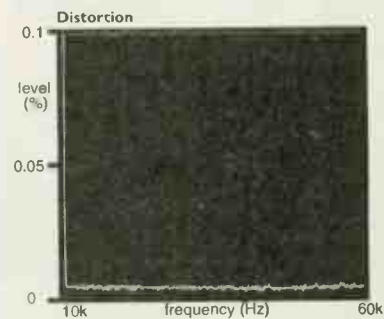
Tone controls were well engineered,

having no effect out of their band of operation, whilst providing 10dB of lift and cut at spectrum extremes. Marantz fit a loudness button that applies a little bass and treble lift at low volumes only.

The PM4000 was neatly engineered, showing no weaknesses or peculiarities other than a fixed IEC warp filter on the phono input. NK

Power	55W
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	7Hz-34kHz
Separation	68dB
Noise	-99dB
Distortion	0.005%
Sensitivity	200mV
dc offset	1.2/1.8mV

Disc (MM)	
Frequency response	40Hz-40kHz
Separation	57dB
Noise	-80dB
Distortion	0.006%
Sensitivity	3.2mV
Overload	140mV



MUSICAL FIDELITY A3 CR

The A3 pre-amplifier has a switchable moving magnet (MM) or moving coil (MC) phono stage for vinyl lovers. The MM section had a very little hiss, less than most amplifiers, and the MC stage was quiet too, being close to the best. Ignore the dB figures, which look worse because of the large amounts of gain available; I'm talking equivalent input noise (e.i.n.), which takes gain and the volume control setting into account. The MC stage was sensitive at 0.3mV for full output, so this pre-amp will accommodate low output MCs. The only ambiguity was a difference in low frequency extension between MM (15Hz) and MC (60Hz). The latter is too high; it will result in perceptibly light bass.

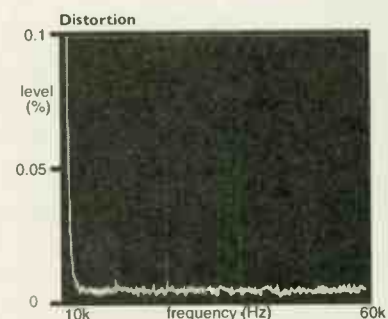
The power amplifier produces a healthy 136W into 8Ω, rising to 225W into 4Ω. Regulation was excellent, some-

thing a choke can compromise if poorly specified. Distortion was minimal, even under the most difficult conditions.

The A3 CR is a powerful amplifier with a fine set of specifications. Choke regulation and low distortion give a sense of smoothness rare with solid-state. NK

Power	136W
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	6Hz-96kHz
Separation	85dB
Noise	-86dB
Distortion	0.004%
Sensitivity	250mV
dc offset	15/24mV
Disc (MM)	
Frequency response	15Hz-42kHz
Separation	81dB
Noise	-77dB

Distortion	0.006%
Sensitivity	2.5mV
Overload	80mV
Disc (MC)	
Frequency response	60Hz-41kHz
Separation	76dB
Noise	-60dB
Distortion	0.006%
Sensitivity	0.3mV
Overload	11mV



ONKYO A-9211 AMPLIFIER

The Onkyo produces a healthy 60W into 8Ω and 90W into 4Ω, plenty enough power to get high volume from any loudspeaker. There's some grunt too; the internal power supply is beefy.

Onkyo fit a capable phono stage, although it is 6dB hissier than the more sophisticated Denon and Rotel stages. The Onkyo has a lot of subsonic gain too, which will produce good subjective bass weight, the drawback being cone flap with warped records.

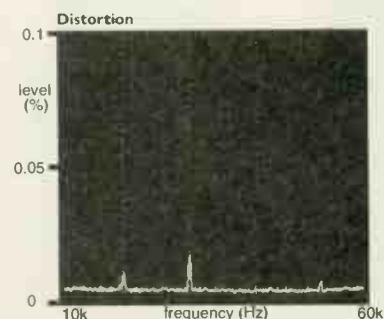
Also fitted are well-engineered tone controls, plus a loudness control that's linked to volume level. Bass and treble boost decline as volume is wound up,

a neat trick.

The Onkyo is powerful and well specified. It measures well too, if not up with the best. NK

Power	60W
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	7Hz-70kHz
Separation	74dB
Noise	-96dB
Distortion	0.01%
Sensitivity	180mV
dc offset	0.8/3mV

Separation	73dB
Noise	-73dB
Distortion	0.02%
Sensitivity	3mV
Overload	130mV



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PIONEER A-207R

The Pioneer A-207R has a buffered CD input that overloads at exactly 2V, producing 1.5% distortion - a peculiar and unusual problem. In practice music from CD peaks just below 2V and averages 1V or less so owners will not hear distortion. All the same it is a very poor specification. There's a line input that runs straight into the volume control, avoiding this problem.

Power output measured 50W into 8Ω and 81W into 4Ω, enough for good volume levels. Distortion levels were low, ignoring the CD headroom problem. The disc stage had low gain, input sensitivity measuring 4mV. There was very little hiss (e.i.n.), even taking low gain into account. Pioneer do not fit a warp filter so warped

records will produce cone flap.

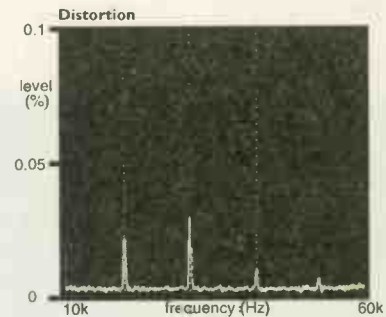
Conversely bass will sound extended subjectively.

The tone controls were very carefully engineered, as was the loudness contour, which is volume related.

The A-207R worked well enough, although it does exhibit early input overload on CD. NK

Power	50W
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	6Hz-44kHz
Separation	68dB
Noise	-97dB
Distortion	0.04%
Sensitivity	230mV
dc offset	mV

Disc (MM)	
Frequency response	11Hz-60kHz
Separation	62dB
Noise	-83dB
Distortion	0.06%
Sensitivity	4mV
Overload	150mV



ROTEL RA931

Rotel's RA-931 amplifier produces less power than many others in the group, turning out 50W into 8Ω and 72W into 4Ω. Distortion was low at just 0.005% in the midband, rising to 0.04% at high frequencies. There was a large rise to 0.3% into low loads, meaning the RA-931 will start to sound a little strained driving low impedance loudspeakers.

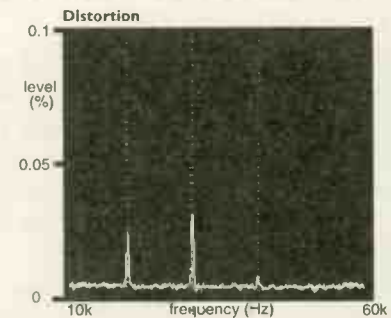
The RA-931 has wide bandwidth through its CD input, measuring 9Hz-80kHz. Rotel have curtailed low frequency response through the equalised phono stage however, gain dropping -3dB at 11Hz. This is enough to provide a little warp suppression. Like the Denon, the Rotel was very quiet on phono, producing 6dB less hiss than the Onkyo for example.

Rotel fit an excellent set of tone controls, with over-ride switch. They produced lift only at extremes of the audio band, affecting the midband little.

This is a well designed amplifier, although it has more distortion than some rivals. This will not necessarily sound intolerable, but careful listening will be the only way to decide. NK

Power	50watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	9Hz-80kHz
Separation	71dB
Noise	-97dB
Distortion	0.005%
Sensitivity	200mV
dc offset	0.8/3mV

Disc (MM)	
Frequency response	17Hz-140kHz
Separation	62dB
Noise	-79dB
Distortion	0.03%
Sensitivity	3mV
Overload	160mV



SONY TA-FB730R

The Sony has a large number of effective features. The tone controls worked very well, providing 10dB lift and cut at spectrum extremes. Switching them in by depressing an over-ride switch also makes available loudness compensation, which adds bass and treble lift at low levels. There's a subsonic filter too.

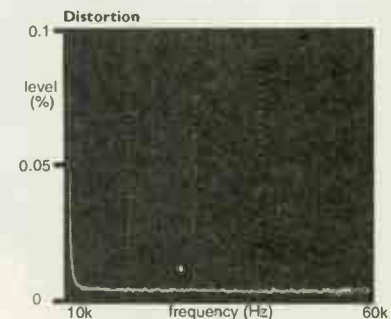
The filter cuts gain below 20Hz with CD and below 40Hz with LP, being a very effective warp filter that follows IEC requirements. Even without this, Sony roll down gain below 20Hz on the MM phono stage, so warped records will not be a problem with this amp. The phono stage was also unusually quiet, as well as sensitive. It measured very well in

every respect.

The power amplifier produces 55W and Sony's use of MOSFETs allows plenty of feedback to be used at 20kHz, keeping high frequency distortion right down to just 0.007% at full output - a very low value. NK

Power	55watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	12Hz-168kHz
Separation	76dB
Noise	-90dB
Distortion	0.004%
Sensitivity	120mV
dc offset	1.8/2mV

Disc (MM)	
Frequency response	18Hz-160kHz
Separation	76dB
Noise	-87dB
Distortion	0.004%
Sensitivity	2.3mV
Overload	150mV





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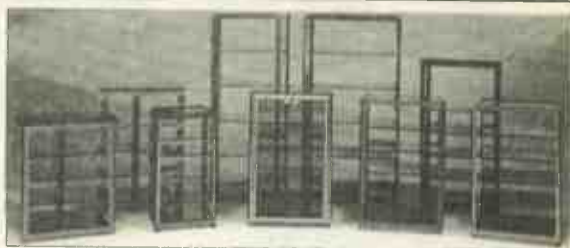
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
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MICHELL 150/HERA phono stage, £275. VDH CS122HB 4x 3.5 metres speaker cable £110. VDH D102III interconnect 1 metre £50. Mana Sound. bases size one £110. £500 the lot. Tel: 0181 205 6778 (Apr/I)

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AUDIO RESEARCH LS5 Mark 3 pre amp, remote (black) mint £2700. Audio Research V.T. 130 SE power amp (black) re.tubed mint £3450. 2 Lynwood Mega mains cleaners £140 each. Lynwood rack mains cleaner 6 outlets £140. Tel: 0207 702 4984 after 6pm (May/I)

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PINK TRIANGLE Da Capo DAC with 1307 HDCD filter very good condition £550 or will take Acoustic Energy AE-3 with stands in part exchange. Tel: 01904 763 157 (Apr/I)

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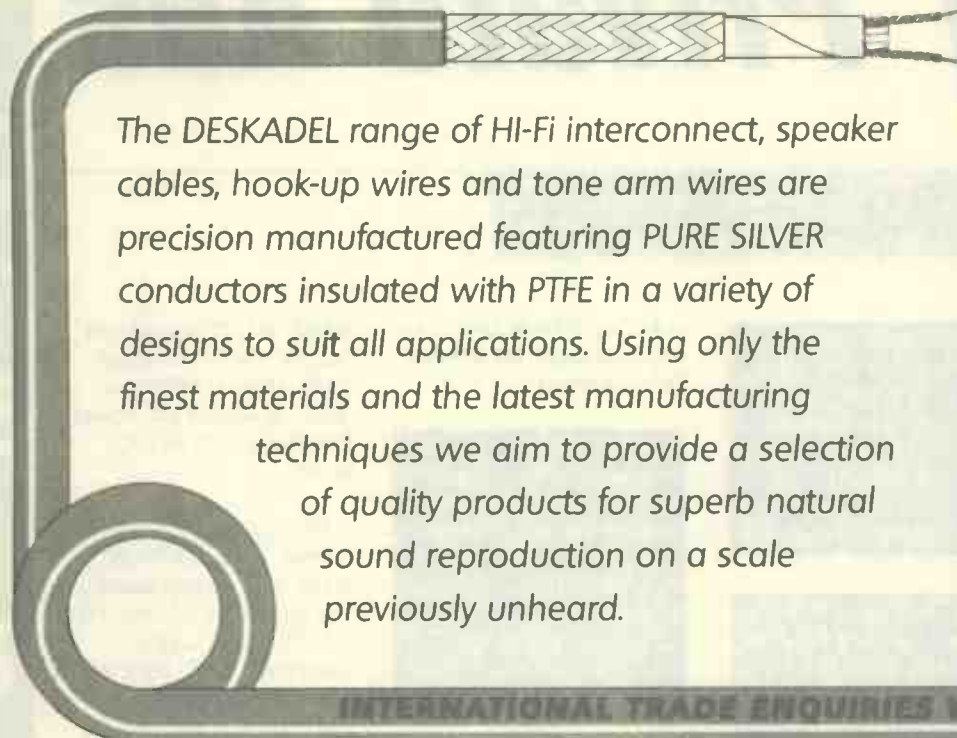
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PAIR QUICKSILVER monoblock valve amps with covers 60w. Recently rebuilt, new valves £575, cost new (£1700). P.S. Audio 6 preamp £200 (£650). Wilmslow Audio Vortex speakers and stands £200 (£750). Tel: 01753 885 728 (Apr/I)

THORENS TD 160 super turntable deck with lid. S.M.E. Series 111, Ortofon S.M.E. 30H £150. Leak (1960's) mini sandwich speakers £55. Harmon Kardon 770 amplifier, 725 stereo preamp, 710 FM/AM tuner, 705 cassette deck. Together £325. Celestion SL6 speakers £120. Tel: 01460 281 731 (Apr/I)

RARE 'PAIR'!!! Tannoy S.R.840 audio power amps, 250wpc, awesome 500 watts bridged mode, thermal protection, MOS FETS. Real, don't miss opportunity, very reluctant sale, £1200 ono. Tel: 01837 54683 Devon (Apr/I)

RUARK SOLSTICE (Yew Finish) £3200. KEF Reference Model Four (rosewood) £2250. All as new, complete with boxes/packaging etc. Tel: 0973 899 651 (Jun/I)

QUAD ESL 57s pair, hardly used, top condition £300. Tel: 01235 524 140 (6 miles from Oxford) (Apr/I)

ROKSAN DPI transport vgc £380 ono. Wanted: Roksan Hotcakes. Tel: 01354 650 318 (Apr/I)

QUAD SPARE system (grey) 34/ FM4/ 606, mint, boxed, cables, manuals £600. Denon CD3520, mint, solid build 17.kg, Tricord clocked £350. Mission 751's, rosewood, mint £125. Tel: 01202 829 811 evenings, (Bournemouth) (May/I)

NAIM CDS/I, boxed as new £1900. Meridian 208 pre amp/ CD + 209 remote £450. Bowers & Wilkins CDM7SE speakers (red ash) £675. Mission 774 speakers £350. Arcam Delta 170 transport + BB3 £250. Tel: 01952 502 097 (Telford) (Apr/I)

SUPERB VINYL replay - all mint, hardly used. Roksan Xerxes 10 deck (black), Artemiz arm, Ortofon MC30 Supreme, XPS5. £1700 the lot. Michel ISO + Hera £400. Tel: 01675 442 567 (Apr/I)

PINK TRIANGLE Anniversary SME Series 4 arm Lira Lidian cartridge £1400. Absolute mint boxed. Rotel Michi RHQ 10 phono stage mint condition boxed £325. Tel: 01443 685 492 (Apr/I)

WILMSLOW ELEGANCE speaker £150. VRR Adur valve monoblocs £600. Magnum IAI7OSE amplifier £275. Focal speaker units TC120 TDX pair £55. Audiom 7K2 pair £150. Audiom 15VX pair £500. Crossovers pair £80. Tel: 0181 531 5979 (Apr/I)

AVI PRE AMP, latest spec £450. AVI Stereo power amp £400. Teac P500/D500 2 box CD player £500. Castle Harlech speakers in yew £550. Linn Keilidh speakers £350. Audio Innovation 400 integrated valve amp £300. Tel: 01977 643 629 (Apr/I)

KESWICK AUDIO Figaro speakers, rosewood, £490. Audio Innovation Series 1000 Triode mono block power amps £1000. A.V.I. pre amp and mono block power amps £700. Tannoy P4 speakers in cherry £500. Gale 401 speakers in walnut £275. Tel: 01977 643 629 (Apr/I)

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-10D enhancer £45. Sonic Link yellow power cord 4ft (£70) £20. Signals blackcurrant power cords 2 x 1.5m (£110) £30. All lightly used and mint. Tel: 01752 773 369 (Apr/I)

CONRAD JOHNSON PV12 linestage zero feedback triode £990 (£2000). Audio Research PH3 phono stage £750 (£1500). Both latest models, 18 months old, mint and boxed. Tel: 0181 325 2585 (Apr/I)

JT HORN loudspeakers. Fitted with Lowther DX3 units, superb sounding, retail for £2700. Accept £1250. Tel: 0181 994 2030 after 6pm. (Apr/I)

AUDIOLAB CD £550. EPOS ES14 4 1/2 years warranty £275. Chord Rumor bi-wire 4 metres £60. Target turntable shelf £20. Nordost Black Knight £30. All items boxed and mint. Tel: 07967 646 089 (Apr/I)

REGA PLANAR 3, blue finish, mega bearing upgrade, Elys cartridge good condition £165. Musical Fidelity X-Cans £65. Jecklin Float Model Two headphones £50. Unused boxed as new. Tel: Stuart 0121 748 5683 (Birmingham) (Apr/I)

ROKSAN XERXES rosewood Artemiz Shiraz XPS III DS2 £750. R.A.T.A. 1000VA power supply. +26V.0 - 26V £200. XPS V 5 pin speed controller £230. Tel: 0181 991 9259 or 0403 189 225 (Apr/I)

LINN AXIS turntable, basic arm. Immaculate condition, genuine reason for sale £240 ono. Tel: Prav 01753 853 867 or 07990 590 677 (Apr/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000A amplifier 70wpc (latest model) £225. Linn LP12 Valhalla, Akito arm, K9 £550. Trio KR 7400 receiver, 63 wpc, offers. Each excellent condition. Tel: 01384 878 439 or 07899 665 424 (Apr/I)

LINN SONDEK Lingo Ittok LVII Klyde cartridge only 3 months use £850. Trilogy 900 pre amp and 905 head amp £400. Lyra Lydian just been re-tipped £300. Marantz CD52 Mk2 SE £60. Tel: 0151 289 9755 (Apr/I)

NAIM NAC82 pre amp with MC boards (£1300). Naim Hi-Cap (£400). Naim NAP250 power amp (£1100) or all for (£2600). All new style cases boxed as new. Tel: 02920 761 841 (Cardiff) (Apr/I)

MAGNEPLANAR SMG b panel speakers 19"W x48"H. Were "Choice" excellent/excellent £200. Bang and Olufsen Beocentre 7007, L.P., radio, cassette. Perfect for quality timer recordings off air £30. Tel: Mr. Ronaldson 01837 840 438 (Apr/I)

MONITOR AUDIO PMC 703 speakers in cherry with plinths £400. Wanted: Audiolab 8000Q pre amp late model. Tel: 01395 275 698 evenings (Devon) (Apr/I)

HI-FI WORLD favourites Sonneteer Alabaster (silver) £550. Pink Triangle Tarantella Rega RB300 A.T. cartridge £500. Also Pro-Ac Studio 100 mid cherry finish filled Atacama stands £475. Tel: 0181 546 1414 or 07971 266 361 (Apr/I)

QUAD 303 power amplifier dated 1983 £150 ono. Quad 34 control unit dated 1983 £100 ono. Garrard 301 turntable with SME arm series II £175 ono. 2 Quad electrostatic speakers serial no. 9901 circa early 1960's £275 ono. All with instruction books. NAD 4020A stereo tuner £85 ono. Tel: 01427 612 030 (Apr/I)

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ALR JORDAN NO4	NEW	£1200	£719	MUSICAL FIDELITY X-A1 AMP	NEW	£475	£379
ALR JORDAN TAKE 2	NEW	£1700	£995	MARANTZ CD6000 OSE	XD	£299	£239
ALR JORDAN TAKE 4	XD	£2000	£995	MARANTZ PM6010 OSE	XD	£299	£179
ANTHEM CD1 CD	XD	£1700	£899	MARANTZ SR5000 DTS RECEIVER	XD	£500	£379
ANTHEM INT 2 AMP	XD	£1800	£995	MARK LEVINSON 380S PRE	XD	£6500	£4500
AVI BIGGATRON	XD	£599	£469	NAD 514 CD	XD	£370	£229
AVI NUNEUTRON	XD	£499	£359	NAD C340 AMP	XD	£270	£199
ACOUSTIC ENERGY AE120SE	XD	£600	£399	NAD C440 TUNER	XD	£200	£150
ACOUSTIC ENERGY AEGIS 2	XD	£250	£179	OPERA PRIMA	XD	£495	£349
ACOUSTIC ENERGY AEGIS ONE	XD	£150	£99	PIONEER PDS5005 PRECISION CD	XD	£460	£229
ATC SCM10 YEW	XD	£1080	£649	PIONEER PDS904 CD	XD	£400	£199
ATC S1A2-150 INT AMP	XD	£1995	£1399	PIONEER PDR509 CDR	NEW	£300	£229
AUDIO ANALOGUE BELLINI (PRE)	XD	£495	£369	PIONEER CLD515/2 LASER DISC	XD	£550	£249
AUDIO ANALOGUE DONIZETTI (PWR)	XD	£595	£439	LEXICON DC1 PROCESSOR	XD	£5000	£2500
AUDIO ANALOGUE PUCCINI SE	XD	£635	£469	MERIDIAN M100 WALNUT	SH	£3500	£750
CHARIO ACADEMY ONE	NEW	£1450	£899	PROJECT CLASSIC (CHERRY)	XD	£450	£379
CHARIO ACADEMY ONE	XD	£1450	£799	PROJECT 1.2	XD	£200	£149
CHARIO ACADEMY TWO	XD	£1700	£919	PROJECT DEBUT	XD	£110	£89
CHARIO ACADEMY THREE	XD	£8500	£3995	ROTEL RA971 MKI AMP	XD	£225	£159
COPLAND CDA266 CD	XD	£1300	£995	ROTEL RA971 MKII AMP	XD	£250	£169
COPLAND CSA28 INT	XD	£1349	£995	ROTEL RC 971 PRE	XD	£150	£99
CREEK CD43 CD PLAYER	XD	£600	£389	ROTEL RC 972 PRE	XD	£250	£169
CREEK P43 PRE	XD	£250	£159	ROTEL RB 971 MKII PWR	XD	£225	£159
CREEK A52SE PWR	XD	£600	£389	RANE THX 5CH GRAPHIC	NEW	£995	£549
CREEK 4330 INT	XD	£280	£179	QUAD 99 PRE AMP			
DIAPHASON ADEMANTES III INC STANDS	XD	£2450	£1795	QUAD 99 CD PLAYER			
EPOS ES22 CHERRY	XD	£1350	£749	QUAD 99 FM TUNER			
INFINITY KAPPA80	XD	£1000	£649	QUAD 909 PWR AMP			
JBL CONTROL 1G	NEW	£150	£99	TEAC REF 500 SYSTEM	XD	£800	£639
LINN KAIRN C/W PHONO	XD	£1700	£995	TEAC REF 300 SYSTEM	XD	£600	£479
LINN GENKI CD	XD	£995	£795	TANNOY CANTERBURY 15HE	XD	£8500	£5995
LINN KOLEKTOR PRE	XD	£495	£395	UNISON RESEARCH SIMPLY 845	XD	£3085	£1995
LINN LK85 PWR	XD	£475	£375	UNISON SIMPLY ONE	SH	£1200	£650
LINN CLASSIK	XD	£995	£849				
MUSICAL FIDELITY XA100R	XD	£1000	£599				

EX = EX DISPLAY, SH = SECOND HAND, NEW = BRAND NEW BOXED

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	WAS	NOW		WAS	NOW
CABLETALK TALK 3.1	£2.50	£1.50 PM	NORDOST RED DANN 1 PAIR 3M XLR/XLR XD	£640	£299
CABLETALK TALK 3.1 BW	£5.00	£2.99 PM	NORDOST SOLARWIND 1M	£85	£49
CABLETALK TALK 4.1	£4.50	£2.00 PM	NORDOST RED DAWN 1 PAIR 1M XLR/XLR	£330	£169
CABLETALK TALK 4.1 BW	£9.00	£4.50 PM	PRECIOUS METALS SILVER 18FW 2X3M BW	£250	£210
CABLETALK TALK 2.1 BW	£16.00	£8.00 PM	QED QNECT 4 1M	£50	£27
CABLETALK STUDIO 2 XLR 1M	£70.00	£35	QED QUODOS SILVER	£5.00	£2.99 PM
CABLETALK MONITOR 2.1 1M	£50.00	£25	QED SILVER ANNIVERSAY BW	£8.50	£5.00 PM
CABLETALK MONITOR 2.1 .5M	£40.00	£20	VAN DEN HUL PB5 HB .8M	£50	£29
CABLETALK TALK 3.1S	£4.00	£2.00 PM	VAN DEN HUL SOURCE HB .8M	£65	£35
NORDOST MOONGLO DIGITAL 1M XLR/XLR XD	£200	£99	VAB DEN HUL D102 III .8M	£80	£45
NORDOST BLUE HEAVEN 1 PAIR 1M XLR/XLR XD	£180	£89	VAN DEN HUL CS122 HB	£13.50	£7 PM
			VAN DEN HUL ROYAL JADE HB	£11	£6 PM
			VAN DEN HUL TEATRACK HB	£24	£12 PM

ALL CABLES ARE NEW UNLESS MARKED XD - EX DISPLAY/DEMONSTRATION
PM = PER METRE BW = BIWIRE

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Atlas (£1800) £795,
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M.F. P270 MkII preamp
(£1500) boxed £595. Aragon
24k pre amp design by Krell
cost (£1500) £425. M.C. 20
Supreme low use £195. Tel:
01634 387 686 (Apr/I)

LINN MAJIK amplifier with
phono stage. Excellent con-
dition £350. Tel: Mark 0114
254 8436 or 0410 266 440
(Sheffield area) (Apr/I)

ARCAM DELTA 290 amplifier
£250. Good condition,
boxed, remote control. Sale
due to upgrade. Can demo.
Tel: 01780 753 079 or leave
a message (Apr/I)

LINN LP12 Jttok rebuilt
Troika £600. Naim 32.5
Hicap 140 old style £700.
Naim IBL speakers 2 x 10
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£275. NAD 412 tuner £60.
All ono Tel: 01977 512
845 (Apr/I)

MERIDIAN 204 tuner refurb-
ished, mint condition, last of
the Meridian set up to go.
Demonstration anytime. Tel:
Mike O'Driscoll 01323 842
227 (East Sussex) (Apr)

YAMAHA AX570 amp £100.
Yamaha KX380 cassette
£75. B&W 602 MkI £100 (all
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filled £35. Interconnects
Chord Cobra £20. SonicLink
silver pink £20. D.B.F. azure
£30. Tel: 01978 750 575
(Apr)

BOOTHROYD STUART
rosewood Meridian M20 two-
way three unit integrated
active speakers £400.
Musical Fidelity MVT ampli-
fier with pre-amp £50. Rotel
AM/FM tuner RT830 £25.
Tel: 01932 247 406
evenings/weekends. Email:
jfpettitt@cs.com (May/I)

DYNAUDIO CONTOUR 1.8
MkII loudspeakers rosewood
as new, two years old, boxed
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Tel: Chris 0181 592 9797
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ROGERS LS7t speakers.
Walnut. £275. Also Visaton
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Tel: 01274 632 492
(Bradford, Yorkshire) (Apr)

NAIM CDi, mint condition,
boxed, remote control,
manual £1000. Tel: Chris
01767 317 166 (Apr/I)

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excellent, boxed £2500.
Altec speakers A7500
£1000. GE 211 VT4C x 2,
new, boxed £80 each. Tel:
01189 310 410 (Apr/I)

LEAK TL12 plus valve
power amp monoblocks
enamelled gold, superb
condition £295. Hafler
solid state pre amp vgc
£75. Tel: 01273 724 970
anytime or mobile phone
0403 791 279 (Apr/I)

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ing Quad Lumley, Audio
Innovation, Audion
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Fidelity A1000, DPA 505 KEF
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boxed. Phone for details Tel:
01992 718 265 (May/I)

CYRUS dAD 3Q CD play-
er £450. Primare A20.2
amplifier £400. Mission
750LE speakers on
Atacama stands £130.
Tannoy DC2000 floor-
standing speakers £130.
All mint and boxed Tel:
01765 600 450 (N.Yorks)
(Apr/I)

NAKAMICHI DRAGON ser-
viced mint 1994 (£2200)
£1200. Studer A80 on trolley
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remote (£900) £380. Quad
FM4/34/405-2 wood rack
MM/MC stages boxed manu-
als vgc £400. Tel: 0161 764
8888 or 0161 762 9884
(Apr/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000Q pre-
amplifier £575. Audiolab
8000SX, 8000P, 8000PX
power amplifiers for sale
£375, £450, £550 respective-
ly, KEF Reference Series 4
speakers, Rosetta Burr
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Reference 200 centre speak-
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boxed. Tel: 00353 509
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(Apr/I)

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01293 411 500 (Apr/I)

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Innovations P1 phono £195.
All excellent condition. Tel:
01460 72545 (Apr/I)

MERIDIAN 506 CD player,
excellent condition £375.
Micromega Stage 2 CD play-
er £180. Castle Keep centre
speaker, black £120. Tel:
0117 941 1729 Bristol (Apr/I)

MUSICAL FIDELITY E200
pre E300 power (£1300)
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M73 power PD73 CD CT91A
cassette (£2900) £1000 ono.
B&W 802 Series 3 walnut
(£3000) £1200 ono. Sansui
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range Mash DAC balanced
(£1550) £430 ono. Pioneer
Ref C90 pre amp £200 ono.
Wanted: Quad 67 CD player
and 66 tuner, cash paid or
will do deal with something
above. Tel: 0121 742 2015
(Apr/I)

ACOUSTIC 3311 speakers
12" polywoofer 5" midrange
3" tweeter liquid cooled max
power 125 watts, little use
boxed bargain £600 ono. Tel:
07932 062 060 Email:
scbrooks@globalnet.co.uk
(Apr/I)

WANTED: MUSICAL FIDELI-
TY E624 CD player. Tel:
07901 687 971 (Apr/I)

MISSION 762F black loud-
speakers. Few hours use
only £280. NAD 1300 pre
£100. Both mint. Boxed. Tel:
01444 413 782 Sussex
(Apr/I)

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complete Aktiv System,
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Numerik, Kairn, LK100 x 3,
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x 2RS £65. Tel: 01792 798
253 or 01792 651 532 day-
time (Apr/I)

REGA XEL floorstanding
speakers. Furniture quality
finish. Lovely sound. Half
price bargain at £520.
Soundcraft Absolute 4P
active monitors. Superb.
Little use £495 (£800) Target
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Dynavector DV10X cartridge
£100 (£200) Tel: 0171 613
0136 (Apr/I)

VOYD TURNTABLE 0.5 ref-
erence bearing/ platter, split-
phase, light oak, Helius
Orion arm, Lyra Lydian, little
use, immaculate, boxed, can
deliver £1950. Tel: 01730
263 473 Email:
ndoe@dtuk.co.uk (Apr/I)

NAIM CD 3-5 CD player
£725. 02 tuner £700. 82 pre
amp £1400. 180 power amp
£725. Hi-Caps £425 each.
Epos ES12 (dark cherry)
plus Atacama stands £400.
5-tier sound tower £200. All
boxed can demonstrate.
Offers considered. Reluctant
sale. Tel: 0786 759 8469
Gatwick (Apr/I)

MERIDIAN 200 transport
£295, Meridian 263 DAC
£175 or both with intercon-
nect £450. Tel: Wyn 01873
854 349 or 07974 413 005
(Apr/I)

WANTED CELESTION
SL600si or SL600 speakers.
Tel: 01782 535 652 (Stoke-
on-Trent) (Apr/I)



Hand and ex-demo clearance items - April '00

	Was	Now		Was	Now
CD players & DAC'S			Amplifiers		
Audio Alchemy DDE1.0V D/A converter	399	149	Audion Sterling Power amplifier	599	349
Audio Alchemy Power Station 2	250	99	Audion Sterling Integrated Line	799	449
Audiolab 8000 DAC Improved 20 bit	1000	399	Audio Note P1 Power amplifier	750	499
Audio Note ANCD2 Valve CD player (new boxed)	1000	695	Albarry 408 Mono Block Amplifiers	N/A	399
Audio Note ANCD2 Valve CD player	1000	499	Chord SPM1000B 200W Balanced Power amplifier	2920	1599
Audio Synthesis DAX2 HDCD balanced	3000	1499	Pass Aleph 4 100W Class A Power amplifier	5500	3695
Deva 600 CD player	699	349	Roksan Caspian Integrated (New & boxed)	795	595
Deva DAC	495	199	Roksan Caspian Power amps (New & boxed)	599	449
DPA Enlightenment Drive / Transport (New Style)	995	695	Quad 33/303 Amplifiers (New caps fitted)	N/A	250
DPA SX64 DAC 24/96	800	599	Quad 606 Power amplifier	N/A	450
Nakamichi DV10 DVD DTS / 5.1	799	599	Unison Research Simply 845 Valve Integrated	3095	1999
Naim Audio CD 3.5 (5 months old)	1050	799			
Marantz CD10 CD player	1099	449	Loudspeakers		
Marantz CD94 Mk II CD player	N/A	399	Audio Note AN-E/L Rosewood Loudspeakers	1680	950
Marantz CDA 94 D/A converter	N/A	299	Audio Note AN-J/SP Light Oak Loudspeakers	1230	750
Marantz CD 52SE CD player	350	129	Audio Note AN-K/SP Light Ash Loudspeakers	1070	629
Meridian 566 20 Bit D/A converter	950	450	Celestion SL600 Loudspeakers	675	275
Micromega Stage3	999	495	Impulse Maya Loudspeakers	695	399
Primare D20 24/96 CD player	695	575	KEF Reference 100 C Centre speaker	350	175
Quad 77 CD player	900	499	Musical Fidelity MC5 Loudspeakers stands	899	249
Rega Planet CD player	450	325	Snell J MK2 Loudspeakers Black / Huygens stands	900	349
Restek ConcretII CD player	2500	1399	Totem Arrow Cherry	950	699
Roksan Atessa DP2 MKII	1499	699			
Roksan Caspian CD player	895	650	Cables & Accessories		
Rotel RCD965BX CD player	350	149	DPA White Slink 1M	99	45
			DPA The Power / Power Slink	199	125
Turntables Tonearms & Cartridges			Kimber 8TC 2 x 5M	356	180
Aphelion Audio 401 Plinths (New & various finishes)	250	169	Kimber 4TC 2 x 5M	169	99
Decca London Gold (Garrot Re-build)	N/A	195	Kimber 8TC Mains Cable 3ft IEC	84	49
Lyra Parnassius 600 Hrs	1895	699	Kimber 8TC Mains Cable 6ft Figure of eight	140	75
Roksan DS5 PSU	549	479	Kimber PSB 0.5 Interconnect	59	29
Roksan Xerxes Black Ash/Tabrizi/XPS3.5/DSU	1795	695	Kimber PSB 1.0 Interconnect	68	38
Roksan Xerxes X Black/Tabrizi/Corus (New & boxed)	2072	1200	Musical Fidelity X-10D Line Tube stage	129	75
Transfiguration AF-1 Moving Coil Cartridge (400 hrs)	1350	350	Nordost Flatline Bi-wire 2x10m	480	250
			Roksan Turntable Stand (medium)	129	79
			Roksan Turntable Stand (tall)	169	99
			VDH The First 1m Interconnect	220	149
Preamplifiers					
Audio Note M1 Phono preamplifier	750	599	Tuners & Tape Decks		
Audio Note M2 Line preamplifier	999	750	JBL ESC 200 Surround Package	299	199
Audio Note M3 Phono preamplifier	4650	2750	Naim Audio 02 Tuner	1200	695
Audio Research LS2 Hybrid preamplifier	2890	1299	Revox B77 fi Track 3fi - 7fi Mk1 Reel to reel	1600	549
DPA Enlightenment (New style)	799	599	Roksan Caspian Tuner AM / FM	599	449
Musical Fidelity F22 Remote Controlled	999	449	Yamaha DSP 1000E Processor	899	199
Quad 66 Preamplifier / Remote	800	450			

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SUGDEN MASTERCLASS pure class "A" power amp. Mint. Boxed. 10 months old. £2550 (£3000). Sugden AU5IC preamp £650 (£995). Spondor 5P2 speakers/stands £190 ono. Tel: 0385 771 819 or 01293 611 293 (Apr/I)

KEF REFERENCE 104/2 speakers. Rosewood. As new, still sounding superb. Original boxes and manual. Come and listen (Sussex coast) £350 ono. Tel: 01243 555 632 (Arundel) (Apr/I)

E.A.R. 834P phono pre amp with volume control £150. J.B.L. subwoofer 60W £60. Pioneer separates system CD, minidisc recorder, tuner, surround sound £300. No offers. Tel: 01524 63838 (Apr/I)

KRELL KSA 150 power amp. Mint. Boxed. Manuals. £1750 (£5500). MIT Terminator Proline balanced interconnect £90 (£250). Audio Research LS5 MkII balanced pre amp £1900 (£5800) Tel: Bill 01993 851 508 (Apr/I)

S800 ANNIVERSARY amp. Silver circuit board full upgrade components, valves and £1000 PSU by Border Patrol. Superb! £1250. Living Voice Auditorium, immaculate £785. Tel: 01224 572 370 evenings (Apr/I)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS DAX Decade stunning DAC and pre amp £1500. Marantz CD94 player also dynamic transport, very light use £275. Tel: 01224 572 370 evenings (Apr/I)

MORDANT SHORT 442 speakers unusual. Electrocompaniet integrated. Leak TLI2s Perreux SM2. Pre. Wanted Electrostatic ribbon hybrid, or unusual speakers. Reasonable prices please or swops. Tel: 01626 774 246 (Apr/I)

CELESTION DITTON 25 speakers £125 ono. Tel: Mr Smith 01525 261 238 (Milton Keynes) (Apr/I)

WILSON 5.1 Desert Topo Nov 98 No.6643,4 . Awesome (£18,000) £11,000. Jadis 200 power October 89, latest protection circuits magnificent! (£15,000) Bargain £5,500. Concordant exquisite pre amp (cherry) 14.01.98 (£2000) bargain £750. Tel: 01902 786 818 (Midlands) (Apr/I)

REGA PLANET CD player, boxed £325. Rega Mira amplifier, boxed £275. KEF Reference Two speakers, boxed, black £975. Chord Chrysalis interconnects £25. All excellent condition. Tel: 01793 526 796 (Apr/I)

LINN TRAMPOLINN base kit £50. Chord Company Cobra 2, Din to Din £50. van den Hul D102/III, XLRs balanced interconnect £40. Stands Unique carbon fibre cone/spikes 3-set £8. Tel: 01793 526 796 (Apr/I)

CASTLE HARLECH speakers mahogany, beautiful high end sound. Twelve months old. £400. Swap Audio Note AN CD2, Pioneer DV 717 or CD offers. Tel: 0161 727 8885 will not post speaker, personal callers only. (Apr/I)

CROFT SERIES 3 OTL/OCL monoblocks. Fully upgraded with Aerovox mains capacitors, silver signal wire. Audionote copper foils and fully re-valved. Superb open transparent music maker! £900. Tel: 01384 271 571 (Apr/I)

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RUARK TALISMAN II speakers, mahogany, pristine £475 (£799). Teac PD D880 5 CD player £225. Denon DRS810 tape deck £100. Denon TUS80RD tuner £85. Technics SUV2X integrated amp £100. Tel: 01702 712 091 (Southend) (Apr/I)

SONY CDP-557ES, flagship 20kg CD player, awesome transport, (£1200), £350. Marantz CD-54, classic first generation player with CDM-1 Pro transport, gold, (£400), £60. Aiwa AT9700 tuner, huge battleship FM only (£300), £95. Sony ST-J60 tuner, high end slimline FM only (£220), £65. Sony EL5 Elcaset, recent service, plus 20 FeCr tapes (£395), £95. Sony XL-55 Pro MC, 10 hours only, very rare! (£250), £95. All mint, boxed, light use, can deliver. Wanted: Mission 775S, Sony TCK81. Tel: 07939 084 514 anytime. (Apr/I)

MICHELL GYRO deck, Fidelity Research arm, Goldbug Briar cartridge £295. Nakamichi RX-505E cassette deck £245. Trio Labs L-01A 110 watt Class 'A' amplifier, extensively rebuilt, big, black and powerful £125. Tel: 01634 296 346 (Kent) (Apr/I)

EXPOSURE XI Pre-amplifier with Exposure XII power supply (£1350). Asking price £695. Tel: Laurence 01270 871 390 (day), 07879 460 935 (mobile) (Apr/I)

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-Dac CD upgrade with HDCD facility £185. Tel: 0141 334 2728 (Apr/I)

AVI S2000 Reference CD £749, S2000 tuner £399, S2000 preamp + phono £749, S2000 monoblocks 150wpc £839 (pair), ProAc Studio 100 speakers £399, Target RS2 stands £149. Tel: 01992 628 848 (Apr/I)

GARRARD 301 and 401 chassis only, excellent condition £115 and £95. Rega Planar 3, Rega arm RB100 £150. SME 3009, boxed £75. Various old hi-fi equipment. Tel: Barry 01472 870 367 (NE Lincs) (Apr/I)

IMPULSE H2 Loudspeakers £1200 ono. Reluctant sale, house move. Tel: 01772 687 133 or 0370 634 486 (Apr/I)

LEAK STEREO 20 £250. Croft Micro 'A' £140. Musical Fidelity B1 integrated £115. Wanted: Marantz CD94 Atlas PSU for Alphason Sonata turntable. Tel: 01780 764 149 (Apr/I)

PROAC TABLETTE 2000 Signature birds eye maple, matching Target R2000 stands, four months old. excellent condition, original boxes £600. Madrigal Iriq remote control £150. Audiophile Furniture six tier with three platforms, excellent condition, original boxes £200. Tel: 07974 250 869 (Apr/I)

XLO INTERCONNECTS. 1x 0.5mtr pair Reference Type 1 £75. 1x 0.5mtr Reference Type 4 digital £50. 1x 0.5mtr pair signature Type 1.1 £150. Stands Unique midi rack 32"H, 14"W, 13"D, 5 shelves. Tel: 01249 821 288 (Apr/I)

PROAC STUDIO 200 rosewood £895 ono. Monolith 20/20 2x5m £210. audio Innovations P2 £475 ono. Gamma Acoustics Aeons Mk3 single ended amps £2000 ono. All vgc. Tel: 023 9266 2772 (Apr/I)

TEAC V6030S Cassette deck, only 10 hours use, mint, boxed (£550) £275. Michell Hera power supply (£175) £60. Michell Iso HR with Lithus A upgrade, mint, boxed (£1075) £595. B&W IF6000S centre speaker (£199) £50. Tel: Tony 01189 344 447 (Apr/I)

WANTED: MICHELL Focus 1 or 1S with Focus tonearm, Michell Hydraulic Reference turntable with Fluid Arm, Michell Prisma turntable. All must be original. Cash paid. Tel: Tony 01189 344 447 (Apr/I)

MORDAUNT SHORT Performance 860 Reference speakers. 5 star reviews, excellent condition £995. Tel: 01869 278 249 (May/I)

LUMLEY ST70 Power amplifier, switched pentode triode £650. Tel: 01724 336 113 (Apr/I)



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AFFORDABLE VALVE COMPANY Model EL34. Quality 30 watts Class A valve amplifier £600. Thick aluminium front panel. Detachable safety cage for hot valves. FREE colour literature. 1 month HOME TRIAL. Tel: 01634 373 410 anytime (Oct/I)

EMT 948 £550, 950 £850, Nagra Stereo £2000, Studer A807 £950, A810 £800, B67 £650, A80 VU £850, A710 £550, Technics SP10 MkII £280, SLP1200 CD £550, Revox G36 HS £500. Tel: 01246 235 024, Fax: 01246 550 421 (Apr/I)

X.DEM TUBE technology Unisis Signature, power amp, (£1900) £995. Castle Harlech Sendor SPI speakers. Various Ortofons. Records cleaned. SME Model 10 on dem. Tel: South West Analogue 01643 851 351 anytime (Apr/I)

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Tel: 0171 258 3448
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ROGERS LS88 Floorstanding speakers. Brand new and boxed. Black only. £175 pair. Massive saving on list! Very few left at this special price. Call Mitcham Loudspeakers 0181 648 0743 or 01344 873 943 (24hr answerphone) (Apr/I)

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