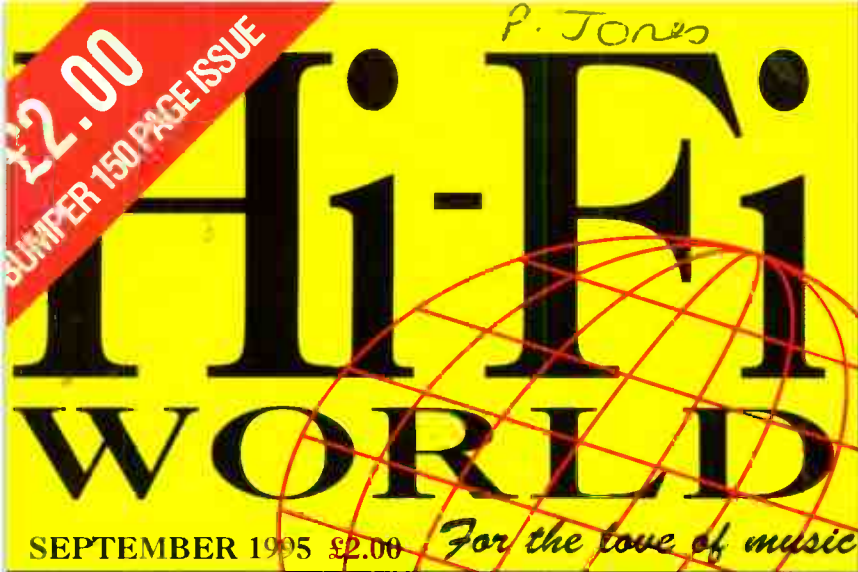


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**MISSION 734
LOUDSPEAKERS**

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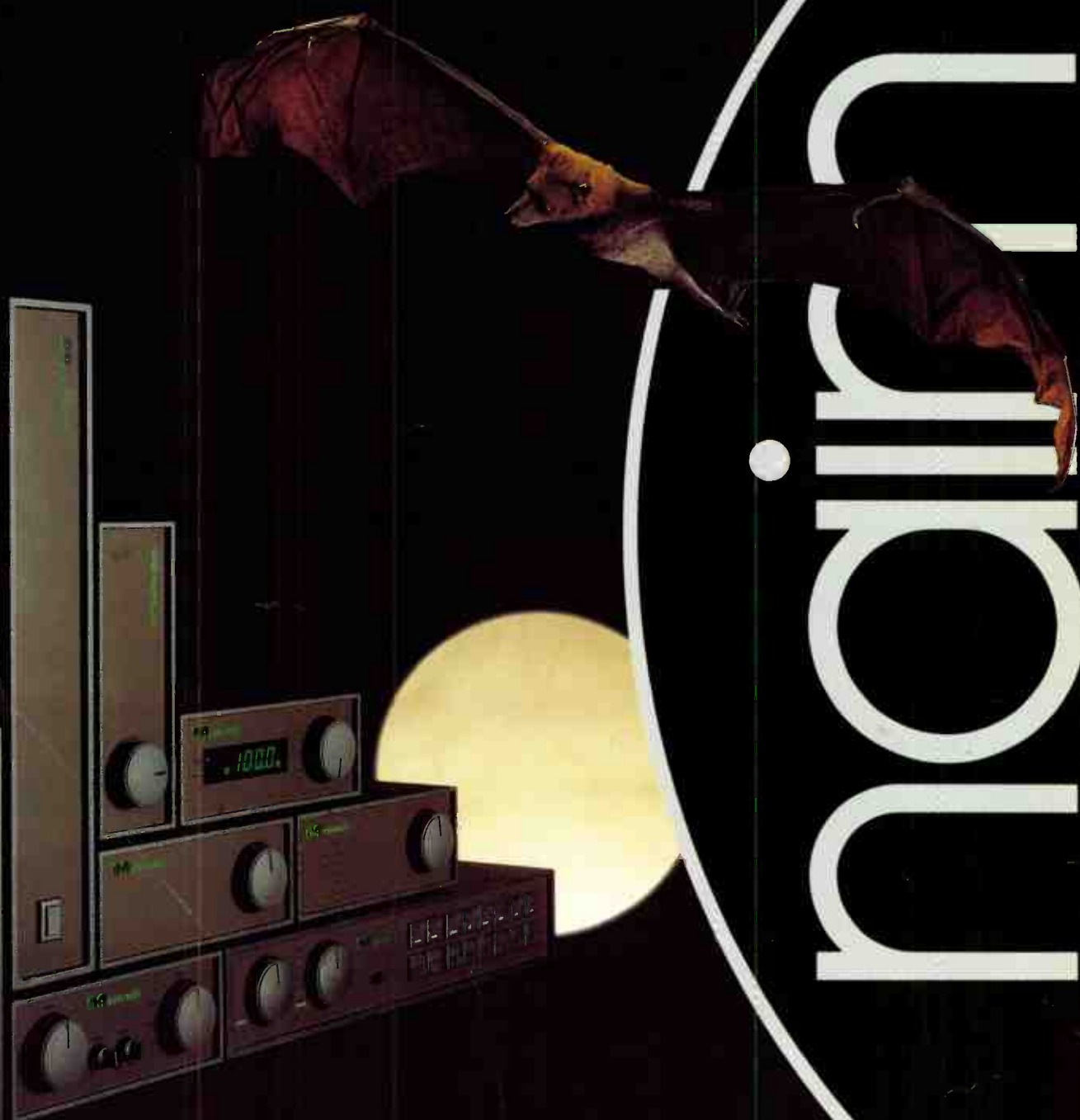
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This Month's World

- Every now and again, NAD come up with a textbook example of affordable audio engineering - just listen to the 402 tuner for proof of this. Will the new 614 cassette deck also have rivals on the run? See p13.
- McIntosh is a venerable US manufacturer renowned for stunning "big Mac" valve amplifiers. Now they've released a monster solid-state amp. See p20 for their latest recipe.
- B&W tried it long ago and Sony more recently. Now Cadence of India have had a go, combining an electrostatic midrange to a dynamic bass in one giant loudspeaker. It sounds great - see p42.
- In the struggle to advance, amplifier design is getting strange these days. Check out Alchemist's beautifully styled low feedback Axiom on p23, and TEAC's balanced-bridge A-BX10 on p31.
- Mission have produced some great 'speakers in their time. Their £430 734 floorstanders look good too, but face stiff competition - from Mission! See p26.

CD brought convenience to the public and economical storage to the music business. But it didn't advance sound quality - some claim the opposite, including me. This isn't blind prejudice as measurement shows it has significant limitations.

Now we're getting a real advance. The two new proposed video carriers have enough storage capacity for ultra-high quality audio - and a working group of digital engineers and industry academics have put forward a 21st century specification. But don't panic, backwards compatibility means your CDs won't become obsolete! We bring you an exclusive, on p34, of what could be a monumental advance for music lovers.

Noel Keywood, Editor

S H O W ! S H O W ! S H O W !

Hear our DIY kit designs at the Sound & Vision Show, Cumberland Hotel, Marble Arch, London. It's a great venue for real hi-fi, held from 21st-24th September 1995 (the same time as Live 95, so you can go to both). We'll be there, with a stand and a room.

TEST EQUIPMENT



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

LISTENING ROOM (TREATED BY RPG ACOUSTIC TOOLS)



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see page 68 for details

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THIS MONTH'S REVIEWS

AMPLIFIERS

McINTOSH MA6800 20

How do monster transistor amps weigh up? Dominic Baker listens to £3500 of America's finest.

ALCHEMIST AXIOM 23

This intriguing £300 integrated from metalworking masters Alchemist is reviewed by Douglas Floyd-Douglass.

TEAC AB-X10 31

David Price asks whether this upmarket Japanese integrated amplifier can compare to the best of British?



MISSION 734 26

Mission's medium sized budget floorstander goes more for showroom appeal than outright sound, finds David Price.

CADENCE ES 42

Douglas Floyd-Douglass listens to these imposing £3500 electrostatic/moving coil hybrid loudspeakers from India.

REVOLVER COLT 65

It's tough on the shelves for small 'speakers, so can Revolver's budget boxes prevail? Peter Downs listens in.

VINYL

ORTOFON MC25F/L 57

David Price auditions Ortofon's new budget super-transducer, the fine lined MC25F/L moving coil, along with the cooking MC25E.

CASSETTE

NAD 614 13

Does NAD's latest audiophile cassette deck fulfill the promise of their earlier designs? Noel Keywood listens in.



COMPACT DISC

ROTEL RCD-975BX 29

Rotel have produced some fine CD players in their time. Dominic Todd auditions their latest mid-price contender.

TECHNICS SL-PS840 49

Dominic Baker listens to Technics' new Compact Disc combatant, the well-specified SL-PS480.

LOUDSPEAKERS

CASTLE SEVERN 18

Dominic Baker listens to a beautiful exercise in woodworking that also happens to be a fine mid-price floorstander.



TUNER

DENON TU-215RD 40

Denon should have success with this bargain entry level RDS tuner, finds Eric Braithwaite.



WORLD VERDICT

- ● ● ● ● OUTSTANDING - Superb sound, something we'd use ourselves.
- ● ● ● GOOD - Has strong merit. Well worth an audition.
- ● ● ADEQUATE - Mediocre in vital areas. May be worth auditioning.
- POOR - Seriously flawed. Not worth considering.

REGULARS

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All that's happening in hi-fi.

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A varied selection of this month's missives.

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We offer you an instant upgrade!

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Subscribe now and look forward to a whole year's worth of enlightened comment and reviews, plus lots of nice pictures of valves.

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David Price takes a look at the arguments for and against audiophile vinyl.

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Some excellent new releases for your perusal.

ROCK RECORD OF THE MONTH:

Supergrass: *I Should Coco*

CLASSICAL RECORD OF THE MONTH:

Mahler: *Symphony No6 in A minor*.
Strauss: *Metamorphosen for 23 string instruments*.
New Philharmonica Orchestra; Sir John Barbirolli

ROCK AND POP

73

JAZZ

86

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COMPETITION

Win REL subwoofers worth £1500! A monster REL Stadium II is the first prize, and a serious REL Strata goes to the runner up.



One of life's more rewarding decisions.



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NOTTINGHAM	Nottingham Hi-Fi	01159 786919
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OXFORD	Audio T (head office)	01865 742044
PETERBOROUGH	The HiFi Company	01733 341755
PORTSMOUTH	Jeffries Hi-Fi	01705 663604
SALISBURY	Salsbury Hi-Fi	01722 322169
SHEFFIELD	Sound With Style	01142 737893
SHREWSBURY	Creative Audio	01743 241924
SOLIHULL	Music Matters	0121 742 0254
SOUTH CROYDON	Zebra	0181 688 2491
ST LEONARDS	Adams & Jarrett	01424 437165
WORCESTER	Sevenoaks Hi-Fi	01905 612929
WORTHING	Phase 3 Hi-Fi	01903 245577

KEF Reference Series

If only all decisions in life were as straightforward as this.

The fact is that if you want the purest sound and the most uncompromising specification, it simply has to be New KEF Reference.



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tolerance of 0.5 decibels. This means you can be sure that the sound KEF created will be recreated in your home. Exactly.

Our breakthrough Uni-Q® technology delivers an astonishing stereo image, its unique point source design, with the tweeter at the exact acoustic centre of the mid-range cone, lets you visualise the precise location of every performer on the stage. What's more, because of Uni-Q's smooth, even dispersion you'll hear that incredible realism throughout the room. From speakers this good you'd expect outstanding



bass performance. With KEF's famous 'coupled cavity' bass system, now further improved with interports, you get it. We go to similar extremes in perfecting every detail.

Some you can't see, like Oxygen-Free Copper internal wiring or magnetic shielding (vital in Home Theatre). Some you can - sumptuously veneered cabinets with heavily gold-plated feet and terminals, for example.

In other words, each pair of Reference speakers is as close to perfection as KEF can make it.

When you know you can choose the best, would you willingly settle for anything less?



The experience of sound

IF YOUR TOWN ISN'T LISTED PLEASE CONTACT:

KEF AUDIO (UK) LIMITED, ECCLESTON ROAD, TOVIL, MAIDSTONE, KENT ME15 6QP. TELEPHONE (01622) 672261.

September 1995 trade winds

ERGONOMIC DENON MULTI-BIT

Featuring 18-bit Burr-Brown DACs, 20-bit 8 times oversampling filters, and "interesting new styling and excellent ergonomics", Denon's new DCD-625 seems to have a lot going for it at only £199.95.

This new player sports an improved digital servo control for the laser assembly, said to give improved tracking over the DCD-615 player it replaces. The DCD-625 also has more than its fair share of features, including coaxial digital output, full remote control with remote volume and synchronised record with Denon cassette decks.

Hayden Laboratories Ltd.,
Chiltern Hill,
Chalfont St. Peter
Gerrards Cross
Bucks SL9 9UG
☎ 01753 888447



INFINITE VARIETY

American loudspeaker manufacturer Infinity has announced new budget standmounters featuring APG drivers with carbon and Kevlar fibre cones, which give high sensitivity and faster transient response.

The UK range comprises the £149.95 Ref 1i with 130mm APG woofer giving 89dB sensitivity, the £199.95 Ref 11i with 170mm bass unit and 90dB sensitivity, and the £299.95 Ref 21i (pictured) with 210mm APG woofer and a quoted 92dB sensitivity. All three are available in Chatsworth Oak or Black Ash cabinet finish.

Infinity UK
Gamepath Ltd.
25 Heathfield
Stacey Buses
Milton Keynes MK12 6HR
☎ 01908 317707

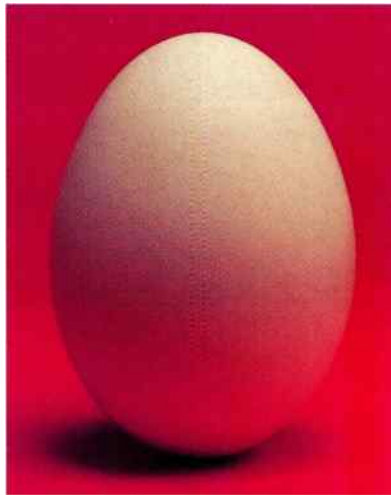


LINN PINE FOR MORE FINISHES

Linn have announced that you can now have your Keltik, Aktiv, Kaber or Tukan loudspeaker in any wood finish you like. With their special custom finishing service, just provide a sample wood and Linn will match your new 'speakers' finish to it. The Tukan can now also be ordered in a white, paintable finish for absolute colour matching to rooms. For the less fastidious, four real wood finishes are available directly from stock - Cherry, Black Ash, Rosenut and Walnut.

Linn Products
☎ 0141 307 7777





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NAD pure.and simple.



September 1995 trade winds

QUANTUM MECHANICS



Quantum Audio brings you this limited edition dc coupled hybrid integrated amplifier going by the name of Partridge. Boasting 26 watts into 8 ohms at 1kHz, it is said to feature "cool and quiet operation, excellent build quality and product reliability of an order not typically

associated with valve amplifiers". The Partridge comes with a choice of valves, either the 350B for £1799.99 or the Sovtek 5881, said to sound more lively, at £1699.99.

Quantum Audio Ltd.,
PO Box 26,
Kilmarnock
Ayrshire,
Scotland KA3 7JA
☎ 01563 71122



designed output transformers, Aerovox, Roedestein and Nippon ChemiCon Capacitors, Beysschlag metal film resistors, gold connectors and ceramic valve bases.

Kronos Distribution,
35 Farlough Road,
Newmills,
Dungannon
N. Ireland BT71 4DU
☎ 01868 748632

SOLID AS A ROK

Roksan have announced two new models. The Ojan 3X loudspeaker builds on the strengths of the Ojan 3 with an acoustically braced cabinet, but features new custom-built high performance

drivers. This, say Roksan, makes for "more extended low frequencies and a cleaner, clearer midrange". The 3X comes in black for £1195, and in rosewood for £1395.

Also making its debut is the 3S subwoofer, a passive device which turns the Ojan into a pure three-way design, as well as acting as a stand. £795 buys you a textured black 3S, or £895 in rosewood.

Roksan
Stockley Close,
West Drayton,
Middlesex UB7 9BB
☎ 01895 436 384



SWINGING SENNHEISER

Remember a time when Radio One DJs were young? Yes, the swinging sixties are being revived by Sennheiser in the shape of their "new old" HD414 headphone. For their fiftieth

anniversary, this venerable 1968 design has been exhumed now boasting updated sound capsules with Copper Clad Alloy Wire and 99.99% OFC copper cable. Coming in Sennheiser's trademark black and yellow rather than the original's grey, the limited edition HD414 CLASSIC, said to be "tough as old boots", will set you back £49.95.

Sennheiser UK
12 Davies Way,
Knaves Beach Business Centre,
Loudwater,
High Wycombe,
Bucks HP10 9QY
☎ 01628 850 811



ARION APPELLATIONS

Arion Acoustics have announced a range of tasty looking tubular belles in the shape of the Elektra, Eos, Talos Triode (illustrated), Triton, Eros, and Tycho valve amplifiers. The model range stretches from £1199 for the Elektra integrated to the Tycho integrated at £1850, and all feature Audio Note-

AUDIOVECTOR



You may be forgiven for thinking that the best solution for a speaker design is the commonly found, easy to manufacture, rectangular box. Not so.

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AUDIOVECTOR 3X Cuba	£1500	AUDIOVECTOR 5 Black Ash	£2500
AUDIOVECTOR 3X Black Ash	£1500	AUDIOVECTOR 6 Black Piano	£4600

For more information and demonstration, contact:

The Chord Company Ltd., 30a Sarum Business Park, Portway, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EA. Tel: 01722 331674 Fax: 01722 411388

Distributors of Audiovector speakers for F3/LYD, Meinungsgade 8, D2, DK-2200 Copenhagen N, Denmark. Tel: 01 39 60 60

September 1995 trade winds



NAD COMMITTED TO TAPE

The ever-prolific NAD company announce yet another new model, in the shape of the 614 cassette deck. This £269.95 two motor, two-head machine promises NAD's usual high sound quality allied to some interesting features. Play Trim ensures compatibility with virtually any tape, while the CAR button compresses recordings for best results with in-car or portable players. There's also a fine bias control, electronic tape counter, Dolby HX Pro and vertical LED bargraph meters. Look out for this new model suffering our customary tape deck torture test in this issue.

NAD Building

401-405 Nether Street

London N3 1QG

☎ 0181 343 3240

UNPARALLELED

Pentacore have announced they are importing Opus3 products from Sweden, including the £550 Continuo turntable which made its debut at the Buxton show, fashioned from 24kg of concrete marble composite, complete with a 7kg



platter! The Cantus parallel tracking arm also looks an interesting proposition at a very modest £350. Opus3 also produce a range of similarly weighty loudspeakers, the Credus, Chorus and Chaconne, ranging from £400 to £1400.

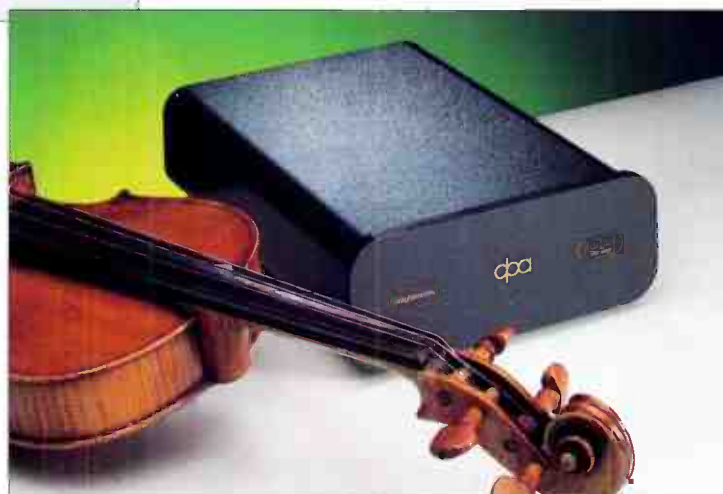
Pentacore,

4 Cross Bank Road,

Batley,

West Yorkshire WF17 8PJ.

☎ 01924 445039



ENLIGHTENED CONVERSION

DPA Digital have announced the Enlightenment DAC upgrade kit for the Little Bit 2 or Bigger Bit. For £400, Rob Watts will convert your ageing pride and joy into an Enlightenment DAC, complete with its unique discrete DX32 processor with 32times digital filtering and simple analogue structure.

DPA Digital Ltd.,

Units 7&8,

Willowbrook Lab Units

Crickhowell Road, St. Mellons.

Cardiff CF3 0EF

☎ 01222 795621

OBITUARY: ARNOLD SUGDEN

The death of Arnold Sugden on Saturday 27 May 1995 leaves a large gap in the living history of audio reproduction. In his own right as owner and managing director of the Connoisseur company, and as associate and mentor of some of the early revered household names, Arnold's engineering expertise and original turn of mind produced answers to fundamental problems in the establishment of high fidelity as we now know it.

His BD1 and BD2 turntables are still known and used throughout the world and older enthusiasts will recall the sensation of May 1956 when, at the Waldorf Hotel in London, he produced and demonstrated stereo reproduction from a single groove disc for the first time.

To those who knew him well, his reminiscences of behind-the-scenes development work in ceramic cartridges and stylus mounting, pickup arms, stereo amplifiers, microphones, loudspeakers, and engineering in general, were a delight and an eye opener.

I must add that he was also a lovely man and a firm friend - in all my business dealings with him nothing was committed to paper, a handshake being sufficient. He leaves a wife, Vera, a son, Robin, and a daughter, Christine.

Dennis Burke

Technical & General,

East Sussex.



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Ref 04 94

NEW AESTHETIC DIMENSION

The elegantly simple facade of NAD's new 614 cassette deck conceals some surprises. Noel Keywood finds out whether beauty is more than skin deep.





TRAILING *edge* TECHNOLOGY

Of course, the leading edge of hi-fi loudspeaker technology is firmly rooted in...

England? - Of course.

America? - Certainly.

Japan? - No doubt.

France? - Absolutment.

But in India we're a bit backward. Yes, most of our technology and arts can be traced backwards for at least a couple of thousand years: music, yoga, metallurgy, woodcraft, building, silk manufacture. But somewhere along the line we managed to miss out the essential technology of music reproduction.

So we read on the back of a cereal packet something about how the electrostatic is the most straightforward and efficient approach. After a couple of years of fiddling in our R&D facility, anechoic chamber and some records, we are now proud to announce the launch of the CADENCE ES hybrid electrostatic.

For those of you for whom such things are important, here are some figures:

Efficiency: 91dB

Power: 20 - 200 Watts RMS (500W burst, ALL frequencies)

Operating temperature: 0 - 40 degrees C

Operating humidity: below 90%RH

Charge up time: < 1 second

We'd like to tell you about how the chemically formed stators are aligned with the 5 micron PTFE membrane in such a way that arcing is impossible. And how the crossover unit seamlessly integrates the bass, midrange and treble. Or how the cabinet is treated to eradicate internal standing waves.

But that would stretch credibility, wouldn't it.

But then, you could always go and hear them for yourself at Kamla in London's West End (0171-323 2747).

CADENCE

Finished in a colour once robustly described as Battleship Grey (now probably known coyly as Dove Cote), NAD's new £270 614 cassette deck isn't as colourful as a Renoir or as solidly built as a man-O-war. But it does appeal to the eye more than earlier NAD designs and, crucially, looks smarter and easier to comprehend than its oriental rivals.

Funny that, because in fact the new 614 has lots of facilities, but the absence of 'go faster stripes' makes the deck look comparatively simple. Mind you, there are conspicuous frailties. The cassette door was flimsy and appeared not to shut firmly. I often found tapes grinding to a halt, the cure being to open the door and then close it again more positively. This apart, the 614's operational ergonomics are excellent. It's so neatly styled, clearly marked and sensibly laid out that foreign rivals could learn a thing or two. NAD use nice, large displays, bevelled rounded corners, gentle curves, colour and even shape coding. The record meters have a useful peak hold action and put the red zone where it should be - above 0VU (which has been set, as usual, at Dolby flux). It was all so obviously right as to be surprising.

User adjustable bias is provided for tuning blank tapes, but unfortunately finds its way to the back panel. NAD's Play Trim facility is also here, and is very useful for tweaking the treble balance of pre-recorded cassettes to banish that muffled sound they so commonly suffer. Good as this is, and as enthusiastic as I am for any deck with properly set up replay amplifiers, recording is still a prime use for cassette decks, so bias trim really should be on the front panel.

SOUND QUALITY

The 614 gave a smooth, cohesive presentation and easy dynamics from Isaac Hayes' Branded album. I recorded the album onto TDK SA without Dolby, the meters peaking just below +3dB. This deck's ability to get high recording levels onto chrome-bias tape helped nearly eliminate tape hiss (TDK SA is a very quiet tape). It handled this well -

until a cymbal crash went "schhhh" past my ears like a flaming arrow - flutter and high rate wow were dirtying the sound, adding coarseness percussion instruments. This said, the 614 was no worse than others of its ilk in this respect, but no better either. Although hard struck chords from Steve Earle's close-miked steel string guitar on Guitar Town produced some turgidity and muddle on TDK SA, chrome and ferric tapes always suffer this problem to a greater or lesser extent, so the NAD wasn't at fault. Indeed on balance, it turned in a creditable performance with TDK SA chrome tape: smoother, quieter and more dynamic than usual.

Metal tape (TDK MA) gave more vibrant treble but remained slightly coarse: nevertheless, hiss was very low. If recording levels are kept below +2dB the 614 works well with metal tape. Piano held stable, with little sign of any of the subtler aspects of wow, such as "cracked" notes (caused by small, sudden speed changes, or random wow) appearing - at least, over most of a tape. However I got a nasty surprise at the start of a tape, with dreadful capstan wow adding a rapid warble that was heard through everything, even the most varied rock music. This was a disappointment, being sufficiently audible to be unacceptable.

Our analyser hinted that TDK AR might not sound too good, exhibiting a ropery on-screen response. And that's roughly how it sounded to the ear, with some coarseness, while treble came over as soft and fluffy. Whilst uncritical users would probably think this normal enough for a budget ferric tape, TDK AR can in fact sound amazingly smooth and relaxed, because it has some great properties, but it just didn't match the 614. TDK AD gave a more positive sound, especially in the treble, but I still detected a lack of real smoothness and cohesion. With these ferrics the 614 worked satisfactorily, but no better.

"It's so neatly styled and sensibly laid out that foreign rivals could learn a thing or two."

It was with pre-recorded tapes that the deck really pulled ahead. Tina Turner's 'Addicted to Love' strode along beautifully, with strong bass and ringing cymbals from the drum kit. With

soft sounding tapes like Diana Ross' Eaten Alive, cranking treble up fully brought a sense of clarity that only Play Trim can find within what seems to be an irretrievably dull recording. In this respect, the NAD's almost magically superior to the herd, elevating pre-recorded cassettes to

respectability.

The NAD 614 worked very well with chrome tapes like TDK SA, averagely with ferrics and will handle metals if it's not pushed too hard. It makes recordings as well as one can expect for £270 these days, with the exception of the poor transport, giving a variable performance affected by load, or the amount of tape on each hub. It's a well designed and aligned machine, with all the benefits that brings. It plays pre-recordeds very well, making it a must for anyone using them as their primary source. But NAD haven't been able to offset head and transport limitations, and their variable bias facility was poorly implemented. All this bodes badly for the NAD, with an overall performance that can only be described as satisfactory ●

NAD 614

£269.95

**NAD Building,
401-405 Nether Street
Finchley, London N3 1QG
☎ 0181 343 3240**

WORLD VERDICT



Excellent electronics let down by poor transport means the 614 doesn't quite make the grade.

**Measured Performance
see p113-121**

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meridian



551

All Meridian components, from the simplest to the most complex, are designed to be operated by the touch of a single button on the MSR remote control.

The 551 integrated amplifier is no exception. It will provide the same, very high, standards of music reproduction as every other model within the superb Meridian range. Utilising a dual-mono configuration similar to that used in the 555 power amplifier, the 551 can deliver enough current to drive most loudspeakers with control. Combine this with a high quality pre-amplifier section that includes many of the technical features of the 501 pre-amplifier, and you have a superb performer, suitable for all applications.

However, the real benefits of the 551 only materialise when it is used with other Meridian products like the 506 or 508 CD players and the 504 digital tuner. Thus, creating an advanced, and flexible digital remote control system

audiolab



8000Q

With the introduction of the new 8000Q pre-amplifier, Audiolab are able to offer a true 'audiophile' product, capable of working within any ancillary combination.

New 'Zq' technology ensures ultra low noise and distortion, while a printed circuit layout realizes the optimum (shortest) signal path.

The 8000Q is best described as a purist design, yet it certainly is not minimalist. Six line, and three tape inputs mean it is an ideal partner for Audiolab's own 8000P or 8000M power amplifiers.

For more details on the complete Audiolab range, including the 8000A, 8000C, 8000CDM, 8000DAC, 8000T and 8000PPA, contact your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi branch.

monitor audio



STUDIO 12

The breathtaking, new STUDIO 12 loudspeakers from Monitor Audio, clearly show the no compromise approach they have to design and construction. This is obvious the moment you see them. Whether they are finished in a standard satin veneer or a luscious grand piano lacquer, the STUDIO

12's are stunning.

All of the models within the new STUDIO series offer a combination of a gold anodized tweeter and an aluminium alloy bass/mid range driver. If partnered with suitable amplification, the STUDIO 12's offer remarkable transparency and the necessary focus to reproduce very complex passages of music with glorious accuracy. To experience the Monitor Audio STUDIO series of loudspeakers, including the STUDIO 20SE, just visit our branches in Sevenoaks, Chelsea, Croydon, Guildford, Watford and Witham (Essex).

arcam



ALPHA 5+CD

When the original ALPHA CD was launched, few could have thought that it was destined to become such a success.

Over the years the Alpha outsold every other model (from Britain and Japan) in its price category, and although other manufacturers made wholesale changes as new technology was developed, Arcam kept to their original philosophy.

Today the new ALPHA 5+CD still uses multibit conversion. Arcam, firmly believe that this reproduces instruments and vocals naturally. With an improved master-clocking device on its DAC board, the ALPHA 5+CD player can provide technical accuracy and musical enjoyment.

You will discover the Arcam Alpha and Delta series at all Sevenoaks Hi Fi branches.

cyrus



DAD 7

The DAD 7 CD player is the one box derivative of the acclaimed DISCMASTER and DACMASTER. Like these, the DAD 7 utilizes a multibit conversion stage, which ensures that all music, from rock to classical, is delivered with a close attention to detail.

All Cyrus products are designed with the same innovative styling, and each reproduces music with natural sophistication. To improve performance further, simply add the PSX-R power supply, which isolates the unit from the mains, therefore reducing the chances of extraneous noise and glitches.

For more details on the Cyrus DAD 7, DISCMASTER, DACMASTER, PSX-R, FM 7 digital tuner, award winning CYRUS III amplifier and the new PRE-POWER amplifiers, contact your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi-Cyrus stockist.

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EXPRESSION

hi fi connoisseurs and music lovers

The new **77** integrated amplifier embodies all of the hallmarks of quality you associate with Quad, which have made them such a well respected and successful manufacturer over the last fifty years.

Compared with many other integrated amplifiers, the **77** is revolutionary. The new **77** has almost limitless expansion capabilities, thanks to a new 'intelligent' remote control.

With a **77** CD player, and tuner soon to be released, this family of exciting products represent that rare breed of innovation and tradition, that is only available with Quad.



Designed and developed in the UK the new **RA970BX** is instantly recognizable as a Rotel product. With the same slimline styling and characteristically solid build quality as every other Rotel amplifier, it delivers the performance you would expect from models at twice the price. Four line inputs, a tone defeat switch, and a split volume knob provides finite adjustment.

When partnered with a suitable pair of loudspeakers, the new **RA970BX** is capable of getting feet tapping. 60 Watts RMS per channel means that bass lines are punchy, and treble is crisp.

For further details of the Rotel range, including the new **RCD970BX** CD player, and **RC/RB970BXII** pre/power amplifier combination, visit your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi.



There are no obvious revisions on the exterior of the new **HOWARD II**. Yet beneath the handcrafted, real wood veneer cabinet, are more closely specified components.

Castle's mastery of quarter-wave bass technology was evident in the original **HOWARD**. However, combine the new crossover with the off-set metal dome tweeter and fibre polymer bass/mid range driver configuration, and you have a loudspeaker that is adept at handling all types of music well.

The **HOWARD II** encapsulate all of Castle's style, offering nine real wood finishes on all of the models in their range, like the compact **TRENT II**, **DURHAM 900**, **SEVERN** and **CHESTER II**



Marantz are one of the dedicated manufacturers that enjoys making recorded sound

as realistic as is possible. This development of pure hifidelity has led the Hi Fi Press to bestow numerous Best Buys and Recommendations upon models within their range.

The **CD63SE** offers the kind of sparkling performance you associate with more expensive CD players. With a high mass drawer mechanism, and copper screening, ensuring unrestricted CD transportation and air flow, music is always reproduced faithfully.

The **CD63SE** also offers an easy upgrade path, via coaxial and optical digital outputs. With this pedigree, the **CD63SE** represents exceptional value for money.



Nad's no compromise approach to the development of the new **514** CD player, has meant that many unique features and specifications have been demanded.

At the heart of this unit is a one bit dual digital to analogue (DAC) MASH converter. This maintains the purity of the all important audio path by eliminating the need for any capacitors. Thus, yielding real benefits in terms of musical detail and nuance.

The **514** also offers a new CDR audio compression circuit, enabling the **514** to make top quality recordings onto tape for a wide variety of listening environments, such as car audio.

To hear the new **514** contact a Sevenoaks Hi Fi near you.



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World Radio History





SEVERNTH *HEAVEN?*

Dominic Todd asks whether Castle's new Severn loudspeakers can deliver us from the evils of mediocre mid-price floorstanders.

Ever since TDL launched a range of good quality floor-standing 'speakers for under £500, other competitors have been falling over themselves to compete. Once the province of stand-mounted stalwarts such as Epos' ES14 and Celestion's SL6, the £300-£500 loudspeaker market now finds itself awash with floorstanders.

Castle Acoustics are no strangers to floorstanding loudspeakers, having already enjoyed success with their Chester and Howard models. Now they've turned their attention to the fiercely competitive £500 sector, with the introduction of the Severn priced at £499.95. Mission, Ruark, Royd, TDL and Tannoy have already pushed class standards to such heights that for the Severn to be simply capable isn't enough. To succeed it needs to offer something different and transcend mere competence.

The Severn makes an excellent initial impression. It's one of the best finished 'speakers at its price, shaming models costing hundreds of pounds more. The real wood veneer is finished immaculately with not a sharp edge in sight. Castle make much play of their real hardwood veneers, but whether this is environmentally sound when there are so many convincing pulp reconstituted veneers around is questionable.

In an effort to break up standing waves, as well as bracing the structure, the cabinet is internally divided via a sloping shelf. The two-way, bass-reflex design features two entirely new drive units, each designed and built in-house by Castle. The woofer features a rigid cast chassis, long-throw voice coil and injection moulded polymer cone. The tweeter is a soft dome, traditionally held to give a sweeter sound than hard plastic types.

Properly run in, these 80cm high 'speakers gave of their best in free space about one metre from the rear wall, with the bi-wiring terminals used. Castle 'speakers have never been

known for their gut-wrenching bass and awesome dynamics, and the Severns offer the familiar Castle refinement, without the last word in rip-roaring audacity. The Brand New Heavies proved these 'speakers aren't for bass freaks. But look beyond the dynamic constraints and there's much to recommend.

Sound staging was spacious and unconfined, and acoustic instruments were both well defined and cohesive with the rest of the mix. Bass may not have been especially deep (ironically, no deeper than a similarly priced stand mounter), but it was solid enough to underpin the music firmly. Treble could become slightly splashy, but the fine transparency and imaging offered was ample compensation.

By comparison, Tannoy's similarly priced 637s offered greater dynamic contrast, but at the expense of a cloudy mid-range and abrasive portrayal of the saxophone.

Danny Thompson's 'Whatever's Best' showed the Severns in an even more favourable light. Correct tonal colours for the acoustic guitar, alto sax and double bass let me listen right into the recording. Treble seemed happier too, lending great refinement and sweetness to the alto sax's higher register. Despite the relaxed pace of things, detail didn't appear to have been left out, and the depth of the recording was well depicted. Some listeners may sense a lack of drama though. Although all the basics were there, the effect could just feel too scaled down at times.

A Super Bit Mapped Stevie Ray Vaughan disc provided the Castles with a superb, uncompressed and expansive recording. The Severns rose to the occasion, and didn't impede upon the fine recording in the slightest. They were quite capable of handling difficult guitar transients without glare or compression. Nuances of Vaughan's voice, often missed by Castle's less

courtly rivals, were clearly displayed. While bass wasn't the deepest, it was substantial enough not to have most listeners yearning for more welly.

Castles tend to major on classical music, and the Severns were no exception. Schubert: Scherzo: Presto, from Trout Quintet, once again demonstrated their relaxed, easy-to-listen-to nature. The violins were liquid-smooth and not at all wearing, yet they still gave a fine insight into the music, with bass tight enough for speedy and accurate timing. Breaths and creaks from musicians chairs were there too, adding a sense of realism. The whole performance was informing and vivacious, but never over-bearing.

If you can accept the Castles' limitations, they have much to offer. Those who find their system lacking refinement or who don't want a floorstander with strong bass will warm to the Severns. They're not the sort of 'speaker to jump out at you on initial audition, but their qualities of subtlety, transparency, strong imaging and accurate timing will show themselves, over time, to be of far greater worth.

The problem for Castle is that both the Mission 752 and Ruark Templar offer similar sonic qualities and slightly more ability in some areas. But it's here where Castle play a strong card. The Severns are better finished than either of the others, and offer a wider choice of finishes to boot. So anyone looking for a compact, floorstanding 'speaker unobtrusive in its surroundings would do well to listen to the Severns ●

Castle Severn **£499.95**

Castle Acoustics
Park Mill, Shortbank Rd,
Skipton, North Yorks BD23 2TT
☎ 01756 795333

WORLD VERDICT



Highly capable floorstanders with a polished performance and finish.

Measured Performance
see p113-121

“The Severns offer the familiar Castle refinement, without the last word in rip-roaring audacity.”

BIG MAC



Dominic Baker finds McIntosh's MA6800 an extremely tasty high-end amplifier.

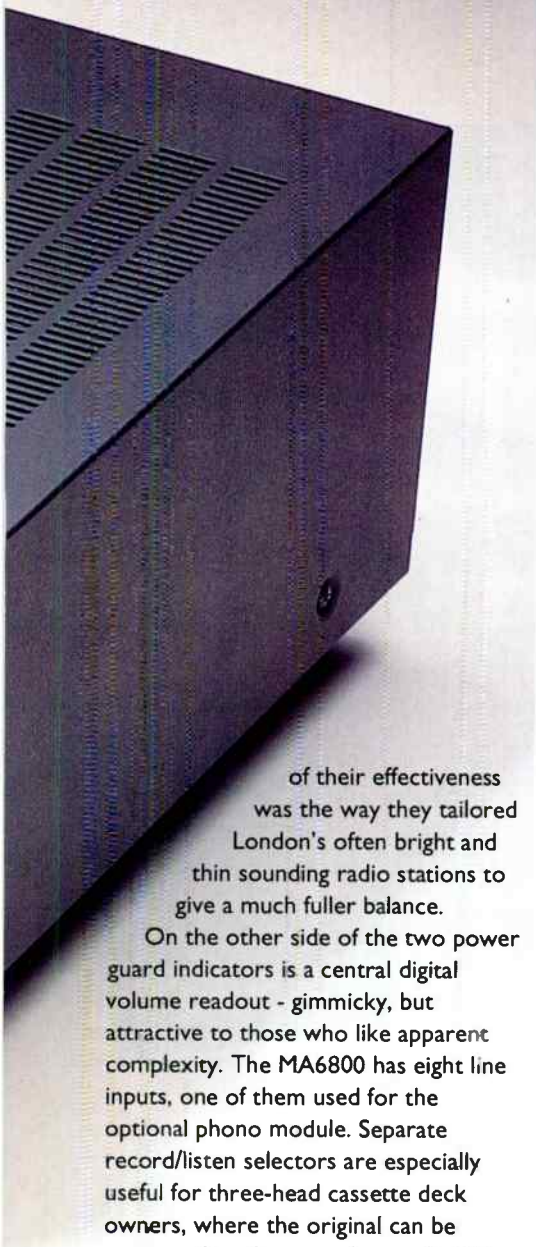
Combining sixties-style power meters and control knobs with nineties' electronic switching and digital volume readout could be a recipe for disaster - who wants the worst of both worlds? But despite my doubts, I came away impressed that

McIntosh have blended these differing ingredients to perfection.

The styling of the £3735 MA6800 carries an aura of American heritage and prestige, with the message of high technology engineering fully conveyed too. Although covered in enough lights,

meters and what have you to rival any midi-system, McIntosh get away with it - it doesn't look gimmicky, so much as functional. It's a precision instrument, dedicated to the task of amplification.

Eschewing the minimalist approach, the McIntosh has just about every feature you could possibly need - and then some. To the far left of the thick glass-fronted fascia there are bass and treble tone controls. Thoughtfully engineered to have a subtle action at either frequency extreme, an example



of their effectiveness was the way they tailored London's often bright and thin sounding radio stations to give a much fuller balance.

On the other side of the two power guard indicators is a central digital volume readout - gimmicky, but attractive to those who like apparent complexity. The MA6800 has eight line inputs, one of them used for the optional phono module. Separate record/listen selectors are especially useful for three-head cassette deck owners, where the original can be compared to the recording at the flick of a switch. Beneath this little lot sits a row of electronic push-button switches covering mono, listen and record functions, or an external signal processor that can be switched into the signal paths. A 6.3mm headphone jack separates these from mute, switching for two pairs of loudspeakers and the power switch.

As the volume control at the far right turns, the central digital readout shows level as a percentage of full power. I rarely got past 7-8%, and with around 150watts on tap and a peak output current of 55amps, you are unlikely to run out of steam into any loudspeaker. As if this wasn't enough, the McIntosh is also fully remote controllable and can be linked to other McIntosh components to allow control

from one handset, meaning it's equipped to become the centre of a remote controlled multi-room system. The power amplifier and preamplifier sections can be accessed separately, making bi-amping easily facilitated, should you feel the need for more power!

Inside, construction is not the neatest, but then the substantial 40kg chassis is packed with electronics. There are separate power supplies, banks of relays for input switching, huge smoothing capacitors and heatsinks, all interconnected by thick looms of wire. It was reassuring to see good quality audiophile grade components throughout the signal path. The MA6800 also uses McIntosh's 'autoformers'. These do essentially the same job as the output transformer of a valve amplifier, providing exactly the right load for the output stage to drive, whatever the impedance of the loudspeaker connected. This, McIntosh claim, means the output stage is always running into the optimum load for highest efficiency, which improves performance and reliability.

As you'd expect, the MA6800 didn't so much play music as take control of it. There was an effortless drive to bass lines, REM's 'Low' with its mellow, resonant bass guitar intro powered the 'speakers' cones to their limit with control and precision. The MA6800 had terrific upper bass punch, with dynamics to match, giving a crisp, firm attack to well recorded rock. The burst of leading edge dynamics you get from a guitar chord was captivating.

With a good recording such as Sheryl Crow's recent Tuesday Night Music Club, the overall scale of reproduction was massive, creating a three-dimensional sound stage. Stage height and width was expansive, and depth surprisingly good, if not quite up with the best. The MA6800 has a brightly lit treble, which helped to give the sensation of space and atmosphere, and an incisiveness with hi-hats and similar percussion. Images weren't as precisely located as I'd have liked, but by being dispersed a little they added to the overall scale and air of the presentation.

Locatelli's Concerto for violin, string and basso continuo proved a good test of tonal character. The MA6800 is velvety smooth through the midrange, with just the slightest hint of grain - and then only on the most fiercely struck notes. Here it rivals DPA's original 50S power amplifier, one of the smoothest transistor designs I've heard. But the MA6800 has a richer texture to it, giving more body to strings and a captivating warmth. Perhaps it is not quite as neutral as a DPA, but still offers a very musical presentation.

Serious classical listeners will notice the extra incision given to upper string harmonics. With rock, this gave an extra sense of precision and crispness, the steel strings of Grant Lee Buffalo cutting the air like a switchblade. But with the more subtle harmonics of violin, an edginess was added to the soft decay, which struck me as unnatural. This is unlikely to be a problem though, as long as sharp or gritty metal dome tweeters are given a wide birth.

McIntosh have combined all the facilities you are ever likely to need in one integrated package. In sound quality terms alone this amplifier could be bettered at the price. But for the listener who wants a versatile amplifier its own distinctive style, the MA6800 looks good. Its strength comes from its unusually broad range of abilities, rather than for any one judged in isolation. Expensive yes, but by any standards it is an impressive piece of engineering ●

McIntosh MA6800

£3735

**MPI Electronics,
13 Weston Road,
Guildford,
Surrey GU2 6AU
☎ 01483 454993**

WORLD VERDICT



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

**Measured Performance
see p113-121**

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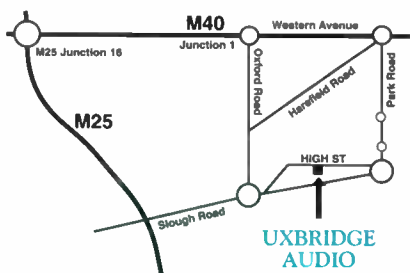
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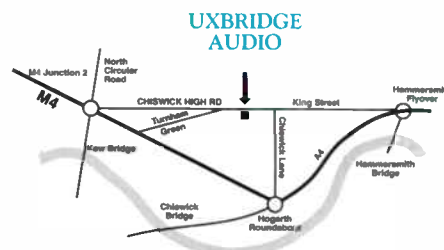
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In the best Alchemist tradition, the new baby Axiom integrated sports an intergalactic Battlestar design finished in brushed aluminium and polished gold, but gone are the dragon wing heat sinks which the original integrated Kraken so proudly displayed.

The outboard power supply has also been replaced by a more practical, internal version which is at the heart of the 30watt Axiom. There is no phono input, but Alchemist have blessed the Axiom with CDV, video and auxiliary inputs in addition to the standard tape, tuner and CD. The loudspeaker terminals are solid and are plastic shielded to protect against short circuiting. Finish is neat, uncluttered and facilities accessible.

The cycloptic power indicator, slap bang in the middle of the front panel, took a while to glow its bright corporate yellow. John Lee

Hooker's 'Chill Out' had good depth of soundstage and a warmth so befitting the blues. Cymbals were open and gave a good indication of the ability of this amplifier to handle transients with musical dexterity.

The percussion was tight and fast and skin drums sounded natural and were given good space amidst the full band accompaniment. Most appealing was the sound of the lead guitar which had me rushing to check the album cover - no doubt at all it was unmistakably Carlos Santana in person, and the Axiom delivered this with truth and absolute precision.

'One Bourbon, One Scotch, one Beer' had the semi acoustic guitar plucking along the temperate blues riff to the left, supported by the subtle-slick-slide on the right. The final four bars oozed the atmosphere of a low-ceiling live jazz venue, and the power in the snare emphasised this. A final drum roll across the kit sounded lifelike and the stereo image well placed. Decay of cymbals seemed to linger forever, the whole sound laid back, rather than projected and imposing.

Isaac Hayes' new Branded album is an example of the digital studio put to good use, sometimes to the extreme. The

album has huge dynamics, and lovers of real soul would have died and gone to heaven, having heard 'Let Me Love You' performed by the Axiom. Bass was seriously deep, and was to be the magic carpet upon which the wind chimes, vibes and muted cymbals were to ride. Soul is often a difficult style of music to translate, but the Axiom produced a moody, heady swell of music.

Pink Floyd's 'Goodbye Blue Sky' was mellower than I had previously heard, but nonetheless compelling. If anything was lacking, it was the projection of Waters' vocals, particularly in the lower midrange.

Soundstage was wide, although not as deep as usual, particularly noticeable on the strings. Setting the customary Floydian atmosphere and tone were the voices of the kids in the playground at the intro to 'Brick in the Wall Part 1'. The typically 'big' production was emulated by the Axiom and in particular the

stereo delayed guitar and bass were true to form. At times, the bottom end seemed to lack complete control, and the cat call at the end of the track was distant, suggesting a wavering or fluctuating control of dynamics.

Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor pulled no punches, the bottom end proving really impressive. At times, high arpeggios sounded thin compared to the consistently solid bass and midrange, again suggesting a change of sorts in the amplifier's character.

Chopin's Impromptu No 1 had good midrange detail and the piece sparkled into life. Piano tone was natural and demonstrated a lifelike timbre all the way down the scale. The only disappointment (and there were few) was that there was once again an inconsistency in the higher notes, which could sound edgy and thin. This was occasional, and didn't really detract from my enjoyment of the otherwise charming character.

The grand finale of Bizet's 'The Pearl



Fishers' was a real tribute to opera. The Axiom demonstrated its dynamic capabilities with orchestral grace. Whilst the tenor sounded faultless and set the emotional scene, the baritone raised the encore. Soundstage was open, theatrical and had great presence. A great performance.

The Aura VA-80 I later compared the Axiom with was smoother, and undeniably more accurate and stable. However the personality that the Axiom displayed was musical in a way few others can manage at the price. Its good characteristics like extremely low noise levels, good dynamics and excellent transients outweigh the niggly details of inconsistency in the higher frequencies.

The Axiom typifies great British hi-fi on a budget. The baby Alchemist may have its quirks and eccentricities, but does at least have the ability to make music rather than just amplify, an attribute sadly lacking in so many of its rivals ●

Alchemist Axiom £299

Alchemist Products,
4 Rosebery Mews,
Muswell Hill,
London N10 2LG.
☎ 0181 883 3008

WORLD VERDICT



A musically rewarding amplifier that deserves serious audition.

Measured Performance
see p113-121

“The personality that the Axiom displayed was musical in a way few others can manage at the price.”

MASS MEDIA

The 734 loudspeakers are Mission's unashamedly populist way of making music.

David Price takes a listen.

As the dust settled and the Audiolab monoblocks cooled down, I finally managed to put these handsome-looking Mission floorstanders into perspective. I'd been greeted by a sound that was at once impressive and profoundly unfulfilling, contradictory emotions that I had to resolve.

First things first, the 734s appear to be a lot of 'speaker for the money. At 84x20x33cm they're large and enjoy Mission's hallmark professional standard of styling and finish. With a metal dome tweeter paired to two translucent polypropylene-coned bass/mid drivers in a large box, what more could you expect for £430?

Run in, toed-in and well warmed through, the 734s produced an instantly attractive sound. 'Big' was the word that sprang to mind as Isaac Hayes crooned forth from 'Life's Mood'. Pianos had body, percussion was clear and the whole mix was highly animated. Unfortunately, I'd just been listening to their famed cousins, the 752s, which although £70 more expensive were far, far superior.

The 734s sounded muddled by comparison, with none of the finesse, detail or precision of their older cousins. The first problem was the polypropylene drivers, which although in essence are fairly clean and innocuous sounding, had a propensity to quack and thrum a little too much, making for a plummy upper bass. When the 8000Ms were cranked up, things got really bad.

Listening to the 733s tested in April, I'd noticed the rather early onset of

cone break-up, making for compressed attack transients at high volumes. Although better than their baby brothers, this is still a recognisable trait with the 734s, resulting in a softening and muddling of the sound on peaks. This isn't altogether unpleasant, but it means rim-shots and snares will never thwack you between the eyes, Linn Tukan-style.

Moving lower down, the 734s certainly had more bass than their older brothers, but were lacking in extension and grip. Again, bass had a pleasing sumptuousness and presence, but was rather rambling and ill-defined. I felt there was little connection between it and the tune it was supporting. Comparison with the 752s was hardly elevating, the opening heartbeat to 'Ike's Plea' sounding emasculated, going on to almost disappear into the mix. The 752s held onto it right through, and managed to capture its rhythmic inflections far better.

Up top, the 734s weren't much to write home about either. They seem a touch less bright than either the 731s or 733s, but still have a tendency to sound fizzy and metallic. Carmen Lundi's 'Spring Can Really Hang' brought this into sharp relief. The Missions gave a creditably spacious and airy sound, but as soon as the slow ride cymbal came in it had me wondering what on earth was going on. Suddenly it developed a hissy, abrasive edge that just didn't square with the 752's sweet, svelte rendition.

Unfortunately, imaging wasn't a forte either, with Carmen Lundi's immaculately recorded vocal hanging



rather ponderously between the two 'speakers. So reluctant were the 734s to project that I wondered if it was a problem with the recording, but swapping over, the more expensive 752s again threw everything into sharp relief.

Wondering what the budget Missions would do to rock music, Teenage Fanclub's 'Start' found itself inside the Audiolab CD drive, and the Missions made their first good move of the day. Suddenly, this rather tinny recording (maybe Norman Blake was trying to emulate his mentors, The Byrds, on this count) assumed some warmth and body through the 734s, with an energetic, lively sound underpinned by a fairly fluid bass line. True, that tweeter grain was still there on hi-hats, but amidst the fray of jangly Big Star guitars, it wasn't so conspicuous. So, the plot unfoldeth. Give these floorstanders basic rock recordings and they'll oblige with an enjoyable sound, but ask them for more and the situation changes for the worse.

It's not that Mission can't produce decent 'speakers - as a fan of the 760is and 752s I'd never suggest that - but it seems Mission's market research has suggested that big, stylish boxes with an impressive showroom sound sell more than quality stuff. If that's the case then so be it, we're just lucky we've got the slightly more expensive 752s to save up for ●

Mission 734

£430

**Mission Electronics,
Stonehill,
Huntingdon,
Cambridge PE18 8ED
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WORLD VERDICT



Engineered for low price and showroom appeal rather than absolute sound quality.

Measured Performance
see p113-121

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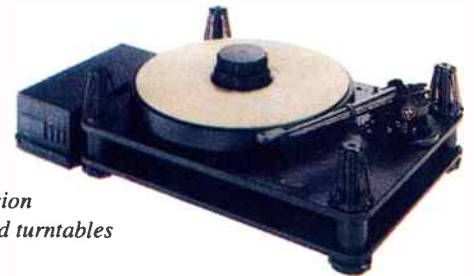
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Black Velvet

Dominic Todd finds Rotel's new RCD975 is a consummately smooth CD player.

The Rotel RCD975 has one of the best starts in life a CD player could wish for - it's based on the RCD970. The transport is the well-proven Philips CDM-9 unit with a continuously calibrated multi-bit digital to analogue convertor. The new machine adds a second DAC, run in dual differential mode. Cosmetically it's unchanged, meaning it maintains Rotel's usual conservatism and excellent build. First used in the 970, the case follows the trend for slimmer boxes, allowing the RCD975 to fit in discretely almost anywhere.

Eric Clapton's 'Running On Faith' saw the player showing a degree of maturity akin to a player from the class above rather than its own. But despite a confident performance, vocals lacked a little body compared to the Marantz CD63SE. What marked it out was

superb transparency - such was the ease with which it unravelled the various components of the mix that it was a breeze to follow individual instruments and vocals.

Acoustic Alchemy's 'Ariane' revealed more strengths - depth and spatial width, the sheer transparency and integration of the sound making the player rewarding to listen to. With acoustic music my only complaint was that bass didn't go down to quite the same level as a good £600 CD player, or even the CD63SE.

With James Taylor Quartet's 'In The Hands Of The Inevitable', the Rotel wasn't quite as light on its feet as some, but fine bass integration saved it from plodding. Bass weight was more than respectable; although unobtrusive when it needed to be, low frequencies were always present in sufficient quantities


when required. True to form, the overall sound was easy to listen to for long periods without seeming veiled. The broad sound stage accommodated all the instruments with ease, lending to the feeling of openness and transparency.

Occasionally though, the Rotel could be caught out. With Sibelius' Symphony No 1, played by The Pittsburgh Symphony, the sound lacked a degree of drama and tension - a little too restrained and refined for its own good at times. That said, the 975 made a fine job of producing the tricky violin timbre correctly, never becoming confused, while the near-silent background brought out subtle detail during quiet passages.

The Rotel RCD975 has a well rounded sound quality that's easy to live with and transparent enough to make listening enjoyable. Perhaps it lacks enough spark with some types of music, but this has never really been a Rotel characteristic anyway. Build quality and appearance are also in its favour. The problem for Rotel though is that the 970 offers all this and nine-tenths of the sound quality. Ultimately, the Marantz CD63SE with E100 interconnect will outperform the Rotel, so it can't be classed as great value, but for those whose musical preference is for classical and acoustic, the Rotel RCD975 should definitely be on the short list ●

Rotel RCD975 £449.95

**Gamepath Ltd.,
25 Heathfields,
Stacey Bushes,
Milton Keynes,
Bucks. MK12 6HR
☎ 01908 317707**

WORLD VERDICT 
A smooth and civilised player that's well worth auditioning.

**Measured Performance
see p113-121**

September 1995



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World Radio History





POWER RANGER

It's big, black, and it's gunning for the UK specialist market. David Price auditions TEAC's top integrated amplifier, the A-BX10.

I suppose it's inevitable that a review of TEAC's new A-BX10 integrated amplifier should be framed around the great east-west audio divide. After all, this new £1000 integrated rather seems set to gnaw away at the sales of some of Britain's foremost amplifier manufacturers, rather in the way they've been assaulting the Japanese

market recently.

Let's get the A-BX10's intentions straight from the start. Forget about bells, whistles and A/V surround sound processors - this is a Japanese real hi-fi product going straight for the jugular of UK audiophile amplifiers. You won't find any fripperies on this front panel. Indeed, in this review it finds itself in the

ironic position of facing a cheaper British amp - the Meridian 551 - with more facilities, flexibility and convenience! Instead of Meridian's svelte user interface, remote control, digital display and what-have-you, the TEAC sports a single central volume control, with power on/standby and input selection knobs to the left and

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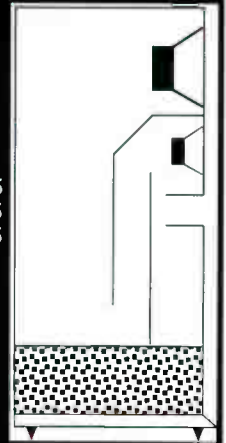
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Internal details of transmission line and lead shots

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right respectively. There's also a tape monitor button and a mains power indicator which glows TEAC's corporate orange for standby and green for go.

At the back is the usual confection of gold-plated phono sockets, binding posts and IEC mains socket, as well as a pair of balanced inputs, telling prospective home market purchasers that this amp. wants to be regarded as a serious piece of kit. Its not inconsiderable 12kg weight underlines this, meaning TEAC certainly pack a lot into its compact (for a Nipponese amp) 443x103x381mm dimensions. Inside, it follows up-market thinking typical of the land of the rising Yen, with a goodly complement of high quality components neatly laid out, a large toroidal transformer and an optional plug-in MM/MC phono board.

Befitting any expensive amplifier from this part of the world, the A-BX10 boasts an enormous 100W RMS rated power output, reflected in its propensity to raise the ambient temperature of any room you care to use it in. In use the TEAC is simplicity itself, the controls have a satisfyingly smooth, positive action, making for a quality feel.

First impressions were highly favourable. A thorough warming up is recommended for this product, after which it took its partnering Linn Tukans by the scruff of the neck. One of its key home-grown competitors is Meridian's 551, somewhat cheaper at £695, but a product for which I have a lot of respect. In truth, I wasn't really expecting the TEAC to touch it, but I was wrong. Kicking off with Everything But the Girl's 'Sugar Finney', the most dramatic difference between the two amps was in their bass. The TEAC was punchier and tauter, with more grip and weight to kick drums, bass guitar lines and left hand piano parts. By comparison, the Meridian sounded softer around the edges, lacking the low frequency articulation of its oriental rival. But for all the A-BX10's

proficiency in steamrolling along the song, I couldn't help feeling the Meridian was more tuneful. The TEAC emphasised notes starting and stopping, but with its occidental brother things were noticeably more melodic.

Across the midband, the TEAC turned in an equally credible performance, with a vast, bold soundstage with satisfying depth and dynamics. Bob Marley's 'Waiting in Vain' assumed an enormous acoustic, with commendably large amounts of percussive detail springing forth. Images were more tightly located than with the

“The TEAC is not to be confused with the headache-inducing Nipponese black boxes at the bottom end of the market.”

Meridian, projecting forward from the 'speakers better. Again, its firmer bass gave more life to proceedings, clearly conveying the impressive counterpoint between bass and drums.

Once again though, for all the TEAC's cerebral delights, the Meridian was the more effusive, beguiling performer. Although its bass wasn't as tight, it caught the rhythmic subtleties of the organ playing noticeably better, which in conjunction with a smoother, finely etched treble made for a more fluid and natural rendition.

The Meridian also threw light on the TEAC's high frequency failings. Although the Japanese amplifier wasn't coarse, it had a slight haze that made cymbals brighter, giving them welcome lustre but losing their feel, making for a rather bland, generic sound. Most noticeable in the upper regions, this effect nevertheless extended to the midband. So despite the A-BX10's lively, grippy character, low level detail and atmosphere wasn't a forté.

It's not the first time I've heard British and Japanese amplifiers fall into these camps - the former 'soft and

musical', the latter 'big and powerful'. I'm sure the Japanese like this sound and engineer their products with this in mind, because with super-dry, pin-sharp modern Japanese recordings, it certainly sounds impressive. Ryuichi Sakamoto's 'Asadoya Yunta' saw the TEAC gaining a lot of ground on the Meridian, sounding fast, lithe and detailed thanks to its talents with leading edge dynamics. The Meridian on the other hand sounded more natural, imparting the song's rather mechanical percussion and koto playing in a rather matter of fact way. As a further measure of the seriousness with which TEAC have approached the design of this amp, even the optional £150 phono card was good, being quiet on MC and giving little away in sound quality to line inputs.

Make no mistake, this is a fine integrated amplifier; the TEAC is not to be confused with headache-inducing Nipponese black boxes at the bottom end of the market. It's a very confident, grippy sounding device, strong on sound and build quality. Used with smooth ancillaries and quality interconnects, its drive and confidence may be just the ticket. But for British ears, the charms of similarly priced Meridian and Naim products may be too much to resist ●

TEAC A-BX10 £999.95
optional MM/MC phono card £149.95

TEAC UK Ltd.,
5 Marlin House,
The Croxley Centre,
Watford,
Herts. WD1 8YA
☎ 01923 819630

WORLD VERDICT



Very strong all-round performer with excellent build and finish. Verging on the expensive though.

Measured Performance
see p113-121

ACOUSTIC RENAISSANCE FOR AUDIO

A group of audio experts have just proposed a twenty-first century specification for Compact Disc. It relies on the increased storage capacity of proposed new video players that use today's 5in CD, but in either multi-layer or double-sided form. Noel Keyword explains.

These days, the Consumer Electronics business talks video, because that's where the money is. Packaged audio systems from the East have become a high-volume, low profit commodity items. So whilst Philips, Sony, Toshiba, Time Warner and just about every other major CE company get stuck into each other's throats in yet another video format war, audio has been ignored. No proposal has been made to put high quality audio onto these discs, except as an accompaniment to films.

ACOUSTIC RENAISSANCE

Now, a group calling themselves the Acoustic Renaissance for Audio (ARA) have put forward a proposal for an advanced digital musical coding scheme. The ARA comprises a small group of senior engineers with long experience in their respective fields of professional, broadcast and domestic audio (see box at end). It was, however, founded by Professor Hirokazu Negishi of Canon's (Japan) Research and Development headquarters whose aim, he told us from Japan, is to promote "the value of acoustics for audio and hence the arrival of the third paradigm". This means thinking of audio as an all-round experience, rather than frontal stereo or mono (second and first paradigms, in U.S. speak). As visiting professor to the

University of Essex, Professor Negishi has co-operated with others in Britain in drafting this proposal, but has been actively promoting it back home in Japan.

Sensitive to the failures of the past, the ARA have ensured their proposed system is "backwards compatible" - meaning the system will be able to play current CDs, so they should not become obsolete. Whilst the digital audio code is out of date, the CD itself, seen as an information storage medium, is going from strength to strength. The growth of video in the home has pushed it along - moving pictures need considerably more storage space than music, so where audio CD has 0.6 Gigabytes capacity to give 73 minutes of music, the new discs have 5 Gigabytes (Toshiba/Warner) and 3.7 Gigabytes (Philips/Sony). This is achieved by using smaller pits read by higher resolution lasers.

PREDICTING THE FUTURE

Faced with such massive storage, the options open out. Quality can be improved immensely, or playing time, or the number of channels used. Which to choose? This is where the proposal wisely acknowledges the impossibility of predicting the future and the folly of attempting to shape it. It can provide numerous options, according to the

intended role of the disc. From two to eight channels of high quality audio can be provided, but the authors lay emphasis on sophisticated surround-sound schemes. Although they see this as the future, the proposal specifically provides properly constituted stereo too, again for compatibility.

CD's ACCURACY x 26!

How about 143 minutes of stereo using a 24 bit amplitude description at a 96kHz sampling rate? That's a resolution of 16,777,216 levels to describe amplitude, instead of today's 65,536 - a considerable gain. Industry experts with experience of high-bit coding schemes generally see 24-bit as offering such high resolution that all future argument about this aspect of digital sound should be made redundant. Let's hope so.

Using more digital steps to better describe the signal reduces distortion and increases dynamic range (theoretically, from 96dB to 144dB). This will give a smoother sound, lacking the glassiness and clinical dryness of today's Compact Disc. The view that CD omits detail and low level ambience cues, giving an immediately impressive but ultimately unconvincing sound, is likely to become a thing of the past.

Today's Compact Discs are sampled at 44.1kHz. The new proposal recommends 48kHz or 96kHz. The latter gives an audio bandwidth of 48kHz (half the sampling rate), compared to today's limit of 21kHz. Pioneer already make DAT machines with this specification and listeners confirm that it sounds a lot more open, neutral and airy than the somewhat constrained sound we get from today's CD. In the background lurk arguments drawn from U.S. Army research that we

THE NEW SPECIFICATION

- The new audio CDs will give improved resolution, making 24bit digital audio in the home a reality.
- Audio bandwidth will extend to 48kHz, double today's figure.
- The ARA hope to make sophisticated multi-channel surround-sound a reality, complete with height information.
- Existing CDs will play on the new players, but today's players will not play the new discs.
- The improved sound quality will put a gulf between midi systems and proper hi-fi.

need to be able to perceive information right up to 100kHz before recorded sounds and environments seem completely natural to us. So there might be a need to go even higher, but at least we know that doubling the sampling rate does bring perceptible benefits to sound quality and the ARA propose this within their system.

REAL HI-FI REBORN?

So this new coding scheme offers some interesting possibilities, but it's also cunningly flexible. Ultra high-quality digital puts emphasis on hardware technology, and therefore cost, but ARA's scheme also allows low quality video or audio players to access and play some part of the disc. This universality has interesting ramifications. Obviously, it makes ARA music discs compatible with a wide range of players, from cheap to expensive. However, it also attempts to exclude budget hi-fi - midi-systems and their ilk - from the high quality sections by imposing a stiff cost penalty. Few midi-systems could afford to incorporate 24-bit D/A convertors, their build budgets are so tight.

This should stimulate hi-fi sales by giving top end real hi-fi products a specific identifiable advantage. Unfortunately, it may well become a two-edged sword, being a benefit only in the short term until the necessary silicon becomes cheap enough for inclusion in a midi-system. Then

suddenly midi-systems will claim 'real hi-fi' credentials - and that will be that! It's unlikely however that any realistic way could ever be found to prevent this sort of thing, even though the ARA proposal attempts to hold off the wolves for a few years.

CD SURROUNDED

Oldsters may be amused to hear that Ambisonics makes a re-appearance in this ARA proposal. This is a method of accurately encoding a sound field, the sound patterns within three-dimensional space, such as a room, theatre or even an outdoor scene. This, as its developer Michael Gerzon always made clear, is not concerned with the number of reproducing channels, which can be three or more, so much as recording a sound field so that it can be reproduced accurately.

HOW IT WILL SOUND

Vocalists and instruments will sound less clinical and hard in their representation. A greater sense of naturalness and air around the images will make music sound more convincing.

Treble will sound sweeter, smoother and more open. The timbral properties of metallic percussion will become apparent. Natural ambience will be revealed.

As Ambisonics is spatially accurate in its coding, it requires a holistic view to be taken. This means meticulous attention to detail, from the soundfield microphone required to accurately capture a complete acoustic, to the decoding needed to translate four internal signals out to any number of speakers. As it is pure, it can be used for large choral works, dramatic Wagnerian experiences, tracking bees in Granchester Meadows, and such like. On the other hand, today's multi-channel systems for cinema simply contrive movement, most sounds being artificially "steered" during the mixing process. This somewhat simpler requirement can also be accommodated by the ARA proposal.

UNLIKE MINIDISC OR DCC

Enthusiasts will be pleased to learn that data-reduced digital of the sort seen in

PASC (DCC from Philips) and MD (ATRAC from Sony) is specifically avoided. Irrespective of arguments about whether such schemes are audible at one pass, there are problems when data reduction is applied more than once. This could happen if a data-reduced DCC tape is broadcast through a data-reduced Digital Audio Broadcast radio transmission. This problem, and the fact that once mangled, music cannot be restored, is enough to have given many people in the professional audio business strong doubts about the wisdom of using such a process. Data-reduction is a retrogressive concept needed only to pack music at low data rate onto inadequate carriers, so it has no part in this new proposal.

A COMMERCIAL REALITY?

The ARA have submitted their proposal to both camps in the video player battle and although there has been no official response, which will doubtless be contingent on many other factors in their commercial war, we were told by Bob Stuart of Meridian that "it has been greeted well". If approval comes through in the next year, and assuming other parties don't object or otherwise make things difficult, it is likely that the new Super-CD could appear in around three years time, or 1998. Then we'll discover just how "inadequate", as the ARA put it, 1970s' digital really was, consigning it to the dustbin of history - alongside flared jeans!

The ARA are:

Professor Hirokazu Negishi, founder of the ARA and Director of the Design and Development Centre of Canon Inc, Japan.
 Professor Malcolm Hawksford, University of Essex, Dept. of Audio Engineering.
 Bob Stuart, Technical Director of Meridian.
 Tony Griffiths, Technical Director of Decca Recording Co.
 David Meares, R&D Manager (Audio and Acoustics) BBC Research and Development.
 Michael Gerzon, ex-Oxford Mathematical Institute.
 Francis Rumsey, University of Guildford.
 Peter Craven & Chris Travis

Black Art

David Price looks at an interesting new direction the venerable long-playing vinyl disc is taking.



VINYL MASTERING

Between the master tape and the slice of plastic revolving in front of you is the mastering process, where the mastertapes are transcribed to the vinyl disc. Normally the cutting lathe (shown below) cuts a groove onto a lacquer blank from which, after a long and complex process, the moulding tool known as the stamper that presses the vinyl is made.

This intricate process is prone to many problems which adversely affect sound. But in 1980, Teldec introduced Direct Metal Mastering, originally developed by Telefunken and Decca in the 1960s for video playback from a vinyl disc (the format's failure was doubtless something to do with its ten minute maximum playing time!). As the cutting

As cost has started to play second fiddle to quality for many record buyers, the audiophile vinyl business has burgeoned. You only need to look at specialist companies like Audiophile International (who supplied the LPs for this feature) to see this. So what does spending £25 on an album that would normally retail for under £10 bring? Are they really better than everyday pieces of plastic? The answer isn't as simple as it seems, for the world of record manufacturing enjoys a number of conflicting viewpoints. Let's separate the wood from the trees.

ORIGINAL MASTERS

There's a long and tortuous path between high quality studio recordings and your turntable. Copies of the mastertapes are made so the original masters can be archived. It's these copies that are often used by the pressing plant, meaning that before even

reaching vinyl, your album has lost at least one 'generation'. But audiophile pressings use the original first generation mastertapes, giving them the best possible start in life. But then comes the mastering process, about which opinions are divided.

lathe cuts the groove directly into copper, which doesn't deform too easily, it avoids lacquer's tendency to 'relax' after being cut, which can lose high frequencies. So the simpler, cheaper DMM process gives what Bob Bailey, production manager at EMI's



AUDIOPHILE VINYL - THE DIFFERENCE

•Audiophile pressings use the original first generation master tapes.

*Standard pressings weigh 120gm, while audiophile discs weigh in at 180-200gm.

•Many standard records are made from recycled vinyl. Audiophile vinyl is new and untouched.

•Standard pressings come with packaging that doesn't protect the disc properly, and can actually abrade playing surfaces.

Audiophile vinyl is packed properly.

Hayes production plant, calls "a closer representation of the analogue waveform", replicating fully the groove cut by the lathe.

Although conventional industry wisdom is that DMM "will give an improved result over a lacquer", why is it that none of the specialist audiophile pressings tested here are Direct Metal Mastered? Herb Belkin, president of Mobile Fidelity Sound Labs believes it's a case of best practice. For MFSL, instability problems at high frequencies are reason enough for rejecting copper as a mastering medium. Because it's so much easier to use, DMM looks an attractive idea, but Herb believes its subjective drawbacks outweigh its objective benefits. "DMM is a science," he says, "but working with lacquers is an art." This means neither mastering medium is perfect, and care taken in production quality control affects subjective sound quality as much as the mastering materials used.

Less contentious is half-speed mastering (HSM), which offers improved transient response by cutting a master tape playing at half its original speed on a lathe turning at 16 2/3 r.p.m. The standard way to master discs until the early fifties, HSM was abandoned as soon as technology permitted time-saving double-speed mastering. Nowadays, most audiophile vinyl is half-speed mastered as a matter of course.

PRESSING QUALITY

Is there any point carefully transcribing the masters if you're going to press onto the first piece of plastic you can find? Audiophile LPs employ thicker vinyl, all titles tested here are pressed

on 180gm vinyl, nearly twice as heavy as conventional LPs which weigh as little as 100gm, while Mobile Fidelity use 200gm vinyl. What difference does this make?

Bob Bailey argues there has been no conclusive research on this subject to date. Instead, he believes "the quality of vinyl is *in the groove*", rather than around it, "if a 120gm disc is formed well it will perform as well as a 180gm". As the average 120gm LP is 1.25mm thick, while the groove depth is less than 0.05mm, many industry engineers feel the extra thickness of an audiophile pressing is unlikely to improve performance.

However, Herb cites his company's reason for using heavyweight vinyl as longevity. Standard weight vinyl, he argues, means thinner, less resilient groove walls which can result in the vinyl developing a "memory" as it's repeatedly played. Thicker, heavier vinyl resists warps and wear, retaining the microscopic information in the groove better. Indeed Herb claims that MFSL vinyl "has at least as good a survival rate as CD". Audiophile pressings also have deeper grooves, which he believes gives superior signal-to-noise ratios.

There's also vinyl quality to consider - all these audiophile pressings come on virgin vinyl. Nothing to do with Britain's resident balloon flying, Cola-drinking entrepreneur, this simply means what you're listening to isn't made from reground ABBA records - the vinyl is new and unrecycled. In the seventies, massive record sales meant fast pressing cycle times were needed. Using impure 'regrind' vinyl which was malleable and quick to cool, cycle times could be reduced to 12 seconds. But this made for a muddy sound with endemic surface noise. Pressed with high quality virgin vinyl, audiophile LPs can take over 1 1/2 minutes to cool, and are far harder to work with, but side-step the noise problems caused by contaminants in regrind vinyl.

Industry professionals don't see this in black and white. Some argue recycled

vinyl is more stable and predictable, meaning greater real-world consistency. While Bob pointed out that "there's no research showing virgin vinyl is quieter", Herb countered that a properly set up press using virgin vinyl will give better results, and that mass production on EMI's scale doesn't allow time to optimise presses.

STORY OF THE GROOVE

Many regard the fifties as the heyday of vinyl. Then, standard LPs were pressed on 180gm vinyl rather than today's 120gm norm. In the seventies, pressings got lighter, and suffered from the widespread use of inferior recycled vinyl which meant increased distortion and a lower signal to noise ratio.

At the end of the decade, while LP quality was entering freefall, audiophile pressings on heavy virgin vinyl appeared. Many Blue Note releases appeared Direct Metal Mastered on to virgin vinyl. Half-speed masters from Mobile Fidelity Sound Labs' Original Master Recordings made serious inroads into the market.

The mid eighties saw LP quality drop further still, thanks to the increasing use of second or third generation master tapes in the reissue of 'mid-price' albums. The use of regrind vinyl and ever flimsier jackets suggested that big record companies were losing interest in black plastic.

Mobile Fidelity Sound Labs



MFSL have long had an involvement in audiophile vinyl, being the first to produce half-speed mastered Original Master Recording LPs, says president Herb Belkin. The company shows exceptional attention to detail at all stages in the production process, from class A direct coupled power amps driving the cutting heads to super-smooth inner sleeves for the discs themselves.

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AUDIOPHILE VINYL IN ACTION

Now, in the middle of the nineties, standard vinyl pressings seem to be getting better, so how do they compare against the serious stuff? We listened to titles from specialist audiophile labels including Mobile Fidelity, Decca SXL, Analogue Productions, RCA Living Stereo, and DCC Compact Classics, and rated them out of ten, with top marks awarded when the record disappeared completely! Does audiophile vinyl give more sound per pound?

Ray Charles and Betty Carter

DCC Compact Classics: 8/10
Standard: 2/10

This release uses valve power amps to drive the cutters, making for a dramatic improvement over the standard digitally remastered LP. Where the cooking version sounded dry and compressed, the DCC pressing had far more atmosphere. Brass had superb timbre, while Ray and Betty's voices projected much better. Surface noise was very low, with the recording's original analogue tape hiss replacing the digitally remastered disc's vinyl hiss and roar.

Debussy Printemps

Decca FFSS Stereo Phonic: 9/10

This had an even quieter surface than the DCC. Sound quality was excellent, with a deep, rich timbre to strings. The

room had a magnificent ambience, far surpassing any standard LP I've heard, while bass was unusually powerful.



Debussy/Iberia/Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Fritz Reiner conductor

RCA Victor Living Stereo: 10/10

This was stunning. Never have I heard such an expansive, dynamic recording - attack transients were unbelievable, enough to knock you off your seat at twenty paces. Vinyl roar and surface noise were totally absent, leaving an eerie silence behind the music. Soundstage was breathtaking, going back miles behind the 'speakers. This seminal 1958 recording is the best I've heard to date.

Bill Evans Trio Waltz for Debby

Analogue Productions: 8/10
Standard: 6/10

An excellent pressing almost up to RCA standards, it improved on the already impressive Riverside version in every respect. Again, imaging was far superior, the 'speakers disappearing and the acoustic projecting right out. The beautifully etched ride cymbals made the standard pressing seem muffled.

Stan Getz/Joao Gilberto

Mobile Fidelity Anadisc 200: 9/10
Standard: 5/10

This super-heavy disc sounded superb, with a faultless pressing that felt like the stylus was glued to the groove. Double bass had the best solidity of the group, while soundstaging was excellent. Cymbals were devoid of the grain of the already good standard pressing. So

accomplished was it that the disc disappeared, leaving me hearing only my cartridge!



Muddy Waters Folk Singer

Mobile Fidelity: 10/10

Pressing quality was again up with the best I've encountered, but the awesome dynamics showcased the vinyl better than the more laid-back Getz/Gilberto recording. The massive acoustic, the physicality of Waters' voice and the attack of his guitar came close to the heart-stopping drama of the RCA pressing.

THE VERDICT

The arguments over the practicalities of record production will run and run. What's obvious is that standard LPs are produced with very different time and cost constraints to their audiophile cousins. This explains why the latter are considerably more expensive. Sonically, audiophile vinyl has much to recommend it. The discs tested here provided a level of fidelity that shames conventional pressings, and some were just plain awesome. The quality of sound they wrested from my system has made it grow in my estimation, to say the least. The question you'll doubtless be asking yourself is "are audiophile pressings worth £25?." To this I can only say yes. It's a hell of a lot of money for a piece of black plastic, but not much more expensive than a lower-fi double CD. They'll also last a lifetime, and a very enjoyable lifetime it will be too.



AI was formed to meet the needs of the European audiophile software market, says director Keith Martin. They offer everything from LPs on ultra-high quality vinyl to gold CDs. Their catalogue covers a large range of music from classical stereo LPs and remasters of legendary rock titles to vintage jazz impossible to find on original vinyl.

Audiophile International

EON'S AHEAD

Denon's TU-215RD tuner brings you full RDS 'Enhanced Other Networks' capability for a mere £150. Eric Braithwaite sees the future and is impressed.

Maybe it's because Denon has a strong footing in broadcast equipment in radio studios that they do affordable tuners so well. If you heard it on radio, chances are you heard it through one of Denon's professional-sector CD players. Here's the latest in Denon's tuners to keep others on their toes, the TU-215RD, a mere £149. For this you get a remarkable selection of facilities.

It looks much like any other tuner, Denon or otherwise, yet here you get those nice solid-touch controls that inspire confidence. Not for Denon the narrowing down of choice that fitting only VHF/FM imposes. The '215 has Medium wave radio too, so the new Medium wave specialists popping up in the UK can be captured. This is a synthesiser tuner

with no fewer than 40 station memories, optional remote control and full RDS (Radio Data System). Many of the front panel buttons relate to RDS, rather than other tuner functions, like selectable IF, which are absent.

Denon's RDS system gives you more than most: it's a full implementation. I mean, full. Not just the station name. We have scrolling text ('Rachmaninov Prelude in C minor Op23 No 7') that does away with all those memory failings and allows you to impress your friends with your instant encyclopedic musical knowledge.

"What's that, then?" with "Ah yes, that's Rachmaninov, the Prelude . . . of course." Or, via Choice FM, parrot 'Continuous jams in London'. For a moment I thought they meant jam sessions, which

"I wouldn't give tuppence for the way most tuners treat solo piano, but I couldn't complain about the TU-215."

seemed a bit of a new departure in programming, but this is RDS EON (Enhanced Other Network), which gives you the traffic updates.

Mind you, that message was hardly news and RDS expression can be a bit limited. What do the asterisks stand for in 'Sarah Kennedy, the *** early Show'? No, don't write in. You do need to be within a couple of feet to read it, though the display is usefully bright. I thought it was 'Wogan, with news weather and great wits' and was about to complain about misrepresentation until I looked again. It was 'great hits'. Some stations are now also finally broadcasting the time from the Universal Cesium clock, so you can tell people the time without even looking at your watch.

Impressive? That's only the written word. Spoken word was pretty good, too, with just a touch of cuppiness and nasality, but of the degree where you have to listen for it. I caught Yevgeny Kissin on Radio 3, and it wasn't only last year's Royal Festival Hall performance that scored, it was reading the names of all four encores as they began that came in handy as well.

I wouldn't give tuppence for the way most tuners treat solo piano, but I couldn't complain about the TU-215. A balance on the rich, warm side gave the left hand a very solid round and deep tone, while scales and arpeggios in the treble were clean and sweet, without any discontinuity. It was a very well-defined, rather close-up image between the speakers, with the applause properly confined across the sound stage instead of splashing around: a





good test of a tuner's control.

Tennstedt, conducting the overture from *Die Walkure*, came over pretty well, too, with, as you'd expect, rich fruity brass and sweet strings. Laid back, yes, but this is better than being thin and scrawny in tone. A solo violin piece again had a good, sweet and vibrant tone. Top marks at this price, here. Good marks at twice the price, even. Dynamics are a touch constricted compared with a reference, but the Denon made a better stab at the transitions between *ppp* and *p* than most.

So far, so very good, but rock devotees beware: this is not a tuner

tweaked for compressed rock stations. There are those that bend the truth, beef up the bass and sharpen up the upper end of the midrange to compensate. The Denon stays a bit of a smoothy, with decent finger-clicking bass timing and a dry bottom end. All this on FM, of course; AM is competent, a bit less cloth-eared than some, but lo-fi with enough added brightness to make it listenable, as opposed to sheer mud.

Yet again, Denon have come up with a budget tuner with real class and no false economies sonically. In Des's cringing catch-phrase: "how do they do that?"

Denon TU-215RD

£150

**Hayden Laboratories Ltd.,
Hayden House, Chiltern Hill,
Chalfont St. Peter,
Bucks. SL9 9UG.
☎ 01903 888447**

WORLD VERDICT ●●●●●

With no technical weaknesses, great sound and comprehensive RDS facilities, it's a bargain.

**Measured Performance
see p113-121**

TWO-STEP

Getting an electrostatic panel and box bass to tango isn't easy. Noel Keywood and David Price judge a curious partnership in the shape of the Cadence ES loudspeaker.

The principle is sensible enough, but the practice peculiarly difficult. Open electrostatic panels offer an airiness to the reproduction of vocals and instruments that's hard to resist. I detected this in the £3500 Cadence ES 'speakers from the moment they sang their first song. But harmonising the efforts of gossamer-thin clingfilm with the antics of a weighty bass cone working against the air in a large, closed cabinet is another task altogether. Like getting a gnat and an elephant to dance together without treading on each other's toes, it's not a mismatch easily concealed.

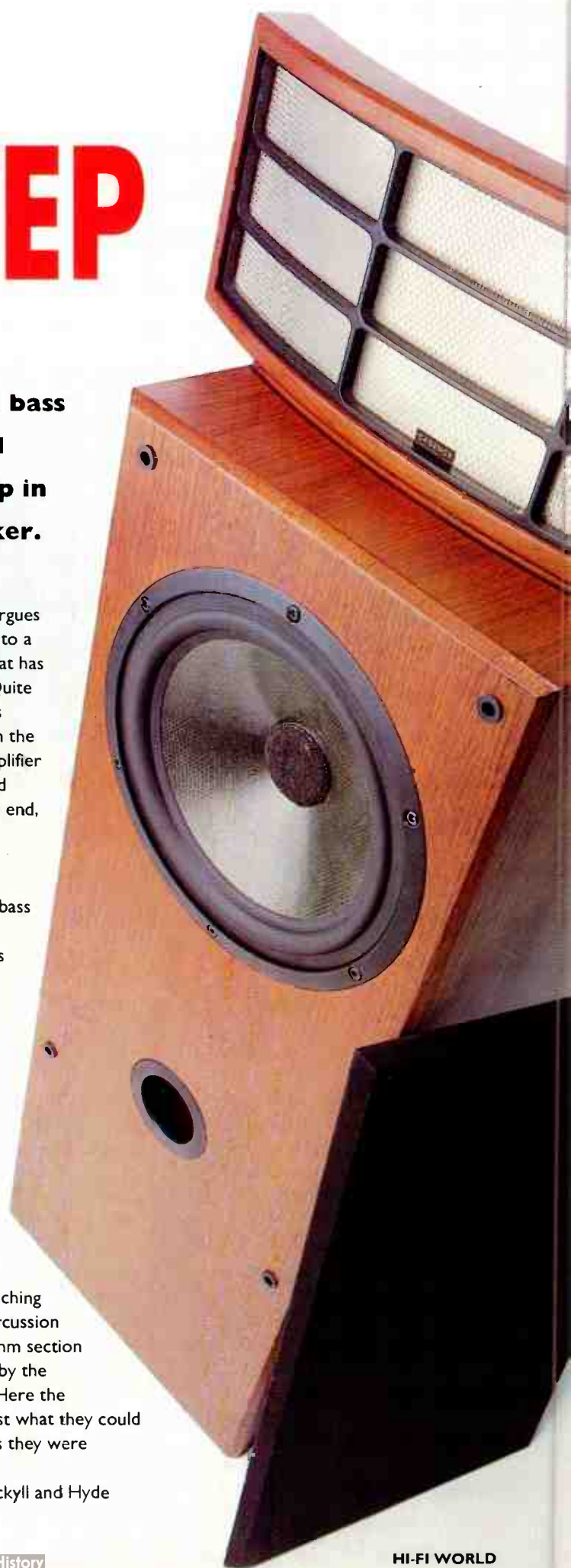
I've tried a bit of this mularkey too, using an active filter to help give the bass driver a good prod to keep it in step. Experimenting with this gave me a good idea of the difficulties. I suspect Cadence opted for a closed cabinet because it offers better damping and potentially "faster" bass than the more common ported (reflex) cabinet, hoping it would match the electrostatic section more readily. This means the cabinet must be large if its bass is to go low - as buyers will expect from such a costly and complex loudspeaker. So, like B&W with their early-seventies DM70 hybrid, the Cadence is seriously large and not unintrusive. Does the trick come off? Can two drive units so different from each other stay in step?

I can't say they do. The Cadence crosses over noticeably from a full,

grumbling bass that argues with the floorboards to a sprightly midrange that has other things to do. Quite how obvious this was depended much upon the music played, the amplifier used and the required listening levels. In the end, I found they best matched mellow sounding power amplifiers with good bass drive and grip - Audiolab monoblocks fitted the bill.

The low synth throb at the start of Isaac Hayes' cover of 'Summer in the City' had so much weight and power it shook the room. The Cadences were deeply impressive here, with rare bass quality - deep, thunderous gut-wrenching stuff. Hayes' vivid percussion effects and tight rhythm section were well projected by the electrostatic driver. Here the Cadences showed just what they could do - by any standards they were impressive.

Peculiarly, in a Jekyll and Hyde



that one listener said made them a little "clanky" sounding. This wasn't much of a concern with rock, but the violins of the Philharmonia Orchestra struck me as hard and forward with Wagner's Tannhauser. This 1960 recording isn't the newest, and I know the strings do sound hard, but not that hard. Balancing this was a gloriously wide soundstage across which the string sections were arrayed convincingly, making the 'speakers impressive, even whilst wayward.

As electrostatic hybrids go, the Cadences are better than many I've heard, if not perfect. Cadence have made a good basic job of some difficult

engineering, even though trying to match an open backed electrostatic to such a huge bass cabinet was always going to be a non-starter. This apart, however, the Cadences are very sensitive - always a good point - so they'll work with all high quality amplifiers, even low power designs.

They need mains power of course, but overseas readers may well appreciate the fact that they're unaffected by very high humidity. The fact that these 'speakers hail from India partly accounts for this unusual plus point, but Singaporeans contemplating the monsoon will likely take heart too. Apparently, an Austrian electronics engineer designed the 'speakers for his own use, but development and production was funded by a large Indian company with various industrial interests, so presentation and back up are first class.

The Cadences were professionally finished and they measured unusually well too, which was the biggest surprise. It's the impedance/sensitivity/reactance characteristics of a 'speaker that say much about its designer - an area where beasts of this size and

complexity are commonly a dog's dinner. The Cadences were not. Those with a big wallet and a room to match should certainly listen to the Cadence ES 'speakers - they've got performance to match their size.

DAVID SAYS

Now these are 'speakers I rate, but before I start to wax lyrical I'll make one qualification - neutral and inconspicuous they're not. What they are, however, is fun - the kind that brings an evil grin to people's faces when they know they're hearing something special. Isaac Hayes' 'Summer in the City' went from being just another cover version to an epic soundscape in which Isaac's voice battled with legions of wah-wah, keyboards and

drums of cowering strength. As the track progressed Hayes' arrangement grew in complexity and the soundstage filled out to envelope me - while all the time the bass rumbled and growled like an Aston DB5. The Cadences appear able to convey scale, without limitation. As a critic, I could find problems, but as a music lover, they were awesome. An imperfect cadence, but an enjoyable one nevertheless ● DP

Cadence ES

£3499

**Ambience,
92 Ruskin Park House,
Champion Hill, London SE5 8TH
☎ 0171 274 8317**

WORLD VERDICT



An interesting design with a very impressive sound, but an inconsistent performer.

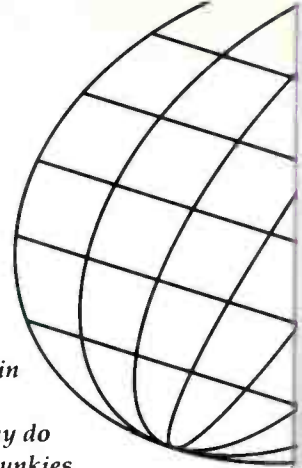
**Measured Performance
see p113-121**

manner, other tracks seemed to excite only the electrostatic driver, producing a thinner sound with less apparent body and cohesion. Oasis and Teenage Fanclub both fell victims to this effect, coming over as harsher and more raucous than other 'speakers would have it. Yet as production techniques changed, track to track, so the 'speakers could snap out of this: the well balanced mix of TFC's 'Mellow Doubt' sounded altogether more cohesive than preceding tracks, for example. I got the distinct impression the bass unit was reluctant to boogie at times, yet when it did the 'speaker was as impressive as you'd expect. Keeping the bass driver moving is the reason for using a punchy, solid-state power amp, by the way.

The electrostatic driver had a fine sense of openness with a noticeable absence of overhang after notes - cymbals and bells rang with delightful purity. I detected some extra zip in the treble that hardened guitar strings a little, giving them bite while avoiding sibilance. An underlying hardness of tone was evident, a metallic colouration



World



IN DEFENCE OF SILVER DISCS

I would like to use the pages of your magazine to leap to the defence of the Compact Disc user. I reject the views put forward by some of your recent letter writers that CD users don't know any better and have been led astray by record companies and Philips' long-ridiculed marketing hype. I use CD because I actually prefer it!

Oh horror of horrors! I can just see the vinyl snobs among us wringing their hands in despair at my last remark. Contrary to the belief that CD is the spawn of the devil, I know what I

like and can recognise the strengths and weakness of both mediums.

In his review of moving coil cartridges in the June issue, David Price rather sneeringly remarks that CD users need to be told that there is more to music than just instant track selection. Not so Mr Price. I spent a lot of time and money selecting my system and it suits me just fine. Why do people keep knocking me for it because I prefer CD?

When I read your letters page I often wonder how vinyl users have the time to listen to music because they seem to spend all their time

worrying about the effects CD is having on other people's systems. Why don't they mind their own business! Hi-fi is not a crusade for vinyl and should not be treated as such.

**Jeff Bryan
Enfield.**

Ooops, methinks I've been misquoted. I actually said that the vdH MC10 was "the sort of thing to remind CD fans..." - there was no suggestion that CD users need to be told anything. This wasn't meant to sound sneering - of course CD users have got a right to enjoy their

music in peace.

Why do vinyl junkies make so many disdainful comments about CD? Simply because CD is a hostile threat to them. Record companies have unilaterally deemed that the world wants CD and can't have anything else. So I don't think vinyl junkies' complaints are addressed to CD users as much as the major corporate players in the "music software" game. Like you, all they want to do is enjoy their chosen format in peace.

PASTRY, PUMPS AND PEAKS

I have a number of issues that may be of interest to the readers of *Hi-Fi World*. Firstly, the bargain of my year was discovered while being dragged screaming and kicking around Ikea I stumbled across some lovely looking pastry boards. What I hear you say has pastry making got to do with hi-fi? They were marble slabs 60x40cm - I couldn't resist them and they've made my turntable come to life, with a marked improvement in dynamics and imaging over their wooden predecessors.

On the subject of equipment supports, 18

years ago I did an A-level project on finding a method or substance to isolate my Connoisseur BDI turntable. After hours spent in the workshops building a test jig (incorporating an old ceramic cartridge) I tested a whole range of things, including foam, neoprene and springs. My conclusion was that a balloon partially inflated with air gave the best result. The only problem I had in using these for my turntable was that they kept deflating over time. It seems that Max Townsend has partially solved the problem with a valve and cycle pump!

I read with interest

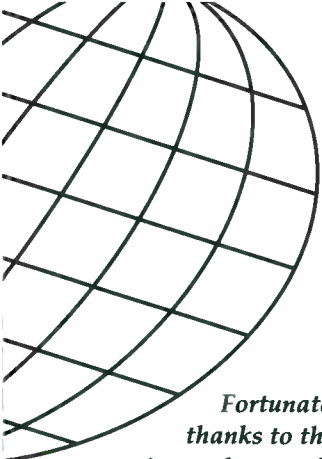
Noel's comments about compact disc being seventies technology with an inadequate dynamic range "in vivo" limited by a horrendous sounding distortion that all too often makes itself known. I listen to mainly rock and jazz and find many recordings compressed to death. This doesn't surprise me at all. From my limited experience of recording a live band in a hall most of the time the VU meters barely moved from the -20dB area. Then, the vocalist lets rip and the needles bang the end stops and all the peak lights flash at you as if the end of the world is nigh! If you don't overload the

electronics and are recording onto analogue tape you get compression and some distortion of the peak. Judging by what you used to see going on in recording studios this was an accepted way of doing things. But never in your wildest dreams would you go over the limit recording digitally would you? You compromise, lower the levels, whack in the brick wall limiter, never daring to get to 0dB. Wasting precious digital bits and resolution and getting into that horrible sounding 1-2% distortion at -60dB. Oh and don't forget you have a restricted frequency limit caused by a ridiculously low sampling

Letter of

Send your letters to Hi-Fi World Letter Page,

writes



Fortunately, thanks to the noise made recently, many record companies are waking up to the undeniable demand for black plastic. DP

POWER TO THE GARRARD

Following the note of the Vintage Communications Fair (Trade Winds, May), I thought I would go, and despite the drive down I really enjoyed it. Not a lot of hi-fi as a percentage of the floorspace, although I did see a pair of Heathkit amps and

preamp similar to the ones I built (mine were mono) to go with my deck, but I bought a couple of valve radios to join my small collection. I'll be back next year I think.

Now for a suggestion. If it's not in the pipeline, has anyone thought of designing a power supply for the Garrard 301/401 for inclusion in the supplement? I would think Andy Grove could knock one out in a tea break. I mention this because I have a 301, which I bought new when I was nineteen-ish, along with an 3012 SME arm and Shure cartridge. I remember my mother had to

sign the guarantor form for the hire purchase! It appears to be a transition model, a 301 deck with a platter and motor. It doesn't seem like 30 years ago. In fact, until when I started reading World I built another plinth for it with an RB 300, and it's now in its third incarnation. **Ken Johnston Glasgow**

They knew how to make them to last. As Quad note, almost irrespective of purchase price, products with a life span like this are cheap in the long run. NK

WORLD WIDE OF THE MARK

While I have been a fairly consistent reader of your mag for some time now, I feel I must take exception to the stomach-churning sycophancy of your multiple reviews of the DPA Renaissance CD player in the

June '95 issue.

You might well be on first name terms with DPA's designers but that's no excuse to completely lose your heads and objectivity over what is basically a very good value-for-money CD player, nothing more, nothing less. It's certainly not the best thing since free money.

When I'd got through counting the number of glowing terms you used to describe the player, I had to check the front cover to make sure I hadn't picked up a copy of *What Hi-Fi* by mistake. This was sensationalistic journalism at its most vulgar. To suggest the DPA has no competitor at the price is short-sighted and reckless.

As someone always on the lookout to better my existing set up, I have auditioned many top-end players. Good though they are in their own ways,

continued on page 47...

the Month

frequency.

Think about this...You have a cine camera taking a frame 25 times a second. You are filming a see-saw oscillating at 12 times a second. Can you say which way the see saw is moving all the time? Can you say how high it is going on each cycle? Using my analogy I think ten times the highest frequency you want to reproduce is a good basis for setting the sampling frequency. 24 bit should be okay to allow for the waste around the edges. This makes red lasers and a 5" disc a non starter.

Dr David Matthews
Thames Ditton,
Surrey.

The need to record at low level on digital, so as never to go into overload distortion because it is so horrendous, has produced some disasters in the past. I've heard seas of violins shimmer and shake in the most astonishing manner because of this. Engineers have now twigged that 16-bit digital, including CD, only works well right at the top of its range, so they compress music up in effect, as you've noticed. You'll find that the new ARA proposal for the digital coding of music more or less satisfies your criteria. NK

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.... continued from page 45

including the DPA, to my great surprise none has bettered my existing CD source. You might be wondering how much I spent on such a capable player - well I spent £825 to be exact. It's based around the modest Marantz CD63 player, with a £200 Audio Alchemy DAC-In-The-Box, the £275 Monarch Digital-Interface-Processor and a pair of Audioquest Video Z interconnects. Get your readers to check out this combo in comparison to the DPA. It's not the best thing since free money, it's just the best thing I've heard to date for under £2000. Nothing more, nothing less.

David Hull
Northants.

I agree that if everything gets a "phew - wot a stunna!" review, we might as well give up and go home. But at the same time we go to lengths to identify good products and give them appropriate coverage.

The reason the Renaissance got three reviews was that it's a product about which opinions were divided. We all loved it, but weren't sure if its sound was 'accurate'. So our dilemma was whether we should rave about a euphonic sounding product - more a philosophical (if that's not to overburden the word) question than one of patronage, friendship or sycophancy. DP

TAKE OFF THAT ANORAK

I stopped reading World when you started wearing anoraks but recently started reading it again and was amazed to learn that you were planning to test the LP12 with all its different PSUs. Apart from the Lingo, all the others seem to have

adopted an underground status, almost as if they were the bastard son of an almost well-to-do family that no-one should talk about!

Have a listen to the deck with different base-board options and then try with no base-board at all. The sound opens out and losses that pluminess that has become its trademark.

I bought my LP12 with Valhalla power in 1991 and have replaced the Akito with a good Ittok III and had a Cirkus installed. However the best and most effective tweak came in the form of a bloody marvellous dealer, thanks to Paul and the guys at Listen Inn Northampton for their exemplary service and attitude.

Gary Hastie
Daventry.

Well, excuse us, but there are no anoraks here - the only vinyl in the office is of the circular, flat variety. I hope you enjoyed the LP12 feature - we'll be carrying more on it at a later date. The base board mod. sounds interesting, but remember to avoid any live mains you might find under the hood. DP

What a crime to be a clothes manufacturer these days. Flared jeans, anoraks, Barbour, white stilettos (the other journalists wear these!) - all gentle forms of social rebuke. You'll be chastened to learn that when I 'spoke to Linn the other day about "Linnies" they thought I was having a go! It took a lot of verbal back pedalling on my part to avoid being shown the usual role of a Kaber. NK

WEDDED BLISS

I have just read the review of the Linn Karik CD player in the July issue and had to put pen to paper, having recently acquired one.

Before auditioning it, as usual I asked my wife to come with me to the dealer, expecting the usual curt refusal, but for some reason she agreed. The first machine was the Arcam Alpha Five, much better than my existing Philips but no match for my Linn LP12/Ittok turntable. The new Mission player followed - even better but still no match for the LP12. A Mimik was next. We both preferred it to the Mission - but how about a listen to the Karik?

Breaking into a cold sweat, I agreed. After the first track of BBM's 'Around The Next Dream', my wife asked me how much? I mumbled incoherently - it was clearly the best player we had heard - but the price!

I reluctantly suggested we settle for the Mimik. "No," said my wife, "It has to be the Karik or nothing!" A quick raid on the building society and it was ours! We are both delighted with it. It hasn't replaced vinyl but coexists with it. We can listen to both sources with equal pleasure, thanks to my wife. It's a funny old world.

S Chapman
Derbyshire.

PS I'm now trying to get her to listen to Heybrook Sextets!

A RUSH AND A PUSH

My current system comprises TDL RTL3 speakers, Denon PMA 480 amplifier, Denon DCD 910 transport, QED digit DAC with positron PSU, Monster component interconnects, Chord Company Speaker cable and a Technics RS-B765 cassette deck.

I've always found that no matter what I did during the various upgrade paths which have lead to my current system, things have always eventually started to sound tame and boring. The sonic revelations brought about by the addition of each new system element became

predictable and tarnished after just a few weeks and I was left questioning whether the money had been well spent in the first place.

However, given that I had invested considerable amounts in hi-fi over the years, I felt that the problem required perhaps just a little thought prior to the seemingly inevitable upgrade. After auditioning a number of new amps, CD players, interconnects and cassette decks to no avail, I turned my attention to my much-loved TDLs.

During a moment of contemplation I realised the only constant in my system during the last two years has been the internal components - the cabinets themselves having been rebuilt to more demanding tolerances by a local carpenter some time ago. Since he is also a hi-fi tinkerer of some local standing, I let him do the cabinet construction and the transplanting of the machinery in one fell swoop.

So I have never seen the TDLs with their clothes off so to speak. After a couple of minutes with a screwdriver, I had the bits laid out neatly on the floor and the problem was practically hitting me right between the eyes! That near-perfect signal upon which thousands of pounds had been spent was reaching the crossovers and then dying as soon as it was injected down the miserably thin bell wire which connected them to the drive units.

Given the inherent quality of the major components within the RTL3s, and their ridiculously low prices it stands to reason that corners had to be cut somewhere. Since I just happened to have some Chord Co. cable left over, I feverishly busied myself with the soldering iron.

The difference was

continued on page 53...

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*Review of PASSION - Martin Colloms
HiFi News April '93 and November '94*

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POLE POSITION?

Dominic Baker finds out how Technics' SLP-840 CD player lines up against its turbo-charged rivals.

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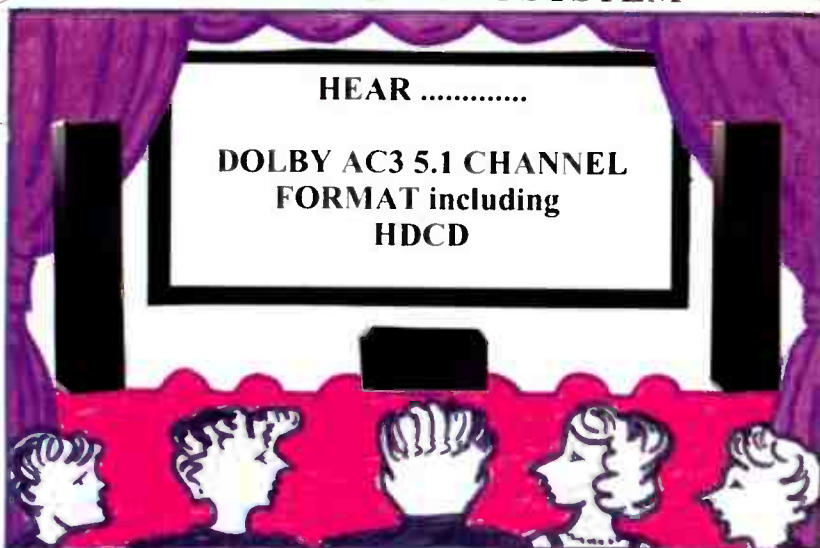
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Things are hotting up in the mid-price CD player grand prix. With Marantz's CD-63SE on pole and NAD's 514 second on the grid, there isn't much room for outsiders. But this month we've tested two other serious contenders, from big name players too. Dominic Todd auditions the new £400 Rotel RCD-975BX, which has the benefit of being tuned up in the UK, and here we're concentrating on Technics' £450 SLP-S840.

Of all of the players in this race, the Technics looks the most dated in terms of styling. Even the NAD has smoother, more aerodynamic lines and a more functional appearance. Although I thought the thin pin stripe that crosses the Technics' fascia had gone out with XR3is, the layout's still clear, neat and ergonomically at the front of the pack. It has a wide range of facilities too, including the ability to sort tracks so that they fall neatly onto a cassette when recording.

Electronically, the SLP-S840 uses Technics' MASH 1-bit convertor chip, which should give a smooth, distortion free sound. Their Virtual Battery Operation power supply is said to reduce noise from the power supply and digital circuits. Technics are quick to claim comparison with audiophile techniques, like Class A and battery operation, but technically connections are tenuous in our view. All the same, component quality in this player was high throughout, with carbon film resistors and audio grade polypropylene capacitors. But there's only an optical digital output provided, which may limit its upgrade future.

Compared to the highly regarded £350 Marantz CD-63SE, the Technics had a heavier, more cumbersome bass quality. Even with the light, breezy balance of the Lightning Seeds' 'Open Goals', bass was fulsome but slightly

plodding, where it should have been driving forwards speedily. With thinner sounding recordings like Oasis' 'Supersonic' this was welcome, giving the bottom end a fuller, more rounded quality. But even here, although much of the balance of the recording was restored, a slowing of pace could be detected.

Another facet of the SLP-S840's presentation was relative lack of treble precision. Whereas lower down the sound was realistically solid, with the grungy guitars and hi-hats of REM's

Monster, treble took on a splashy, phasey quality that destabilised notes. This was less noticeable on richer recordings with a softer balance, but could prove too much with some of the brighter metal dome tweeters around. It was noticeable with a smooth, soft-

dome tweeter, and although peculiar and incorrect, I did not find it overly annoying.

The player's midrange was commendably smooth and focussed. With prominent vocals where bass and treble energy aren't allowed to dominate, such as Bjork's 'Enjoy', the SLP-S840 acquitted itself very well. Her voice was projected out across the stage, her childlike emotion carried nicely. There was very little sharpness or edge to her vocals, even on loud transients, allowing the breathy, open character of the recording to flourish.

These traits carried through in similar fashion on classical works. Ravel's Bolero on the Chesky label sounded as if had been tweaked at the frequency extremes with a graphic equaliser. High percussion had a grainy edge, highlighting harmonics in an unnatural manner. The result, although certainly listenable, paled next to the smoother, cleaner and more refined CD-63SE. In the bass, cellos gained a plummy which, whilst adding scale

to the performance, smothered the rich, woody texture of the instruments.

This track highlighted the Technics' basic character. Although, as is common with most CD players, soundstage depth was compressed into a narrow plane between the 'speakers, a good sense of stage width was apparent. So even though kettle drums had been moved forward to sit with the violins, the orchestra was spread wide past the boundaries of the 'speakers. Imaging was sharp, with orchestral sections tightly positioned. Across centre stage images lost some body, becoming thinner and more dispersed, but all the same the SLP-S840 did a fine job, making for a credible performance.

The Technics SLP-S840 has some admirable qualities, displaying a smooth and lifelike midrange, plus a broad sweep of sound stage. However, its failings - ponderous bass and lack of body in the treble - make it hard to recommend, in sheer sound quality terms, compared to Marantz's £100 cheaper CD-63SE. I'd even suggest that better value could be had from Arcam's more expensive Alpha 5 Plus, which takes refinement one step further. But if it's convenience, ergonomics and features allied to a solid performance, the Technics SLP-S840 is still in the points ●

Technics SLP-S840 £450

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WORLD VERDICT

Not the last word in sound quality but a performance with some strengths nonetheless.

Measured Performance
see p113-121

“The Technics SLP-S840 has some admirable qualities, displaying a smooth and lifelike midrange, plus a broad sweep of sound stage”

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obvious even during the opening bars of Jean Michael Jarre's 'Chronology'. Once the first track was well under way, I was amazed at the improvement in the speakers' reproduction of individual instruments, and their ability to fit everything into a tight and coherent soundstage.

After going through a number of old favourites, I became aware of another characteristic of my 'new' system. I felt I could almost perceive the mood of Neil Peart during a hammering drum solo, or capture the thoughts of Alex Lifeson during one of his favourite tracks. It has to be down to the fact that everything is now so well presented by the TDs - it's just so damned musical, there's no other word for it.

I realise now that it was that musical quality which I was looking for at every upgrade. When I thought I had achieved a better sound, it was probably down to the novelty value of the new component more than anything else. There is, after all, no doubting that the mind can fool the ears, if only for a limited length of time.

So the message to all out there is if you have speakers upon which the guarantee has expired (or you have plenty of cash), and you are confident in your tinkering ability then don't be frightened to have a look inside at just what you're asking those precious little electrons to pass through on their weary way from your crossovers to your drive units. You may well be surprised at how much signal corruption can occur in such a comparatively short length of wire, and how much your system will improve if you replace it with something better.

Andrew Walmsley
Halifax,
West Yorkshire.

DON'T PATRONISE ME!

I've been a reader of *Hi-Fi World* for the last three or four years, so it's about time I wrote in! Overall the new format is a great success and is much more attractively laid out, but...

Noel is right to dismiss A/V and Home Cinema as a matter of editorial policy. The strength of *World's* competitors is that they can review a large quantity of equipment, albeit in less detail than here. Their rating systems can guide potential buyers towards worthwhile products, but can deify certain products at the expense of others. *Hi-Fi World* however, is not a buying guide, so why on earth do you feel it necessary to introduce a rating system? To me, it seems at odds with the magazine's enthusiast approach. Enthusiasm must be conveyed in the article, not with a patronising soundbite and star rating.

Secondly there's an unrealistic view of vinyl. CD for all its perceived faults is the mass market medium, and has brought reasonable sound quality to millions of homes in a convenient package. It seems to me that only at the price extremes that vinyl exceeds CDs. My Moth Alamo/Ortofon 510 is considerably inferior to my Marantz CD52, particularly in the bass. I may revise my view when I eventually have enough cash for a Linn LP12 and Karik CD player!

Rob Hall
Bedford.

We have adopted a globe rating to avoid the criticism that we are either vague or equivocal in our conclusions. This is an old, old problem in fact, one I've discussed many times with different editors over the years. The best approach I've ever heard runs like this: "Look, would you buy it if you had £250, or not?" -

that's what the readers want to know". Without this sort of frankness, too many writers tend to meander around or sink into uninterpretable euphemism when trying to conclude a review. Now they have to decide how many balls - no, globes - it deserves. NK

*Less of the "star rating", please - the other mob do that! They're always seeing stars; we're more Worldly. But seriously (in the words of Phil Collins), you're quite right that the different nuances of performance a *Michell Orbe* has to a *PT Anniversary* cannot be conveyed in a star - I mean globe - rating, and they were never meant to.*

*World Verdicts weren't intended to be a graphic indication of how much better a *Technics CD player* is over the equivalent *Aiwa*. Instead they show how much we respect the design and whether we'd live with it,*

*an important point. So, like everything at *World*, the globe rating works in a slightly different way. This is why we only need four globes, because if we were going to try and graphically represent absolute or relative sound quality, we'd need a scale of one to a thousand, at least.*

As for your second point, the following letter artfully demonstrates the divergence of opinion on the subject. Kind-of makes you feel damned whatever which way you turn, doesn't it? DP

VINYL VALUE

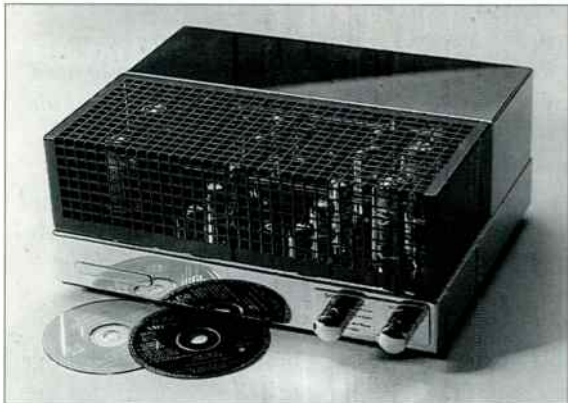
In the June issue I read a letter by Mr. Crooks saying that a £2000 turntable would be better than an equivalently priced CD, but not a budget one. I used to think that way until I bought a new Mission Cyrus 3 two months ago, and man what a difference! My Rega Planar 3/Audio Technica AT120E now sounds much better

than my far more expensive Marantz CD53/Audio Alchemy Dac-in-the-Box. Maybe the opposite is true - that very expensive CD players of the likes of Wadia and Mark Levinson sound better?
Moshe Benarroch
Jerusalem,
Israel.



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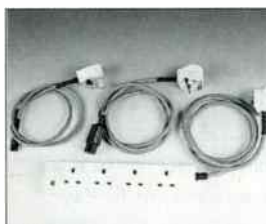
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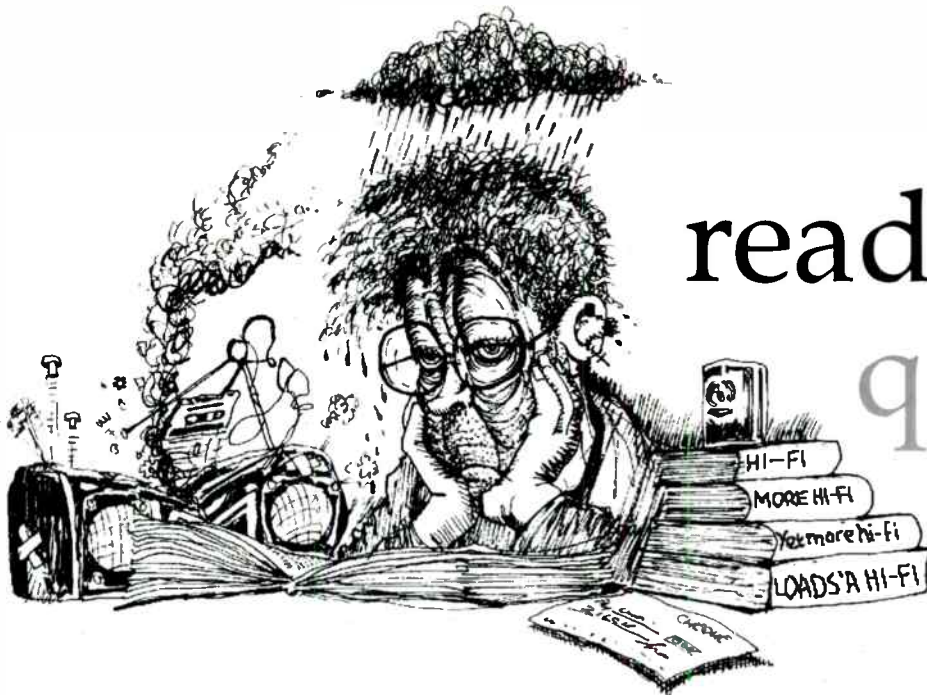
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readers' queries

HDCD UPGRADE?

I currently have an Audio Innovations 500 integrated valve amp, Yamaha CDX810 CD player with Straight Wire interconnects, original Monitor Audio 852 speakers, and NAC-4 speaker cable. In our 6 metre square listening room with high ceilings the sound is pleasant, but lacking involvement and bass. I also have the feeling that the level of detail may have declined since I first purchased the system, but this is subjective and may be due to changed expectations. My query concerns what to upgrade first. I shall be visiting Europe soon and wish to use the occasion to replace one or other of the above components.

Given the doubt over HDCD and CDV replacing CD, is it worth replacing the Yamaha? Would it be better to buy a new Rotel or for the same money install a Trichord Clock 2 or an outboard DAC such as Cambridge Audio's DACMagic? The most impressive speakers I have ever heard have been large Tannoys, and I believe strongly in the advantages of having a point source. Would I be better advised to buy the D100, the 638 or even the D500? I would appreciate your advice as I will not have

Write in with your problems to Hi-Fi World, 64 Castellain Road, Maida Vale, London W9 1EX.

Our panel of experts will endeavour to solve them, or at least offer some practical advice.

much time in the UK. Thanks for an innovative and educational magazine!
**Dr John Franklin
Sydney,
Australia.**

Don't worry about HDCD for the meantime, it will take a good few years for anything directly relevant to filter into the hi-fi world. Pacific Microsonics' excellent system is already a reality, but it's too early to tell whether it's going to become a universal standard.

The Yamaha is your weakest component, so modifying it won't bring a great improvement. Your amp and speakers are good designs, so you

would be better served by a decent CD player. You haven't said how much you want to spend, but if money is tight, the £400 Arcam Alpha 5 Plus or £350 Marantz CD63SE would be an excellent start. If you have £800, listen to the Quad 67 against the DPA Renaissance. The former is consummately smooth and warm, the latter is all fireworks and pizzazz. It depends on your taste, but I suspect the DPA will be better suited to your amplifier's presentation.
DP

CD NEEDS OUTBOARD MOTOR

I currently own a system comprising an Aiwa XC-700 CD player, a Kenwood KA-3020 amplifier and Mission 7601SE 'speakers, bi-wired with Cable Talk 3 cable and mounted on sand-filled Atacama SE24 stands. Interconnects are Tandy Gold Patch cords.

I want to improve the system and was thinking of adding an outboard converter such as the Audio Alchemy Dac-in-the-Box using the optical output on the Aiwa CD player. Would changing the amplifier be a better solution or would

doing both changes be preferable? At the moment it sounds very smooth and I would prefer more bite and attack from the system, as well as a clearer and more tuneful bass. I have a budget of around £500 although I may be able to stretch it a bit further if you think it would be justified. I would be extremely grateful of your help on this matter.
**Basharat Anwar
Oldham,
Lancashire.**

What you describe reminds me much of the KA-3020SE amplifier, which I found a little weak and insipid in its sound. A firmer, more impressive presentation is to be had from the Denon PMA-450SE II, an amplifier with real muscle. This will definitely liven things up and give better bass.

The Aiwa CD player is smooth sounding, but not dull or boring. I believe you need to buy an external convertor of some ability before significant improvements become apparent, so don't be too quick to dispense with the Aiwa - and do try and listen first to any alternative. The QED Digit with Positron power

supply has the extra bite you are looking for, but beware of combining this with the Denon, since together they may swing the sound to become too sharp. NK

LOOSE LPI 2?

My system comprises a Linn LP12, Naim NAC82, NAP250, Hi-Cap, Marantz CD-63SE and Epos ES14s on dedicated stands, using Naim speaker cable.

I listen to delicate female vocals on vinyl a lot, due to its smoothness and ambience. I find the bass from the Epos can be ploddy, and so am considering upgrading them. I want a

smooth, detailed sounding system with tight, accurate bass and good imaging. My budget is £700-£1500 and my room is 13 ft square.

Michael Jones, Wolverhampton.

A 13ft square room spells trouble. It will have a strong main resonance at 43Hz, because length and width resonant modes coincide (rooms resonate like organ pipes). It is highly likely the ES14 has its own low frequency resonance in this region, like most 'speakers of its size. That's a horrible trinity of resonances that together are likely to be giving you the ploddy bass

you complain of. There are various ways of ameliorating the problem, but only a Kango or a bulldozer can eliminate it.

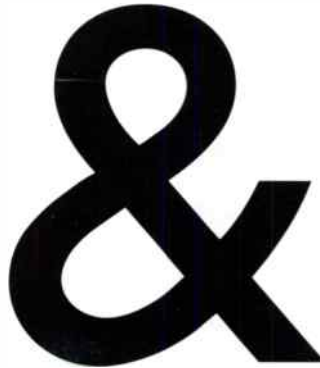
Firstly, both you and the 'speakers should be as far away from the room's walls as possible. Experiment. Pull your speakers forward and listen to a long bass line with plenty of movement across the note scale. Then progressively move out into the room yourself and note how much this lightens and imposes order on bass. Do what you can to site the speakers away from the wall, and yourself if possible.

High quality miniature

loudspeakers with limited output at 43Hz will put less energy into the room, exciting it less. Audition Harbeth HL-P3s or Linn Tukans. The ES14s have a bit of a low frequency kick and I suspect they are a relatively poor match to your room.

You'll not get the bass you want unless you resort to acoustic treatment. Small, square rooms resonate too strongly. And you will only get good imaging with the 'speakers away from the walls, which is how you'll get best bass of course. You could try RPG

Continued on page 61...



TWO HEARTS BEAT AS ONE?

I have a simple question. Can one stereo system be shared by two hi-fi enthusiasts? I am very happy with my system that consists of a NAD 3130 amplifier, Sony 730ES Tuner and Rogers' LS4a 'speakers. I am a radio freak and like the dead "BBC sound" of the Rogers.

There is a problem - my wife. She is keen to start her own CD collection and is willing to go up to £400 for a CD player.

Unfortunately she hasn't got enough money to start her own system, and wants me to attach her CD player to my system. I have a feeling this will end in tears, as I know my wife likes a more lively sound than my system can produce.

What should I do? Is there a CD player that can overcome my dead system and bring it to life, or should I tell her it's impossible, and to keep her hands off my hi-fi?

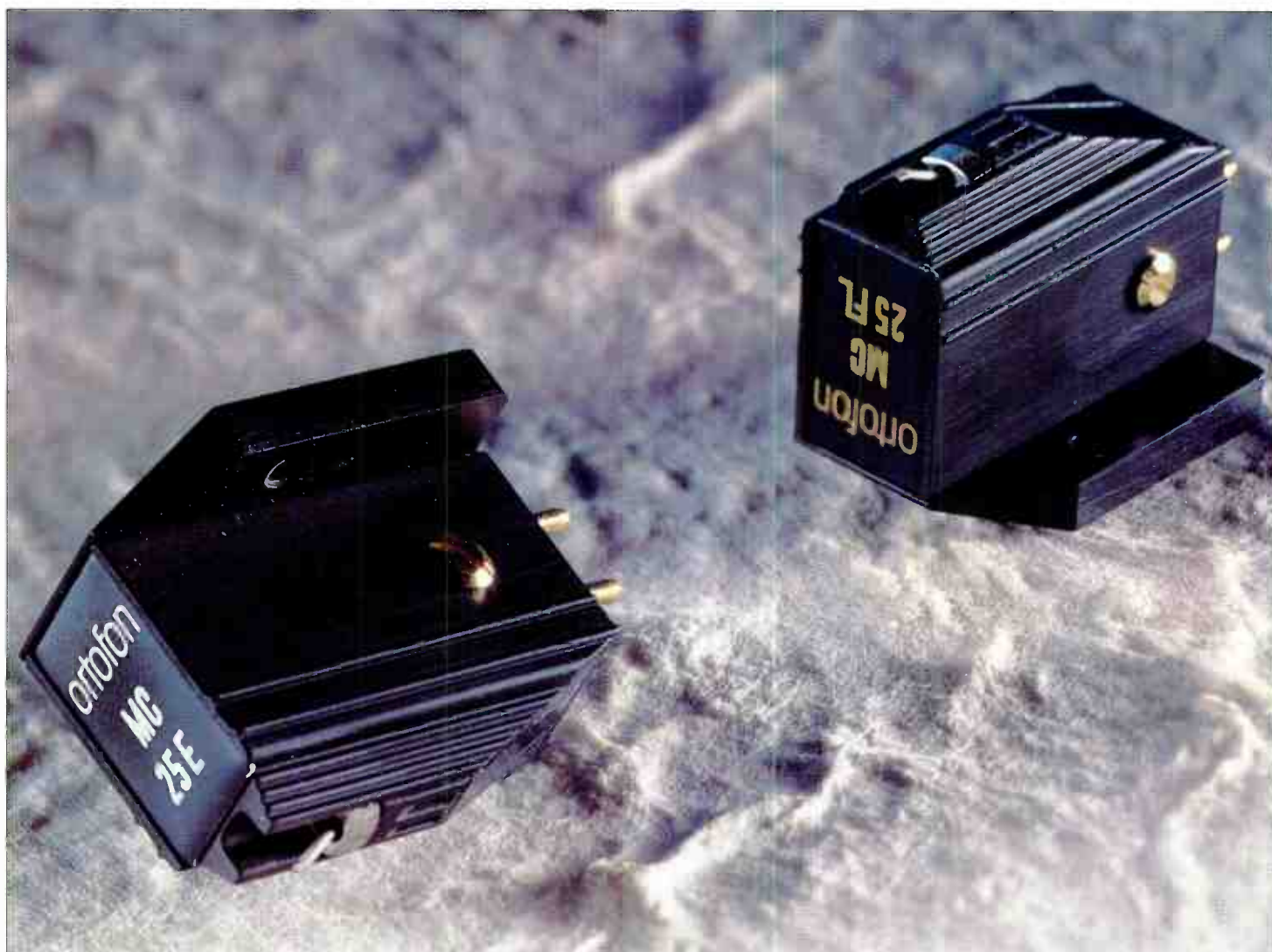
**Vaughn Colley
Isle of Man.**

There's an easy answer for what appears a 'delicate' problem. Your wife should try the Marantz CD63SE CD player, which has a bright, vivacious sound, and connect it with decent budget interconnect such as the ones you've just won. This will give her the life she's after, whilst allowing you to keep your system just as you like it, which is of course one of the central preconditions to married

bliss!

As a radio freak, make sure you have an appropriate outdoor aerial, since this greatly affects sound quality. If you receive Holme Moss, roughly 120miles South-East from the Isle of Man, you'll need a large outdoor array, probably five elements or so, but always consult a local aerial rigger. Don't pass up an opportunity to listen to a NAD402 tuner either. DP

o f t h e M o n t h ▶▶



FINE TIME

Adding a fineline stylus to Ortofon's superb MC25E cartridge makes for more music, finds David Price.

It's puzzling that since LP was dethroned by CD, it has improved enormously. The component that's come along the most is the humble pick-up cartridge, Ortofon in particular shrugging off the presence of Compact Disc. These days their moving coil cartridges sport rigid aluminium bodies,

a variety of advanced stylus profiles, 99.99% pure OFC copper windings, and a healthy output voltage.

Measuring and tracking superbly, the £170 MC25E and £225 MC25FL tested here epitomise the Danish company's approach to the business of getting music from record grooves. If you

haven't quite got the funds for the top £2000 MC7500, you'll find something in the Super series for you, the MC25s sitting above the £95 MC10 Super and £125 MC15 Super II in what has to be Ortofon's most competitive range for years.

Both share a body weight of 10.5g and a tracking force of 2gms, meaning they'll work well in a variety of modern tonearms, including the SME312 used for this review. The only difference is the stylus, either an 8x18µm elliptical

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(E) or a 18x40µm fineline (FL). Both share the same aluminium cantilever, as well as similar measured performance, with the more expensive FL version offering, according to Ortofon, slightly better tracking ability and more extended high frequencies.



Mounted sturdily in our Garrard 401, the MC25E sounded extremely appealing, with a verve and swing to Bob Marley's 'Three Little Birds' that you don't usually get from 'affordable' moving coils. The E's sound was very 'get up and go', with a tight, driving bass line, plenty of detail and commendably delicate hi-hat sound. Switching to the MC25FL showed what the E was doing wrong however, offering a smoother sound altogether, reminiscent of the MC30 Supreme tested in the June issue. Cymbals were crisper, starting and stopping more tightly and displaying better timbre. This combination of greater grip and smoothness wasn't immediately as appealing, the MC25E's punchiness proving more entertaining on first acquaintance.

However, moving to David Crosby's 'Almost Cut My Hair', things looked a little different. The MC25E again did very well, with an animated performance to wake even the sleepest hi-fi reviewer. Most impressive was the amount of detail this cartridge managed to wrest from such an old piece of plastic. Scratches and surface wear just didn't phase it, the Ortofon managing to excavate the backing Hammond organ with consummate ease, while making foreground instruments really sing.

If there was one criticism, it was the MC25E's propensity to sound slightly 'spitty'. Although subtle in effect, this phenomenon was conspicuous next to the MC25FL which wasn't going to let itself get upset by distressed pressings. As well as the extra smoothness, the fineline tip brought superb timing - notes didn't blur into each other but were separately delineated. This precision could make the FL sound a touch analytical compared to its brother's gusto, but in the end, greater control won the day. Cymbals again

“The E's sound was very 'get up and go', with a tight, driving bass line, plenty of detail and commendably delicate hi-hat sound.”

gained a beguiling delicacy of touch, while bass was firmer, but just as voluminous.

Moving to a vintage Decca SXL pressing of Mahler's Symphony No 1 in D Major (George Solti; LSO) and I found myself aghast at the superb quality of sound coming from the 'speakers. I - like most people I suspect - now do almost all my classical music listening with silver frisbees, forgetting just how pleasing it is to hear the body and physicality of an orchestra in full non-digitised glory. The MC25E again showed itself as a veritable greyhound, conveying the vigour and force of the LSO of yore with aplomb.



Interestingly, the MC25FL sounded more wiry and sinewy on strings, contrary to my expectations. Comparison to the E saw the cheaper coil sounding somewhat airbrushed and nebulous, while the fineline was obviously getting further into the groove to impart the violins' harmonics in their entirety. This extra focus also made for soundstaging improvements, superb 'hear-through' stage depth as well as good imaging accuracy. As the E is already strong on soundstaging, the FL joins the distinguished company of

far more expensive coils in this respect.

Fifteen years ago, today's MC25E would have been a revelation, with such a bold, powerful musical sound and vice-like tracking - now it's just a considerable achievement. It builds on the MC15 Super II's

excellent basics and injects true verve and pizzazz. The MC25FL goes far further, snapping at the heels of the big boys in the £500 class. If there'd been a cartridge like this around at that critical moment in audio history, CD might have been 'just another Elcaset'. Makes you think, doesn't it?

Ortofon MC25E £169.95
Ortofon MC25FL £224.95

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WORLD VERDICT 🌐🌐🌐

Delightfully sweet, musical sound with added refinement on FL means the MC25 takes some beating.

Measured Performance
see p113-121

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IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE

There's still just enough time to grab a copy of Hi-Fi World and head to the beach for the last few days of sun. When you're there, read about all the new products in trade winds, enter a super competition to win new kit, read reviews on all the latest equipment, scour the classifieds for bargains, and relax reading features on all aspects of audio. Here's some of what we hope to bring you in October's issue.

LINN TUKAN LOUDSPEAKERS

The Tukans are a miniature loudspeaker designed for a super-fast and clearly projected sound. David Price, a long term user of the original Kans, weighs up the new design.



DPA DIGITAL LITTLE BIT III CD CONVERTOR

DPA Digital's new Little Bit III is the most affordable discrete CD convertor available. Using their own unique in-house designed and built DAC, the Little Bit III looks set to offer unrivalled performance at the price. We take a very look.

WHARFEDALE VALDUS 500 LOUDSPEAKERS

The sub-£500 floorstander battle continues. Now Wharfedale have weighed in with the Valdus 500s. These metre-high floorstanders use a line up of three 8-inch drivers and a 28mm tweeter, and will set you back just £299! They could be the ones to beat.

VIRTUAL REALITY SYSTEMDEK/RB300/I041GX TURNTABLE SYSTEM

Working with Systemdek, Rega and Goldring, Virtual Reality have come up with this highly tuned turntable system. Just some of the tune ups include a precision Swiss motor for the Systemdek, new wiring for the Rega, and a carefully tuned Goldring I042GX. We take a close listen to this high performance system.

COMPETITION - WIN ALCHEMIST AMPLIFIERS WORTH £1500

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.... Continued from page 56

bass absorbers, an effective acoustic treatment, if a little expensive for most people. Alternatively, stuff the room with heavy sofas, if possible, since they absorb low frequency energy.

You could also have a Cirkus kit fitted. At £299 fitted it's probably Linn's best value Sondek upgrade ever, and will improve both tightness and imaging. DP

ELECTROSTATIC DEPRIVATION

My system consists of a Thorens 126 Electronic MkIII, SME 3010R and Grado Signature 8MZ cartridge, with a home-made valve MM phono preamplifier feeding a passive Mod Squad and Electrocompaniet DMB100. Loudspeakers are Celef Stratus, charged with sand and lead shot placed on Target ST20 stands. This current set up is the result of upgrading from an Ariston Q deck and Denon PMA-920 integrated amplifier. I also own a Micromega OPTIC CD player. The system rests on Tripod furniture, with the power amp on a separate stand.

I dream of buying an electrostatic loudspeaker because of the transparency and lack of boxiness. I've listened to Apogee Stage, Martin Logan Sequel II and Quad ESL-63, but unfortunately they are just too expensive. Could you advise me of suitable alternatives?

In the meantime, I've asked for information from Loricraft and Technical and General about tweaking my turntables. I'm going to give the Ariston a heavy wood base, but don't know if I should use the rubber feet or substitute cones. I've also designed a kind of Townsend trough for it.

Would it be wise to install Deflex panels in my loudspeakers, or should I change the drivers and crossover? Is the Ringmat as good as it is said?

Francisco J. Guillot Valencia, Spain.

You may well know that we use modified Quad ESL-63s, amongst other 'speakers, and wouldn't be without them. Although other makes of electrostatic sound considerably different, as you say there's nothing quite like a good one; they make music a wonderful experience.

Dominic has been working on an open-baffle conventional loudspeaker. Our view is that many of the properties of an electrostatic (but not all) can be closely approached with conventional drive units. In particular a lack of box boom and colouration across the critical midband and treble regions, which results in a gloriously open, spacious sound is possible, providing very high quality drivers are used. An electrostatic drive unit has a Clingfilm diaphragm, the ultimate in low mass and colouration, so there's no point in trying to mimic its properties with quacky polypropylene or coarse paper cones. This does make the drivers expensive, but less so than a commercial electrostatic.

My alternative to the Quad is the Heybrook Sextet. It isn't really similar, except insofar as it has superb treble and a level of imaging and soundstaging that approaches ESL-63s. Otherwise, there's little in the commercial loudspeaker world that really offers the sort of sound you are after.

You cannot simply

change the drivers and crossover of your loudspeaker to gain improvement. They are carefully chosen, matched together and matched to the cabinet. Deflex panels are sound dispersers, rather than absorbers. Generally, it is best to mix dispersion with a little absorption, so they are worth trying, although we cannot be specific about benefits, because they'll vary.

Our review of the Ringmat (January 1995 issue) placed it as very good value on a majority of turntables, including Thorens. NK

DUAL TO THE DEATH?

I am looking to upgrade the sound of my 1978 Dual CS510 turntable. Your review of the £1000 Pro-Ject 6.1SA seemed to provide an obvious candidate until I realised this retails for \$4000 here in Australia, and that would be really 'over the top'.

So returning to the Dual, which when purchased was a very good turntable, how would you suggest I upgrade it? Substitute a better tonearm, or fit a better cartridge and stylus than the Shure M95ED currently fitted?

The rest of my system comprises a NAD 3240PE amplifier with Altec Lansing loudspeakers. I would be very grateful for your advice.

**Colin A. Harrison
New South Wales,
Australia.**

The Dual was a good deck in its day, but nowadays certainly isn't the last word on the subject. Even upgrading to a Rega Planar 3 would bring substantial gains in detail and imaging, as well as an extra solidity to the sound. You could also investigate the soon-to-be-

discontinued Linn Basik, or look for second-hand Axis or Manticore Mantra.

If you decide to keep the Dual, fitting a new arm isn't really worthwhile. In the seventies, part of Dual's success was due to the quality of their straight-pipe arms. As they were integral to the turntable package it would be very time consuming to change, so consider a new cartridge instead. The Shure's sound and age is likely to make it the weakest link in your system. Try the ubiquitous Goldring 1042 whose generous bass will compensate somewhat for the Dual's lightness in this area. Also consider substituting the CS510's unsupportive mat for Rega's felt mat, or better still (but substantially more expensive), a Ringmat. However, it's unlikely that these modifications will raise it to Rega standards. DP

ELCASSET BARGAIN!

I recently bought a Sony Elcaset EL7 along with an RM30 remote control unit and 25 LC90 tapes. Both units are in nice-unmarked condition and boxed and working. No one seems to know about the Elcaset and I wonder if you can tell me anything of the history of this machine. Considering its build quality, I would imagine that it was an expensive piece of kit. It came into my hands for £10.

**D.W. Bandpass
Wallingford, Oxon.**

At the time of Elcaset's introduction in 1976, cassette technology was substantially less well developed than now, with poorer tape formulations (no metal tape), transports and heads. Elcaset was Sony's brave attempt to address the Compact

Cassette's sonic problems while retaining its convenience.

Elcasetts were basically cassettes of 1/4 inch tape, with 4 tracks running at 3 3/4ips. With this spec. they easily outperformed conventional cassette. Compared to Sony's top cassette deck at the time, their two Elcaset decks (EL5 and EL7) had better signal-to-noise ratios with an extended frequency response stretching 3kHz higher to (a quoted) 18kHz with Sony's flagship Ferrichrome tape.

Your machine was top of Sony's 1977 range, with a £550 price tag. However, Elcaset machines were soon discounted heavily, as buyers weren't convinced of its merits. The cassettes themselves were large and expensive and there were no prerecorded tapes. Open reel was the pukka enthusiast's medium, while cassette was for convenience. The new format fell uncomfortably between the two.

Although rare as a medium, Sony Elcaset machines still turn up quite often. Nowadays, they shouldn't be regarded as a serious alternative to cassette, as Elcaset tapes are almost impossible to come by and modern cassettes - especially metals - are considerably improved. DP

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

Thank you very much for your excellent magazine. Discovering it was like a finding a knowledgeable friend with the same outlook on hi-fi. I was a long time supporter of *Hi-Fi Answers* in the late seventies but found today's equivalents to be on a downward spiral into A/V comics.

My current system consists of Townshend Elite

Rock MkII/Linn Basik Plus/A&R P77Mg, Audio Innovations 200/QUAD 50E monoblocks, and Rega speakers from 1977. I have assembled this system over a number of years. While not representing the newest or best, its highly listenable quality seems missing from more modern equipment.

The Rock is a recent second-hand purchase through your Classified section. I would like to upgrade the arm and cartridge to an SME 309/Audio Technica OC5 combination. I have used the OC3 which seems a good match for my MC input. The SME's detachable headshell and good adjustments should make setting up the Rock a lot easier. The SME 309 seems an illusive creature so I have not been able to hear the combination on a Rock MkII. Would you recommend this as a good match?

Now to the difficult bit. I want to replace both the 'speakers and power amplifiers but am not sure which combination would suit my desire for an open, clean sound with excellent vocal quality and good soundstaging. I am not a fan of heavy bass or high volume levels and my living room is 13' by 16'.

I am considering either dusting off my Quad IIs and getting them re-valved, having the 50E's enhanced by Avondale to give the top end more detail, sticking with Audio Innovations and getting a 200 power amp, or saving my pennies until I can move up to something like a K588I PSE kit.

For the speakers I have been favourably impressed with dual concentric designs such as the larger KEF Q series and Tannoy 613s which seem to have the fluid midrange performance and clarity combined with great imaging quality I am looking for. On the debit side I was overwhelmed by the bass on the KEFs and unsure of the

Tannoy's presentation, somehow they sounded like a collection of drivers in a box rather than an integrated speaker.

Are there other speakers in the KEF or Tannoy ranges that you could recommend? As an alternative I notice in DIY Supplement 13 that KEF are releasing kits using their Uni-Q drivers, so how about a World Audio design based around a Uni-Q driver?

Reading Noel Keywood in the May issue has set me thinking that perhaps a second-hand pair of Quad Electrostatics may suit my speaker requirements, but how much space would they require around them?

Richard James Swindon.

Lack of a stated budget doesn't help, because your predilections span quite a wide price/size range. Systemdek 931s are moderately priced at £330, image well, are coherent sounding and have dry-ish, well controlled bass. Also, Harbeth HL-P3s may well fulfil your requirements, costing just a little more, and don't forget Rogers Studio 3s.

These days, original Quad Electrostatics don't come cheap, unless you find a pair lurking unrecognised in a junk shop (keep dreaming!). You can fit a pair into a 16ft long room - just. They need plenty of space behind, at least 3ft.

Alternatively, use my trick of hanging curtains of carpet felt behind, preferably spaced behind the 'speaker by at least 6in. This lessens rear radiation usefully, easing placement sensitivity and cleaning treble.

Because the Quad is a bass dipole, heavily furnished rooms are best. If possible, rear bass radiation should be 'lost' down the length of a room. Placement at least one-

third the way up (i.e. 5ft from the rear wall in your case) is about right. They need to be spaced around 7ft apart.

The amplifier you choose will depend much upon your loudspeaker, especially its sensitivity and load impedance characteristics. Quad Electrostatics are notoriously insensitive (82dB) and really need a 45watt amplifier. The old 303 was meant for them, and now the 306 is a good match technically, although it doesn't have a lot of balls. The latest 606 is a good bet.

A valve Quad II power amp. delivers just 12watts (with the wind in the right direction), but I can't say it isn't a match because, although these items in combination wouldn't generate enough sound to down a gnat at five paces, many readers swear by the combination - so criticism by me is unwise! I doubt whether any system in the world could sound so sweet and relaxing. And get your Quad IIs restored by Quad - do not have them 'tweaked'. Our K588I PSE is more modern in its sound, mainly because it has larger output transformers able to swing full output at both ends of the audio band. When the Quad II was around, people couldn't afford such a thing, these days they can.

If you buy an insensitive 'speaker like the Quads, Harbeth or Rogers (all 82-83dB) I have suggested, in a room your size we would normally recommend an amplifier of around 50watts minimum for reasonable volumes. A Sugden Stemfoort (£500) or Aura VA-80 (£280) are both worth considering, the former for its timbrel richness, the latter for its smoothness. NK

Reviewing loudspeakers is easy, great fun and bloody impossible! There's so much variety in their sound and we all know what we like. That makes it easy. Fun comes from hearing a really good one, but loudspeakers are so imperfect this is rare. And it's essential because there are so many conflicting influences that trying to define accuracy and hold a notion of perfection seems pointless. Let me deal with the last, very human problem first, because getting a grip on one's own approach is important to avoid some misunderstandings.

An important precondition for accuracy is a flat frequency response, which simply means all frequencies are reproduced with equal intensity. Readers often raise this point, asking why we don't try to define "accuracy" like this and seek it, which is fair enough. The British loudspeaker industry spoke of little else through the 1970s, with the implied promise of perfection just around the corner. Since then, things have gone a little quiet: here's why.

We've designed and built flat-response loudspeakers (it isn't so difficult nowadays) and they sound hard, thin and lacking in warmth; there would be few buyers in the showroom for a "perfect" loudspeaker like this. This raises a serious problem: if we can't develop 'speakers using even this most fundamental objective criterion, what can we use to guide us?

Loudspeaker engineers try to resolve the problem with yet more theory, wittering about total radiated power, reflected energy, total perceived energy and what have you. They are sailing into deeper waters - room interaction - without a chart. It's best to be pragmatic. The European Commission were not and spent millions on Project

Eureka, a joint research project investigating loudspeaker/room interaction. The result is, er, well . . .

Loudspeaker research soon starts to leave Planet Earth once people get a bee in their bonnet about loudspeaker accuracy. When measuring loudspeakers we look for a smooth frequency response, but don't demand flatness and are ultimately obliged to accept what we and others subjectively perceive as right. This usually turns out to be a slight tilt downward toward the treble in the response curve. Most people, from reviewers to studio engineers, designers and manufacturers find this gives a natural tonal balance.

We rely on measurement for guidance and explanation, but at the end of the day it's necessary to "take a view". Doing this involves taking into account other people's opinions. Sometimes reviewers and designers may differ from a common view, the topic of bass output is one example.

Reviewers with some experience under their belt generally don't gravitate to loudspeakers with heavy bass, yet showroom experience suggests many buyers are swayed by it. A 'speaker with heavy bass sounds big and superficially impressive in a short

Reflections from Noel Keywood

demo; thunderous lows may set it apart from, for example, a small mid-system box. But heavy bass comes with long-term penalties. It's usually obtained by making the air in the box resonate, which gives a rotten one-note effect, rather like an acoustic pogo stick. This sort of behaviour not only destroys bass lines, it gives you a headache. So when we recommend a 'speaker, bear in mind it's unlikely to re-arrange your furniture. Strong bass isn't in itself what sways us; expressive bass, where you can follow a bass line, gathers more Brownie points

Whilst reviewers don't usually go for excessive bass, they do sometimes gravitate toward prominent treble, or at least a bright revealing sound. I try to avoid this, yet I became aware that a common criticism of the original Heybrook Sextet I recommended so enthusiastically was that it sounded over-bright. It was more dry in the bass than excessive in the treble, and our standard but highly complimentary listening room brought up its bass just enough to make it sound balanced. Buyers with similar rooms (16ft x 12ft) would probably get the same impression I did, but for others it may come across as 'dry', losing body from instruments and making vocals seem a little shrill. So bear in mind that your

listening room makes a difference.

Why do reviewers favour a bright sound? In pursuit of detail and insight, I believe, but it can go too far at times. Worse, there are different types of brightness, the selective peakiness of a cheap metal dome tweeter giving the worst sort of "bright" sound, one that is spitty and coarse. They give a good early impression, projecting cymbals out of a mix with skill, but it doesn't take long to twig the fact that every piece of music has ringing cymbals, even a chamber orchestra! Luckily, measurement can easily identify a peaky tweeter and it's something we look for during tests, to be certain it doesn't pass unnoticed.

Beware of "showroom specials", 'speakers with excessive bass and peaky treble, or boom'n'ting. It's something quality British 'speakers have traditionally shied away from. Don't be misled; smoother, less immediately impressive loudspeakers are a better long term proposition. Mission's 752 loudspeaker demonstrates smoothness and integration, good bass fine measured and subjective accuracy, plus super imaging, so use it as a benchmark.

What you choose in the end is very personal. I hope you can understand what we choose - and I hope the two are not so different!

kaleidoscope



opinion

It's a shame that as a self-build activity, digital kit hasn't received much coverage as it's a lot fun to put together. Digital equipment doesn't require the hundreds of volts of H.T. demanded by valves, so bench lash-ups are a breeze and experimentation is a quiet, gentle activity without the painful splats and buzzes which accompany experimentation with valve analogue equipment. And it's also the future - if you're interested in building electronics to prepare for a future job, it's as well to start climbing the digital learning curve as early as possible.

I've just finished designing a unit which may interest digital-audiophiles and constructors alike, the DA150 digital power amplifier, but the unit might equally be termed a digital integrated amplifier because it comprises digital source selection, 18bit DAC, volume control and stereo, 150W precision power amplifier all in one. Other features include three AES/EAU and SPDIF inputs, LED flags for professional/consumer use of channel status, de-emphasis and non-valid data, and comprehensive digital and analogue muting. Safety features include forced mute in presence of errors, a non-locked PLL or non-valid audio data; soft (fade-in) mute on the power amp and relay protected speaker outputs; as well as heatsink-temperature thermal shutdown.

Combining DAC, volume control and power amplifier in this way brings some significant technical advantages. The unit delivers a guaranteed 16/18 bit performance by attention to low-noise design and ensuring that it's impossible to drive it into various forms of signal overload - a benefit in a high-quality monitoring or listening

recorded message

Left by
Richard Brice



environment. This is achieved by designing amplifier sensitivity so that digital 0dBFS is equivalent to 1dB below full-power output clipping, and by defining audio bandwidth precisely in the digital filter prior to the DAC chip. The power amplifier is thus safeguarded from reaching its slew-rate-limit and consequently is protected from generating TID and other transient-effect distortions.

The power amplifier section of the unit is based upon a MOSFET output stage topology. If you have been following Doug Self's articles on power amplifier design in *Electronics and Wireless World* over the past months, you'll know that much of the current debate in semiconductor power amplifier design revolves around the inherent linearity of bipolar junction transistors (BJTs) compared with MOSFETs in the role of output transistors.

Doug Self regards the BJT as a clear winner. I believe this purist debate is something of an irrelevance and should not prejudice us against the use of MOSFETs. Most significant to commercial designers is relative price, with MOSFET output devices costing several pounds rather than the few pence of BJTs. Furthermore, MOSFETs have a finite - and relatively large - on

resistance which is wasteful of power and necessitates the use of paralleled devices in order to drive low impedance loudspeakers.

These two considerations affect 'watts per dollar' calculations considerably. But in the hi-fi market, where their higher price isn't such a disadvantage, MOSFETs have never achieved total acceptance either. So is it not wholly for commercial reasons that the FET is under attack - does sound quality play a part too? This design has proved to me that with care, a MOSFET amplifier is capable of producing results very little short of a dream ticket low-feedback, class-A semiconductor design.

When MOSFET amplifiers first appeared they were heralded as the answer to everyone's prayers. In those days, FETs were regarded as more linear than BJTs. Then the truth broke out - FETs are non-linear. Thus indicating that FETs must be used in an amplifier incorporating a relatively high feedback factor. Fashion dictates that this is a bad thing. But the same is true of a class-B, BJT amplifiers because real-life operating conditions - and the thermal time-lag in temperature compensation - means the bias often departs from the optimal value for the output stage's given

operating conditions.

So while some favour class-A (tube or FET or BJT) above class A/B or class B designs, it's not practically significant to favour BJTs over FETs when used in a predominantly class B design. Add to this MOSFETs' characteristics of constant gain-bandwidth product and inherent protection against thermal runaway and secondary breakdown and I rest my case for their inclusion in a top-quality, class-B design.

To the question, "if I like it so well, why didn't I opt for Class-A?", the answer is that it's not possible to construct a practical class-A, BJT amplifier with a power output commensurable with monitoring digital audio programme without either depressing monitoring volume to an unacceptable level or including cooling fans, bringing operational problems of their own.

As well all the articles so far published about the Maximalist Preamplifier and a host of other information is available on-line by visiting my Electric Perception WWW home page at URL, <http://www.demon.co.uk/epercept/>. You can leave messages and comments for me there or alternatively at Compuserve ID100601,1614 or via e-mail 100601.1614@compuserve.com ●

Famous for turntables, Revolver are new to loudspeaker manufacturing, with less than a year's experience under their belt. The £149.95 Colts reviewed here sit in the middle of their three model line up, priced. They feature a 130mm treated paper bass/mid unit with a 19mm soft dome tweeter in reversed alignment *à la* Mission, and a cabinet that's reflex-loaded from behind.

Positioned on 22" open stands, 11" from the rear wall, first impressions

were favourable with even tonal balance and good scale conjuring up a big sound well projected. Further improvements were achieved by bi-wiring, with a deeper sound stage and better focus. The Yellowjackets' Shades retained the driving beat of the drums, even if the last octave was missing from the bass guitar. The sax showed good tonal quality with the metallic honk produced well, percussion too was ably projected and even handed in presentation. However, dynamics were slightly

softened, with the opening of 'New Shoes' losing its explosive start. Moving to more traditional jazz with Dizzy Gillespie's Bebop Trumpet, the opening bars with Gillespie harmonising Benny Golson on tenor sounded instinctively 'right' - the breathy sax and slow laid back drumming making me want to reach for the Horlicks.

Turning to classical, and with Orff's Carmina Burana, only in the extremely loud passages did the Colts get ragged and lose their poise. Imaging was clear, with the orchestra well placed around the singers. With Beethoven's Piano Concerto No4; Brendel-Levinen, piano showed a slight thickening on the upper keys. Strings sounded sweet with no hint of wiriness - it was only when pushed hard that the Colts lost their composure and became strident. Used sensibly they're OK, and shouldn't be a problem unless you're a headbanger.

Their weak spots? They have lively cabinets which add bounce to upper bass and a degree of honk on some records. The midband could sometimes sound hollow, and although treble didn't suffer from metal dome tizz, there was a slight grain present, highlighted by female voices.

Still, the perfect £150 loudspeaker is yet to come, but at the end of the day the Revolver Colts were enjoyable to listen to. This alone means they're worthy of audition against budget big guns like KEF's best-selling Coda 7 ●

Revolver Colt

£149.95

RAM UK Ltd.

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55 Waverley Road, Sale,
Manchester. M33 7AY
☎ 0161 9730505

WORLD VERDICT



A good honest standmounter with a musical sound, but not the last word in refinement.

Measured Performance
see p113-121

TOP GUN?

Peter Downs asks whether Revolver's budget Colt loudspeaker can face off the opposition.



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PREPARE TO BE BLOWN AWAY

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REVOLVER
by
Ram



Dominic Baker

dB on the level

This month's column continues on from the experimentation I've been doing with Studio 12's stereo decoder for mono tuners. I've done a lot of thinking on this recently; with the quality of Japanese tuners suffering due to the strength of the Yen, it's becoming more appealing to have that dusty old valve tuner renovated and connected up to a good stereo decoder. The joy of bringing vintage equipment back to life and into everyday use with better performance than a modern £200+ tuner (NAD402 excepted, even if it isn't as much fun) makes it all the more worthwhile.

Around the late fifties when stereo FM was first being broadcast, most tuners were still mono, but with an MPX output which could be wired to a decoder to take advantage of new-fangled stereo FM.

lights up with the "PYE" logo at power on.

I've always wanted one, but they're mono with no MPX output. Yet when I spotted this one it set me thinking again. Since a mono tuner contains everything you need to receive a stereo signal, apart from the decoder, it must be simple to convert for an

MPX output. Checking with Stan at Studio 12, and after consulting a couple of good radio books, I took up my

soldering iron for what transpired to be a very simple task.

I have drawn a simple representation of a mono tuner output circuit (Fig.1), showing the signal coming in from the discriminator. The signal from the radio station transmitter has treble boost applied to it, called pre-emphasis, to improve noise performance. This has to be countered at the receiver end to give a flat response. This is called de-emphasis, and is performed by the resistor and capacitor shown in Fig. 1.

The output from the discriminator valve

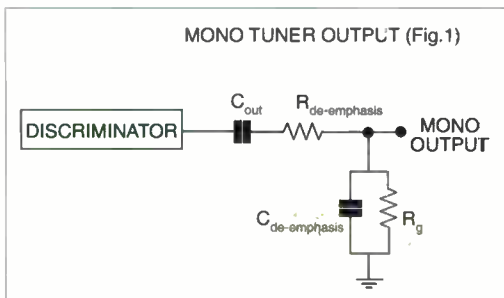
can have several hundred volts of DC on it. The coupling capacitor labelled C_{out} is there to block this DC from the output. It's very important to leave this capacitor in series with the output of the tuner to prevent damage to your amplifier. This capacitor is normally around 0.1 μ F. The Leak Troughline is one of the few exceptions, having a low voltage, direct coupled MPX output.

To convert this mono output stage for use with a stereo decoder all you have to do is disable the de-emphasis capacitor (Fig.2). The de-emphasis in a stereo tuner is done individually on each channel after the stereo signal is decoded. I inserted a small switch which I mounted internally so that this de-emphasis can be easily switched back in to give a usable mono audio output. It also enabled me to keep the same captive output wire. This way the tuner is kept as original as possible, and the modification is reversible.

These de-emphasis components form a circuit

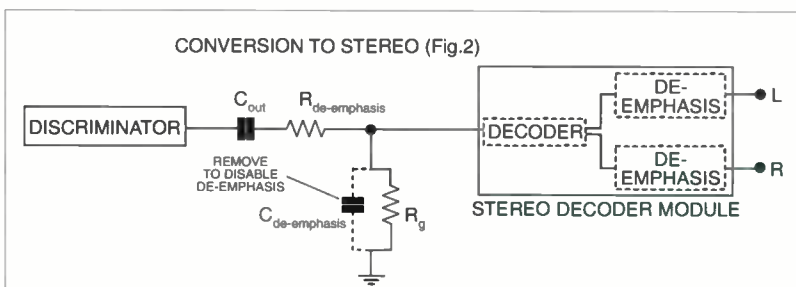
with a 50 μ S time constant. Preferred values are 47k Ω /1000pF or 470k Ω /100pF, which makes them easy to recognise. If you are considering doing this modification to an American mono tuner, bear in mind that the de-emphasis is set to 75 μ S. Another vintage mono tuner prime for this kind of modification is the Quad FM1. These are plentiful and still cheap, and with Quad's legendary backup service, you know you'll always be able to get it going.

Well, after converting the PYE Mozart, I plugged it into the Studio 12 decoder module. At this point I was expecting to be disappointed with the sound compared with my usual Leak Troughline, but although the Mozart didn't have quite the same bottom end power, the sound was crystal clear, spacious and open with superb treble detail and extension. What's all the more satisfying though, was bringing this fantastic copper fronted vintage tuner back into every day use after a thirty year rest ●

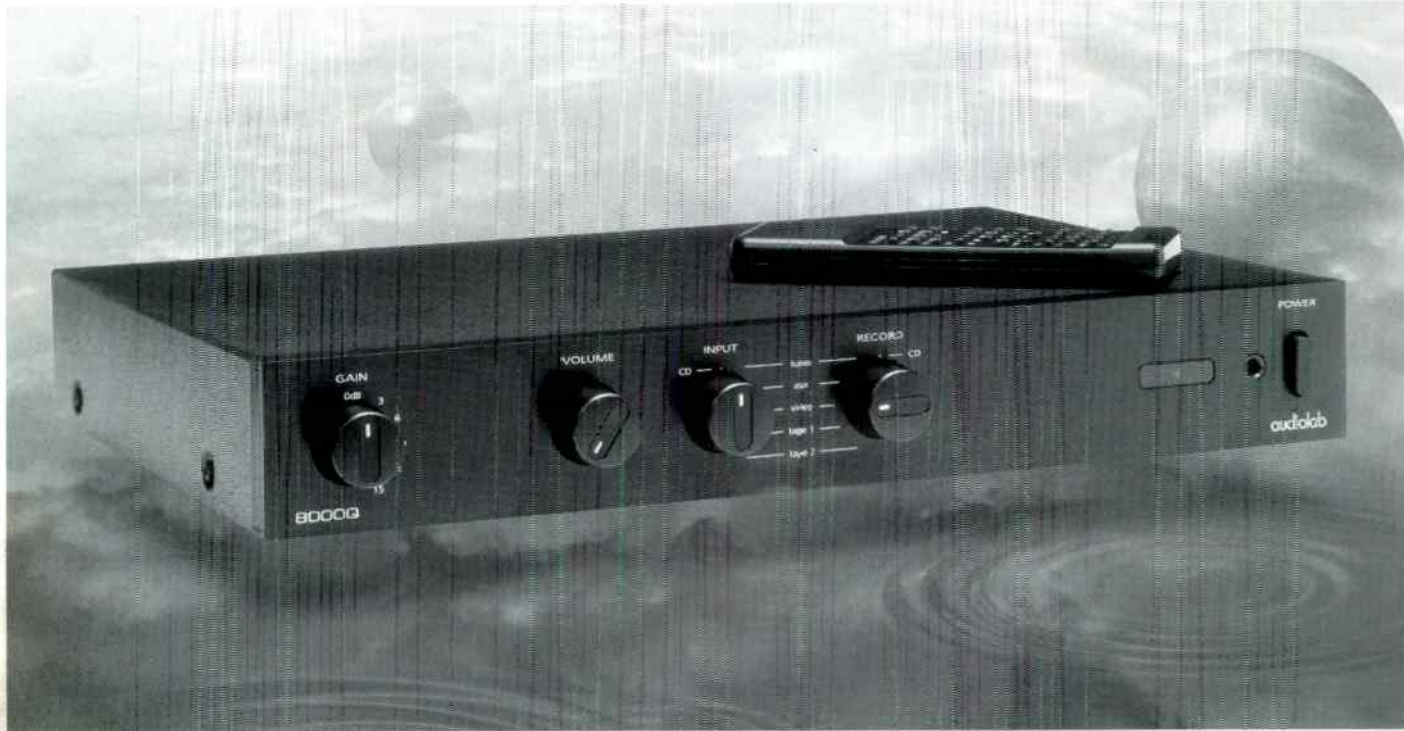


I'm always surprised at the number of tuners like this that were produced during the period, and that so many of them are still around today shows just how well engineered they were.

Prior to the early stereo broadcasts though, tuners were mono with no MPX facility for a stereo decoder. Recently, I stumbled upon a PYE Mozart tuner at Classique Sounds (☎ 0116 283 5821), a vintage specialist based in Leicester. I'd seen a couple of these before, with their fantastic fifties styling. The tuner matches the Mozart preamplifier, with a shiny copper fascia and a triangular cut-out for the frequency display. The power switch is clear, and



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If Sir John Harvey-Jones were to “troubleshoot” the British hi-fi industry, he’d have a field day. It’s not so much a problem with what’s being produced, but more to do with the fact that the industry, with a few exceptions, has to be one of the worst self publicists. Take Tannoy as an example. One of the oldest loudspeaker manufacturers selling a massive range of ‘speakers world-wide. You’ll find Tannoy ‘speakers in a surprisingly large number of studios, the Houses of Parliament, and through their professional brand, in many of the world’s airports and stations. To cap it all, Tannoy are in the rare position of boasting a generic brand name - who hasn’t heard the term, “over the Tannoy”? Yet ask a member of the public to name a ‘speaker manufacturer and you’ll likely as not be faced with a barrage of Japanese brands.

It’s not just Tannoy who are doing themselves down either. The whole specialist industry at large faces a severe image problem. The problem is that quality hi-fi seems to appeal only to those with an interest in either the equipment or music (although many musicians are renowned for owning some of the cheapest and tackiest hi-fi around). Ask Joe Public to name a quality hi-fi brand, and sure enough the list would consist of the Japanese majors once again, and probably Bang and Olufsen, too.

The two main difficulties the industry seems to be facing are that of not appealing to a wide enough audience, and not appearing too cliquey. Many manufacturers do a fine job of selling themselves, but only within the specialist press. The only British

Fair Views

- from Dominic
Todd, our man in
Scarborough



companies I can think of that have taken the bull by the horns and really tackled the non-specialist press, in recent years, have been Linn and Mission. It’s the public at large the manufacturers need to appeal to if they are to stand any chance of *real hi-fi* getting the recognition it deserves.

The other issue that needs to be addressed is that of inconvenience. Running-in, cables and tweaking are all factors that go hand-in-hand with achieving the ultimate system, yet many will throw up their hands in

“Ask a member of the public to name a ‘speaker manufacturer and you’ll likely as not be faced with a barrage of Japanese brands.”

horror at the very idea. And you’ve got to admit it, the whole running in syndrome can seem a little baffling to those used to buying their computers, TVs and videos that work, one hundred percent, straight out of the box. Not only do new products need several hours to work properly, there’s also the question of how long should you leave your system on before you

listen to it? Half-an-hour, a couple of hours or burbling away all day to ensure everything’s at its optimum operating temperature? The trouble is that running-in does make a difference. I’ve lost count of the number of times people have told me how disappointed they’ve been when having listened to a pair of highly reviewed ‘speakers. More often than not, the dem’ has been carried out with ‘speakers straight out of the box.

The responsibility here seems to lie with both dealers and manufacturers. Dealers should (and some do) ensure all demonstration products are properly run-in. Manufacturers could also make more of an effort to run products in before they leave the factory. You can’t blame people for feeling cheated that they have to complete the last five percent of manufacture themselves. This would inevitably add to the cost, though, and whether it’s worth pursuing in the name of wider acceptance, is a moot point, and likely to come up against strong resistance from those in the industry quite happy to put up with the practice.

Cabling and tweaks can be just as beneficial, but can again cause enough confusion to send potential buyers off to the nearest “kettle shop”, to seek out this week’s latest

mini-system. The way of getting round this is for manufacturers to provide decent cables (the sooner we get away from the awful freebie interconnect syndrome the better) and built-in tweaks (i.e. a decent specification) to start with. This way, people who want something that will work straight out of the box are satisfied, while the enthusiasts still have the score for the usual experimenting.

This works in the car industry. If you were to buy a quality sports or luxury car you’d expect it to come with decent quality tyres, oil, filters and so on, to allow it to give of its best. Yet there will always be room for the enthusiast who wants to change the tyres, dampers, exhaust and so forth. But the point is the product as a whole stands up to scrutiny in its own right without any modifications. But to listen to a CD player with its own interconnects just isn’t the done thing.

The British hi-fi industry is respected world-wide, and undoubtedly produces some of the best hi-fi going (and not always at telephone number prices). If it could just promote itself better and convince consumers that there really is a difference between mini-systems and real hi-fi then it could become a force to be reckoned with ●

June the 22nd was one of those unusual days when the office was a calm, relaxing place to be. For some reason the phone wasn't ringing itself to bits, and everything was running smoothly. Noel was away on business, while Dominic was out in Germany's Black Forest mingling with the hi-fi glitterati (and some journalists as well) at a Thorens bash.

I was on the phone to Peter Sheehan of Pentacone discussing the relative merits of turntables fashioned from 24kg of concrete, as you do. Suddenly the Zen-like tranquillity was disturbed, as Audio Publishing's general manager Mark ran in from the advertising office exclaiming "John Major's resigned!"

Having more than a passing interest in domestic political machinations - I'm the kind who believes sport should be banned from the media to make way for more parliamentary tittle-tattle - I was aghast. It was one of those epochal "where were you when" type moments - you know the sort: Lennon's murder, the Thatcher coup, Dave Lee Travis' resignation speech on Radio One.

My first instinct was to find out what the hell was going on. Mark and I looked around for a radio. Neither of us could find one, but then I suddenly remembered - Brian Morris from Linn had been down that morning with their new preamp, the Wakonda, within which, if my memory served me correctly, was a Kudos tuner module. Brilliant, thought I, Radio Four's *PM* programme is a mere press of a button away. I dashed downstairs, grabbed the Wakonda, plugged it into a couple of Audiolab 8000Ms, an FM feed and an IEC mains, and we were off, or so I thought.

In the best traditions of hi-fi journalism, I hadn't read the manual and so had no idea how to activate the tuner. So in

audiophilia

my haste to catch the news I found myself unpreparedly scrolling through the Wakonda's input selector, scrabbling for something that sounded like radio. Nothing. I started running through the record/listen options thinking I'd got something wrong. Nothing again. So in desperation I pressed everything. By sheer chance I got the tuner, only to be faced with silence - it was in preset mode. More frantic stabbing of buttons had me skipping through the Kudos' bank of unassigned presets. I was going nowhere fast, and rapidly missing news of something that could be a defining moment in media hype, if not history.

Getting increasingly annoyed with something I didn't have the time or patience to understand, a moment of inspiration arrived. The Troughline! Yes, our own 'distressed' Leak radio receiver, held together by parcel tape appropriately marked "Fragile"! As it would get the *Hi-fi World* four globe award for the most shabby looking tuner still in existence, I thought the Troughline couldn't possibly work at a time like this. So dilapidated is its appearance that the slightest suggestion of a G.T.Audio rebuild would have Graham Tricker announcing early retirement.

But the clock was ticking and there was

nothing to lose. The grubby captive phono leads were plugged into the shiny new Wakonda, the power switched on, and the tuning knob twisted to 92.5, whereupon the magic eye started glowing. To my total surprise, a smooth sounding Robin Oakley - BBC politico numero uno - wafted from the speakers. At last I'd managed to switch a radio on.

Rapidly approaching my fourth decade on this earth, and dwelling under the impression (if not the knowledge) that I'm a reasonably intelligent being, it's curious that it took me so long simply to tune in to Radio Four. Stranger still was that Linn's latest super high-tech exercise in user-friendliness was harder to use than an old twist-and-go fifties radio. It's not that it's badly designed or unduly complicated - quite the reverse. But like many modern hi-fi products, it's not *intuitive* - it requires 'learning' first.

This is something relatively new to hi-fi. It's come about now that the physical process of turning, twisting, switching - all things we learn at a very early age - has been superseded by a 'virtual' environment designed in software. With the Meridian amp I use, if you want to hear a tape, you can't just press the tape button anymore, you have to scroll through "LP-

CD-RD-TV-T1-T2" on the display, unless you've got the remote.

For me, at least, this is a problem. In everyday use it's fine, but when I need to do something instantly, without thinking - turn the volume down by half for example - 'virtual' controls are a disaster. I have to hit the down arrow and watch as the volume slowly scrolls down from 'LP78' to 'LP39' - hardly as natural as a quick flick of a volume control.

This human need for intuitive ergonomics, where a physical action corresponds directly to a perceived effect is something the motor industry discovered a decade ago. Remember the infamous MG Maestro with the digital dashboard? Even Jaguar dabbled with electronic displays, to drop them like the Tories dispose of their leaders. The message was: fancy electronic 'user-interfaces' are for *Knight Rider* only.

Hi-fi manufacturers are on a learning curve. Making electronic controls appear analogue (oops - that word again), or - in the case of motorised volume controls on Naim preamps - making analogue controls appear electronic, has to be the way forward. Still, with his backbenchers' propensity for excess volume, I'm sure John Major would find an instant electronic mute button very useful all the same ●

David
Price



The Music Pages

In a post-grunge world, pop stylists Supergrass are showing the way forward, but the Foes are fighting back. Meanwhile Elvis and Van run through some standards (borrowed or otherwise), and Madchester raves on again courtesy of The Stone Roses.

Giovanni Dadomo

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FOO FIGHTERS

Foo Fighters

CAPITOL 7243 8 34027 2 4

● Of the surviving Nirvana members, nobody's come up with any post-Cobain material except widow Courtney Love - and her band, the ever so subtly named Hole, were extant well before hubby Kurt bit the bullet. But here come Foo Fighters, a combo built around drummer Dave Grohl (a relative new boy too, having joined after the group's Bleach debut and hitherto unheard as either a singer or penner of songlets). He's aided and abetted by occasional Nirvana sideman Pat Smear (guitar), Bill Goldsmith (drummer) and bassist Nate Mandel, the latter two survivors of the legendary Sub Pop band Suny Day Real Estate. Grohl himself picks up guitar,

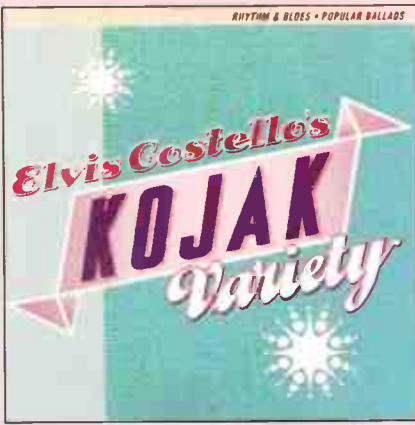
vox and primary writer's duties. And he's no mean purveyor of any of these disciplines, best evinced on the cracking opener 'This Is A Call'. There's the odd Nirvana echo, perhaps irrevitably so, particularly on over-familiar refrain of 'For All The Cows'. They go over the top occasionally ('Exhausted' is an ironically apt title, more bluster than bite) but this remains a promising if by no means classic debut. Still, nothing to be embarrassed about. Now what are the other guys going to come up with? Forgotten their names already? Me too. Sad. But millionaires deserve all the tears they can muster.

ELVIS COSTELLO

Kojak Variety

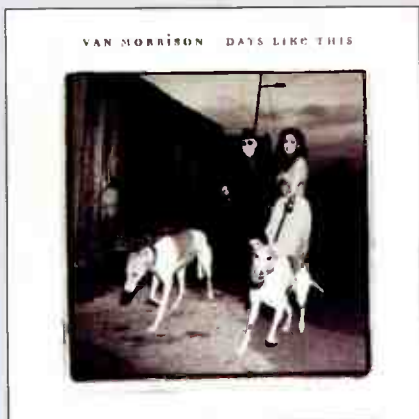
WEA 9362-45903-2

● Journalists - who needs 'em? Certainly not Master Costello - the sleeve notes to this latest collection of cover versions are as concise, informed, fluent and polished as any review you're likely to read this year. This doesn't in itself make this latest EC disc a work of genius of course. And as a matter of record, it must be noted that this is not strictly speaking a 'new' Costello record. It's been bootlegged to hell and back, and is largely the result of time spent in the studio following his hit-and-miss Mighty Like A Rose.



Inevitably it's the more familiar goods that leave most to be desired - hence Dylan's 'I Threw It All Away' ends up with Costello doing precisely that. Ironically though, it's Costello's over-impassioned delivery that makes you realise just how masterfully understated Bobby Zee was on his original. Similarly, and although I must confess to not knowing the original version, El's morosely downbeat interpretation of Mose Allison's 'Everybody's Crying Mercy' sounds, to be honest, like a weak Allison out-take. And 'Pay-day', by no means the best song penned by the often brilliant Jesse Winchester (as El says in his sleeve notes, the man's debut LP featuring The Band is sheer brilliance and ought to be in any serious music lover's collection) gets a similarly rough and ready run-through.

Reservations are inevitable, yet even lukewarm Costello is better than most. Here much of the credit goes to a superb selection of backing musicians from Presley guitar maestro James Burton to Larry Knechtel, whose sterling Hammond will chill your spine, warm the cockles of your heart and bother several bits in between. Mid-price, I'd say buy it for the far from infrequent tasty bits. Full-price I'd think twice. And as for that title, well, I scratched my head so much I could stand in for Yul Brynner.



VAN MORRISON
Days Like This
EXILE 527 307-2

● The old buggar just won't go away will he? It's over three decades now since Van the Man first launched his articulate and totally unmistakable Celtic tonsils on an unsuspecting planet as lead singer with Them, and the odd glitch apart, he's been constantly inspired and inspiring.

He's been on a roll lately, not unlike his Canadian contemporary Neil Young, and Days Like This is Morrison on top form. The disc was recorded and mixed in Bristol and Dublin but you'd never guess it. The sound is richly textured, production and arrangements are sparkling and smart, with Pee Wee Ellis' production leaning towards classic Stax, while there's oodles of rich Hammond organ from John Savannah.

Van's voice is on top form, and he's helped out on a couple of cuts by daughter Shana and Brian Kennedy, the latter particularly strong on the call-and-response chorus of 'No Religion'. And if Shana's voice isn't too impressive alongside her daddy's - but then who would be? - she's a definite asset on the cover of Ray Charles' 'You Don't Know Me'. True there are times when he verges on self-imitation ('Underlying Impression' is just too Van, if you know what I mean) and 'Songwriter' is a throwaway filler. But overall, a strong addition to an already awesome catalogue.



THERAPY?
Infernal Love
A&M 540 379-2

● Therapy? (don't you just hate that silly question mark?) haven't exactly mellowed out but this latest offering certainly isn't quite so abrasive as their previous work. And a good thing too - there was always the danger that the hell-bound Catholic bit would turn into

a self-parodying stance, so it's nice to know there's brains behind the musical brawn. They're still one of the hardest hitting rock acts this side of early Killing Joke, but then what can you expect from a group who open their latest album with a song called 'Epilepsy' and follow through with 'Jude The Obscene' and 'Bowels Of Love': Keep away from Gran and others with delicate sensibilities.



JOY DIVISION
Permanent: 1995
LONDON 82824.2

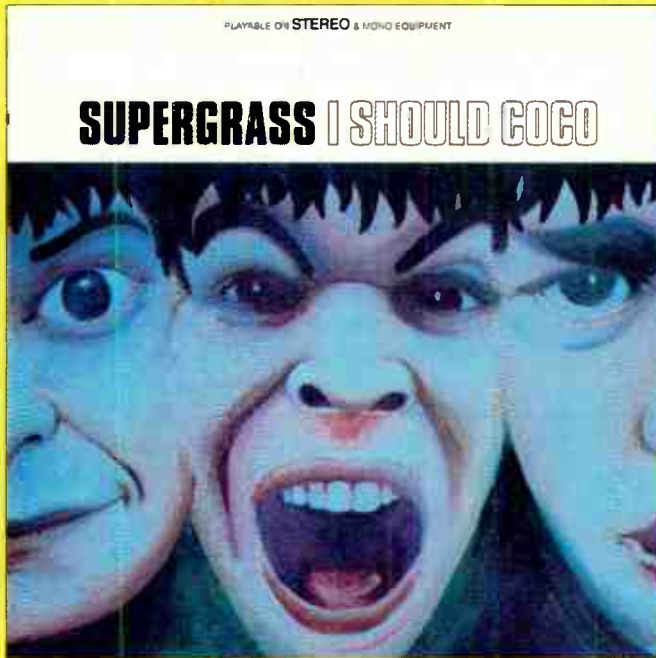
● And if you need an antidote to the chirpiness of Blur *et al.* what better than this well thought out selection from the vaults of the Mancunian Gloom? Of course there's always the epiphany of 'Love Will Tear Us Apart', but the likes of 'Transmission', 'She's Lost Control', 'Dead Souls' and so on are as sombre, brooding, and driven as when first released. But remember - it's only a record. Relax. Rock's answer to Charles Baudelaire.



SUPERGRASS
I Should Coco

PARLOPHONE 7243 8 33350 22

● Yes, yes, yes, I'm getting well marked with all this jolly Cockney geezer stuff too. And alright, I agree that the frontman for this trio looks like nothing more than the mutant offspring of a young Mick Jagger and one of the Simians from *Planet Of The Apes*. And a mate said that they're the new Monkees. But so what? I like The Monkees. And I very much like Supergrass. They're a brash, cheerful pop trio with - like Suede minus the affectations - strong echoes of early seventies' pop/glam rock - a Bowie intonation here, a Cockney Rebel one there, the exuberance the best of the Chinnichap groups, Sweet in particular.



Most importantly though, this debut LP carries heaps of good short snappy, catchy, joyful pop songs. You'll

have heard the hit single, 'Strange Ones' no doubt, and there's bound to be more to follow. If they stumble it's only when they stay from their brief, as on the six-and-half minute 'Sofa (Of My Lethargy)'. Says it all really. And yes, there's always the danger that we'll all eventually get tired of all this boyish, lager-primed high spiritedness. But by then Supergrass will probably be living it up in Rio next door to Ronnie Biggs. A Madness for the nineties? Yeah, why not?

Rock + Pop.

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Jon Clarke



STONE ROSES
The Complete Stone Roses
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● The Stone Roses are as important to Britain's contemporary rock scene as Manchester was to the Industrial Revolution, as *The Complete Stone Roses* demonstrates. While Manchester's thriving cotton manufacturers fuelled the fires of the industrial revolution, so the city's finest band since New Order kick-started the most exciting music since punk's heyday. Being a student in Madchester, as it was called in the late eighties, was to be invited to a happy, buzzing scene full of

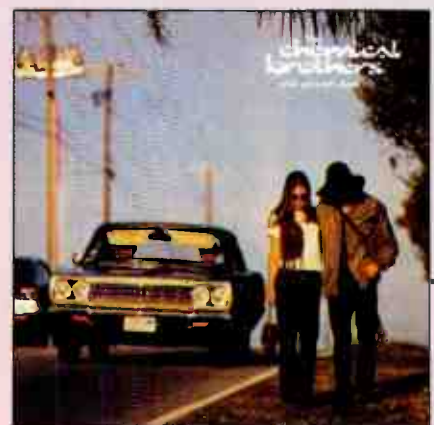
flowery T-shirts, flares and floppy Man City hats - as the cover picture of this new release demonstrates. The music was a fusion of house and indie pop, giving a dance-friendly foil to an intense summer of love hangover.

Along with The Charlatans and the Happy Mondays, the Roses carved a unique scene which for a few sweet months consumed the whole city and then the entire country, even the world. But no sooner had it emerged when it fizzled out, with "Death of Madchester" headlines screaming from the music press once London hacks had grown weary of spending three hours on the train travelling up from the capital. It was a precious moment, a time to savour - a night at the Hacienda, a dance at the Ritz and the hottest ticket of all - a place at G. Mex or Spike Island for the Stone Roses.

The Complete Stone Roses is less an essay on the formation of a modern-day supergroup than a preface to 1994's best album. *The Second Coming*. 'I Wanna Be Adored' best explains the allure of the band, a mystifying chant of joyful rhythm, a bolt of thunderous guitar pop and Ian Brown's lazy humming. But as with so many of the 21 brilliant tracks, it's hard to single one out for particular attention. 'Sally Cinnamon', 'Made Of Stone', 'She Bangs The Drums', 'I Am The Resurrection',

'Fool's Gold' - special moments to be remembered.

Kicking off with the early sessions, it's easy to hear a young and unsure band in the garage, messing around trying to find their niche. Most of the first five or six tracks are standard indie jams, but show how the Roses developed from the early days of 1985 to peak in 1989 with *Fool's Gold*. This is a joyful package for the world to enjoy, one that shows just why the best British rock is still the best in the world.



THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS
Exit Planet Dust
7243 8 40540 2 1

● The Chemical Brothers are Tom

and Ed, two geeky students who just happened to get lucky. Like Ed from Radiohead and darling of the clubby press DJ Justin Robertson, Tom Rowlands and Ed Simons did their time grafting the syllabus at Manchester University.

Hanging out at the UK's hippest Uni at a time when the Roses and the Mondays were doing their bit for style setting, the boys were inspired to set up a little-known dance band of their own, Ariel. But not making huge waves there, they settled on what every half-sussed student wanted to do in the late eighties - they dumped their dissertations for a pair of Technics SL1210s. And suddenly the Dust Brothers were going from basement parties in Moss Side to trendy clubs in the centre of town.

On graduation the boys returned to London, and having set up the much raved about club night Heavenly Social Sunday, they were soon on the front covers of the music monthlies, remixing the Primals and taking as many DJ trips to the States as they were 'vibes'.

Exit Planet Dust is a fitting name for their debut album, after the boys had to forego their old name to avoid a hefty law suit. And it's darn good too. From the first track and single 'Leave Home', the album takes off on a twisting, grinding industrial dance journey. Eleven medium core tracks with the recognisable Tom and Ed feel leave a strong impression with the listener. This is not a hangover cure or bedtime listening. It's a pick me up and get me going - like only Tom and Ed would know.



VARIOUS
Macro Dub Infection Volume One

7243 8 40475 2 8

● Tape loops, hard bass lines and spooky melodies shape Macro Dub Infection - a 23-track compilation of

sound clash slices. Designed to assault your speakers, this long player is an oddball mish mash of dub reggae cuts. It stands as a sort of intellectual forum on reggae's least commercialised outlet.

Dub is an artform - impressionism in music - and it shows. Macro Dub Infection is a testament to its experimental beginnings, pulling together a range of different musical outfits, the album skips by as perfect background music. Ranging from the industrial noise of Coil to the indie/rap of Tricky, the majority of these tracks have a Mad Professor feel at heart. But ultimately while many parts of the album shine, much touches on tedium and repetition.

David Price



BANCO DE GAIA
Last Train to Lhasa
PLANET DOG BARK CD011

● Concept album alert! The KLF were always excused boots as far as their 'trips through ambient dreamscapes' were concerned, because just when you thought all the atmospheric sounds were getting a bit overbearing, they'd cleverly lapse into self-parody. Unfortunately Banco rather miss the plot, bringing you a full-on techno train trip to Tibet's capital city complete with Trans-Global Underground-style Rai sounds, assorted ethnic wailings and a predictable electronic steam locomotive chuffing its way through virtual countryside.

This said, despite its Megadog techno hippy thematics, Last Train is a seriously good album. Toby Marks (for it is he) has a feel for a song as good as anyone, something he proved in no uncertain terms with last summer's scorching Maya debut. Continuing in the vein of what coffee table fashion

monthlies would dub "pop situationism", Banco de Gaia bring you a satisfyingly melodic set of Asia-Pacific traveller anthems, all mystic samples, tribal chants and kicking sub-bass. An accomplished, well-rounded outing with designs on being 'Deep Forest' for the Glastonbury set.



WAGON CHRIST
Throbbing Pouch
RISING HIGH RSNLP30

● Megastore-goers of late will have noticed that electronic music's new golden boy is a certain tank-driving West Country gentleman by the name of Richard James. So prolific is he that his Aphex Twin project has near-as-dammit become the bleepy version of pop's blond-rinsed, pointy bra'd Ms Ciccone. But as Bob Mould cried in one of his more poignant moments, "I want something that's not Madonna", and that's where Rising High's enfant terrible Mr. Luke Vibert comes in. Although lacking the showroom appeal of AT, Wagon Christ is just the ticket for those with their minds away from the mainstream.

More than a touch reminiscent of (the tragically now-defunct) Black Dog's Spanners epic of six months previous in the way it melds rare groove, fusion and hip hop, Throbbing Pouch marks a move away from the darker dominions of Luke's debut long player Phat Lab Nightmare, towards the more slippery funk of his recent At Atmos EP. The secret is the way dreamy Portishead-style grooves are contorted into LFO's twisted robotic hard-core, making for a chilled out ambient funk so fresh and new you'll ask yourself why no-one else has thought of it. Full of epic dance tunes with their guts ripped out, it goes to show that Rising High could well be a self-fulfilling prophesy, if ever there was one.

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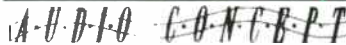
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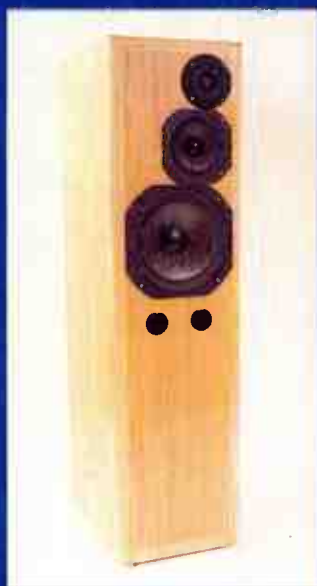
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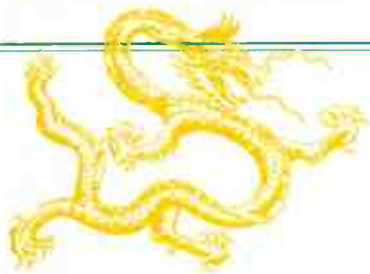
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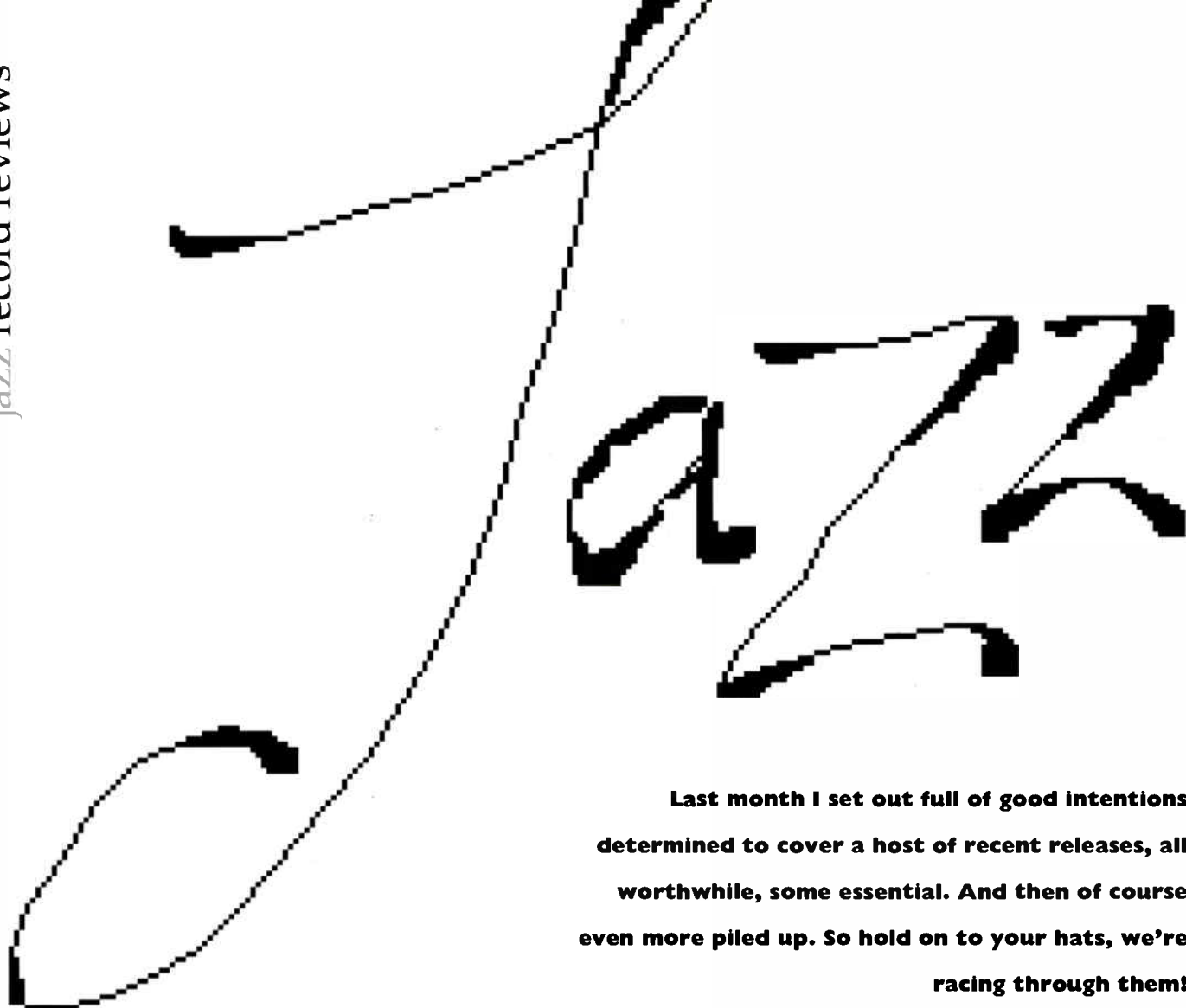
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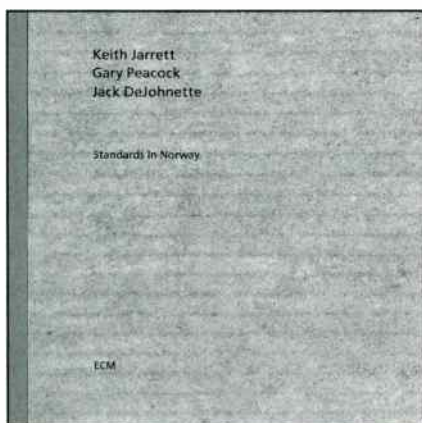
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Last month I set out full of good intentions determined to cover a host of recent releases, all worthwhile, some essential. And then of course even more piled up. So hold on to your hats, we're racing through them!

Simon Hopkins

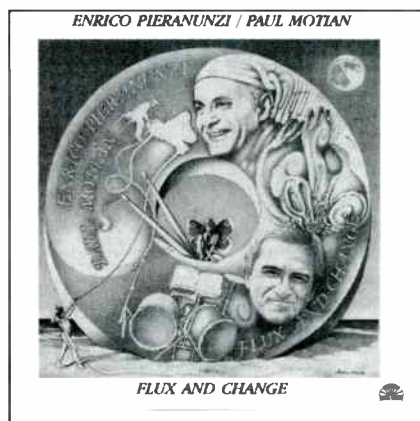


KEITH JARRETT TRIO
Standards In Norway
ECM 521 717-2

● Pianist Jarrett is one of the most publicly successful jazz musicians of his time. Having found fame with Miles Davis' electric groups, in the seventies his work gradually eschewed contemporary instrumentation in favour of acoustic settings and the results - most especially his epic solo work as heard on such masterpieces as *The Koln*

Concert and the mammoth *Sun Bear Concerts* - practically defined a genre of ascetic, introspective, capital-S Spiritual instrumental jazz. During the eighties however, he turned back to straighter jazz improvising in the company of two musicians with whom he's since performed live and recorded extensively. Featuring drummer Jack De Johnette and double bassist Gary Peacock, the "Standards Trio" regularly perform songs from the standard jazz repertoire, yet inject them with a hugely explorative intelligence which constantly has the discerning listener wrong-footed. Recorded live in Oslo in 1989, *Standards in Norway* is as good a place as any for a newcomer to this group to sign up, and will be essential for its fans.

You can forget questions of experimentation versus classicism with this group and delight in three players who understand each other's musicianship intimately and who wilfully, yet lovingly ravage and subvert such common material.

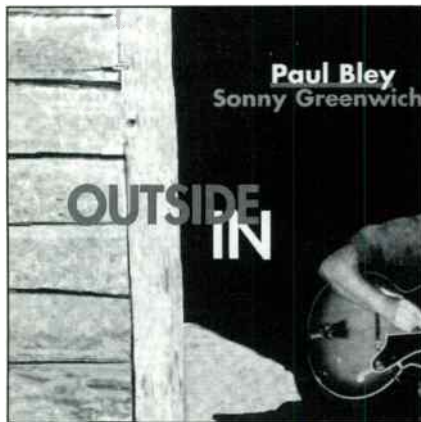


ENRICO PIERANUNZI / PAUL MOTIAN
Flux And Change
SOUL NOTE 121242-2

● More subversion of the jazz classics here. One time Jarrett-colleague, composer, bandleader and master-drummer Paul Motian joins Italian pianist Enrico Pieranunzi in an intriguing set. Constructed as three suites, *Flux and Change* connects radically

reworked (often to the point of being almost unrecognisable) jazz standards, and intersperses them with oblique originals written by both participants. I like to think that along side Jarrett, Motian - as gifted a composer and arranger as he is a drummer - has led a whole new audience to a greater appreciation of the classical jazz repertoire; in particular his trio with saxist Joe Lovano and cult electric guitarist Bill Frisell has deconstructed the repertoire over and over, with frequently dazzling results.

But the music here is something else. A constantly shifting soundscape almost leaves one seasick or vertiginous, as vaguely familiar themes move momentarily into focus then just as rapidly out. This is undoubtedly a music which owes as much in its tonal colouring and formal grace to European impressionism as it does to any Afro-American tradition, but it's utterly compelling. A record for which I had no expectations, and to which I have returned constantly. Highly recommended.

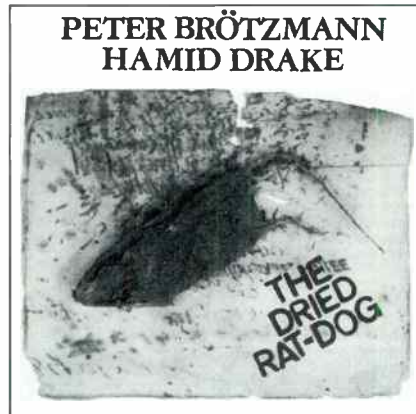


PAUL BLEY
Outside In

JUSTIN TIME JUST 69-2

● Another duo, again working similar territory, albeit for radically different reasons. Pianist Paul Bley, like both Jarrett and Motian, took many of his musical cues from pianist Bill Evans, a musician who in the sixties introduced a sense of lyricism to jazz which has infected the music's history ever since, though not necessarily as noisily or famously as, say, the electric experiments of Miles, or the revolutionary "outside" explorations of the more urban New Thing. (An aside: Bley also has in common with Jarrett and Motian a long history of recording for cult German label ECM, whose very existence it's difficult to envisage without the influence of Evans.) Outside

In captures a day's jamming between Bley and guitarist fellow Canadian Sonny Greenwich. Like Bley, Greenwich has a keen ear for oblique yet scintillating melody, full of heart-stopping interval leaps and staccato flights - and the facility to see it through (though softer ears may find his approach and tone a tad hard-going). Together they work their way through a set of originals, improvisations and standards whose title describes it perfectly; this is music at once easily familiar and vibrantly new. A minor gem.



PETER BRÖTZMANN /
HAMID DRAKE

The Dried Rat-Dog
OKKADISK OD12004

● Yet another acoustic duo, but moving still further away from the chamber jazz tradition. Saxist (though that barely hints at the range of regular and arcane reeds this man plays) Peter Brötzmann is without question one of the giants of modern music. Emerging on the European Free Jazz scene at the turn of the seventies, he was one of a group of musicians who offered a strictly continental alternative to both urban American Free Jazz (a music still steeped in the traditions of jazz and blues tradition at its most revolutionary) and the more self-consciously reserved work that emerged from British improv round about the same time. This music was bombastic, declamatory and above all noisy (the infamous landmark Brötzmann-led Machine Gun just about burns in its wake anything recorded before the emergence of genuine noise culture in eighties post-punk), and Brötzmann had a sound and technique to match the music. The hugely underrated drummer and percussionist Hamid Drake, on the other hand, emerged from the American free school, and is one of an ever-growing group of American jazz improvisers who view jazz as part of a vibrant pan-ethnic

continuum. He brings out a more lyrical, altogether less city-as-dystopia side to Brötzmann's honking. Although these things are relative; I mean, don't expect a Jan Garbarek record, just because this album features songs with titles like 'Trees Have Roots In The Earth' or 'Dark Wings Carry Off The Sky'. This is after all still an album of Brotzmann originals, and even here, he reveals a powerful malevolence lurking in every environment. An more contemplative Brötzmann, then, and in great, truly sympathetic company.



FUSHITSUSHA

The Caution Appears

LES DISQUES DU SOLEIL ET L'ACIER
CDSA 54039

● Now we're talking noise making. Japanese guitarist, composer, singer and bandleader Keiji Haino has appeared here before, albeit as a bit of a cameo. A legend among a handful of extreme rock aficionados and Jap-o-philes in this country, the rumours about him - he plays live with eight Marshall stacks (oh yes please...), dresses only in black robes, that he's secretly a monk, or that he's never been seen without regulation black shades - are rife. The sole availability of his records as expensive Jap imports has done nothing but add to the mystique, but here, finally, are couple of records you don't have to be either hugely wealthy, devotedly fanatical, or incredibly suggestible to actually buy.

On The Caution Appears, Haino is in the company of his regular group Fushitsusha. Details on this record are non-existent, but from the sound of it this is the trio version of the group. (Haino sometimes appears with a second guitarist - as if that were really necessary). He shows himself to be the most exciting, extreme, sublime, mesmerising electric guitarist to emerge in the last fifteen years, a guitarist from a world where Jimi Hendrix and Black

Sabbath grew up listening to Gregorian Chant and John Coltrane, and where clichés like this weary one mean nothing.

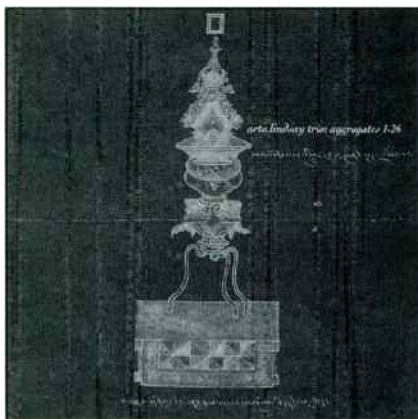


KEIJI HAINO

A Challenge To Fate

LES DISQUES DU SOLEIL ET L'ACIER
CDSA 54029

And here's Haino solo and live, and if anything yet more incredible. Haino shrieks like an electric guitar, plays guitar like one of Cage's prepared pianos, plays percussion like a genius three year old. For all Fushitsusha's transcendental, purifying zeal, A Challenge does slightly have the edge on Caution, although in a perfect world of course you'd buy both. This is a truly unique soundworld, where terrifying torture-victim shrieks preface edgily gorgeous ambientscapes; a music of devastating, and devastated poetry.



ARTO LINDSAY TRIO

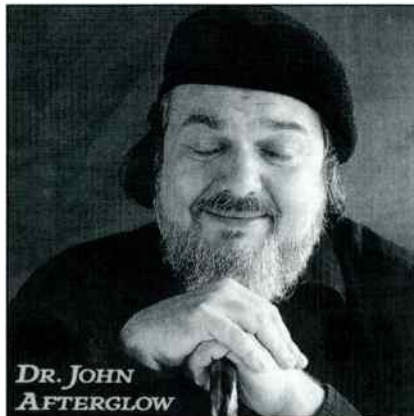
Aggregates 1-26

KNITTING FACTORY WORKS KFW164

● Guitarist, singer, songwriter and sort of professional New Yorker Arto Lindsay is a genuine pop original. From sideman to new music stars like Zorn and Frisell to co-leader of avant-pop funksters Ambitious Lovers, his twenty

years plus of music making in and around the New York new music scene have witnessed the marriage of his voracious assimilation of musical styles (punk, Brazilian pop, Free Jazz, funk... you get the picture, we're talking metropolitanism-as-art here) to his trademark scratchy guitar and paranoid, freaked-out singing, with frequently stunning results. Aggregates 1-26 is one such success. A trio recording with avant-funk super-bassist Melvin Gibbs and drummer Dougie Brown, it touches the usual Lindsay bases - stop-start tempi, languid funk, indiscriminate acts of ultra-violence, coy, geeky sexual come-ons - but delivers it all with terrific power. All your Bowie wannabees and revivalists be damned - this is the truly alternative pop world.

Simon Cooke



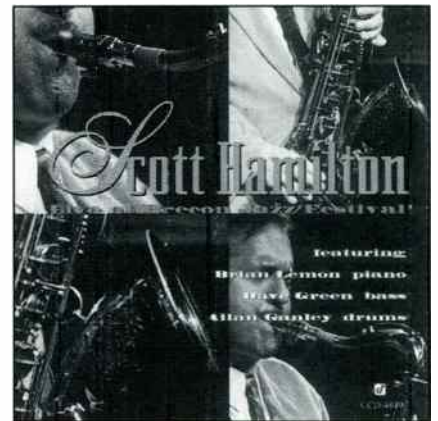
Dr JOHN Afterglow GRB 70002

● Everyone has those tracks you just have to play when your woman done lef you, the dog died, the car's been repossessed, you can't pay the rent, you're out of coffee, life just gets you down. This is one such CD, showcasing Dr John's ivories in a setting of bluesy jazz tracks which though quite well known, are far from standards.

I'm not a Dr John fan, mainly because I don't much like his easy, swinging 'life affirming' take on music, until now that is. This one really hit the spot. Technically, the recording is very clear, keeping the piano right up-front and lending it a limpid, spring-water quality. This instrument bubbles, chuckles and flows just as much as Doc's vocals. And of course, there's always that distinctive Dr John voice.

The ten tracks are an interesting

mix; a couple of Doc's compositions with Doc Pomus and a few older tracks such as Irving Berlin's 'Blue Skies' - a cracker - Robin/Jordan's 'I Know What I've Got' and Ellington/David's 'I'm Just a Lucky So-and-So', all showing a beautifully full big-band sound behind Dr John.



SCOTT HAMILTON

Live At Brecon Jazz Festival CCD-4649

● Another Scott Hamilton release, this time recorded live at the Brecon Jazz Festival last year. In that Hamilton fronts British talent in the form of Brian Lemon on piano, Dave Green on bass, and Allan Ganley on drums, it's the follow-up to 'East of the Sun'. It's a group that knits well, each player complementing the others. Of course, this is not surprising considering that the Lemon-Green-Ganley axis are so well known to one another.

While Scott is a fine performer comparable with the great names of mainstream jazz, this CD shows clearly that his playing has slipped from effortless into mild lethargy - has he lost the challenge? Does he feel he's seen it, done it, and played it all too often? Is he just getting old? I don't believe either that Scott has passed his best or that he's yet played everything available to him.

Hamilton has been a quality artist in this idiom for so long - bursting onto the scene as a blast from the past then becoming the main man of mainstream - that jazz has caught up with him, and that there can be no more challenge in playing this way - too knowing to startle, too set to change. He has never been a performer to re-invent himself, but unless he tries he'll be unable to offer any more to jazz than he already has. Still, if you like any of these performers, this is an excellent recording up to Concord's usual standards, and well worth the money.

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AVON, BEDFORDSHIRE, BERKSHIRE, BUCKS, CAMBRIDGE, CHESHIRE, CLEVELAND, CORNWALL, COUNTY DURHAM, CUMBRIA, DEVON, DERBY

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DORSET, ESSEX, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, HAMPSHIRE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HERTFORDSHIRE, HUMBERSIDE, KENT, LANCAHIRE, LEICESTER, LINCOLNSHIRE

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LONDON, GREATER MANCHESTER, MERSEYSIDE, MIDDLESEX, NORFOLK, NORTHAMPTON, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, OXFORDSHIRE, SHROPSHIRE, SOMERSET, STAFFORDSHIRE, SUFFOLK

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SURREY, SUSSEX (EAST), SUSSEX (WEST), TYNE & WEAR, WARWICKSHIRE, WEST MIDLANDS, WILTSHIRE,

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WORCESTERSHIRE, WEST MIDLANDS, YORKSHIRE (SOUTH)

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PJ HIFI, The HIFI Shop, 3 Bridge Street, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4RY. Tel. (01483) 504801. 9-6 Mon-Sat. Linn, Meridian, Rega, Arcam, Quad, Revox, Musical Fidelity, Rotel, NAD, Nakamichi, Marantz, KEF, Reference etc.

ROGERS HIFI, 13 Bridge Street, Guildford, Surrey, (01483)61049. Aiwa, Creek, Denon, Dual, JPW, Marantz, Onix, Pioneer, Systemdek, Ruark, Tannoy, Teac. Dem facilities available, no appts necessary, free installation, service dept. Access/Visa. Instant credit upto £1,000 subject to status. Monday-Saturday, 9.30-6pm, later by appt.

SURREY HIFI, 45 High Street, Godstone, Surrey, RH9 8LS. (01883) 744755. Specialist HiFi outlet, demonstration room and parking available. Quad, Audioblab, TDL, Tube Technology, Rel Acoustics, Nakamichi, Kef, Thorens, Musical Fidelity, Van Den Hul cables, Bose, Sennheiser, Beyer headphones, Marantz, Denon, Michell, Van den Hul, Musical Fidelity, Tannoy, Target, JPW. Single speaker dem rooms. Free installation service dept, Access /Visa /Mastercard. Open 9-6pm. Closed all day Wednesday.

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Classical

Peter Herring

The art of recording is literally about making sound judgements. In the case of the Swedish Opus 3 label this means matching acoustics to the music and continuing to rely on tried-and-trusted analogue techniques. For the New Queen's Hall Orchestra, it's a matter of selecting the right instruments and obtaining truthful balances within the orchestra, as well as redefining the approach to performing the romantic repertoire. But there's nothing new about taking such decisions: as Barbirolli's Mahler and Strauss recordings prove, EMI's engineers were getting them right three decades ago.



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
Clarinet Quintet in A Major KV581*
JOHANNES BRAHMS
Clarinet Quintet in B minor Op115

Kjell Fag us, basset clarinet* and clarinet; Zetterqvist Quartet
 OPUS 3 CD19301 (AAD/71.03)

● Despite the AAD coding, this is not a reissue: the recording was made as recently as 1993. So is the Swedish-based Opus 3 label simply being perverse in sticking with analogue recording when the rest of the world has embraced digital? Not in the least, judging by the sound quality here.

Opus 3 was founded in 1976 with the simple philosophy of recording music in the kind of acoustic for which it was written, and very successful they were too. The label's engineers also employed the minimum of electronics in the recording process - seldom more than four amplification stages between

the microphone and the storage medium - and came to appreciate the special qualities that valves could bring to the sound. Valve equipment is still extensively used in the recording process, as is the basic Blumlein microphone configuration of crossed figure-of-eights. Why change when you can achieve the kind of glorious sound which enhances these two clarinet masterpieces?

With its broad sound stage, fullness of tone, satisfying timbre and overall transparency, this recording truly offers the sensation of a performance taking place before you. Judicious setting of the volume control brings an immensely pleasing immediacy, with everything in its place in a light, airy acoustic.

Moreover, this Mozart and Brahms coupling is as satisfying artistically as it is technically. These are warmly affectionate, poetic performances, full of character. The impression that all five



I suspect the two works on this EMI reissue were primarily chosen to demonstrate the matchless conducting of 'Glorious John', as Ralph Vaughan Williams affectionately dubbed Sir John Barbirolli. Secondly, the two composers were contemporaries, although Richard Strauss outlived Mahler by thirty-eight years. Yet there is another, and I feel very significant connection between Gustav Mahler's Sixth Symphony of 1904, and Richard Strauss' *Metamorphosen* of 1945; that connection is the notion of the 'hero'.

Mahler's Sixth - originally given the subtitle 'Tragic' by the composer, but later discarded - concerns the fall of the hero figure, and in *Metamorphosen*, Strauss topples the heroes of *Ein Heldenleben* and *Also Sprach Zarathustra* just as surely as Allied bombs brought his beloved Munich Opera House crashing to the ground, the event which was supposedly the catalyst for the work's composition.

Yet there the comparison ends. Mahler was haunted - with justification, as it turned out - by impending tragedy throughout his life. The Sixth, his most pessimistic and bleakly brutal utterance, was nevertheless the product of one of his happiest years, 1904. Strauss, on the other hand, seldom had reason to be less than confident, assured and optimistic: he was, after all, music's first millionaire.

The Second World War changed all that, for it was not until Germany's impending defeat that the eighty-year-old composer could bring himself to recognise the tragedy that had been inflicted upon the entire world, as well as upon his own country, whose culture - which he so revered - had been so defiled by a new breed of

barbarians.

With its half-suggested quotations from Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony and Wagner's *Tristan*, as well as from his own compositions, it is both a valediction and an anguished lament. At the conclusion of Mahler's Sixth, the fateful blow is dealt with all the stark finality of a coffin lid slamming shut; in *Metamorphosen*, the hero confronts his mortality with a quiet, aching resignation. The contrast could hardly be greater, but they share one common, all-pervading bond, that of abject disenchantment. Mercifully, perhaps, neither of these works was to prove their composer's epitaph: Mahler was to find consolation in the final movement of the Ninth Symphony, and in *Der Abschied* (*The Farewell*) from *Das Lied von der Erde* (*The Song of the Earth*); for Strauss, final solace was to be found in the 'instrument' which had dominated his life's work, the soprano voice, and in the poetry of Hesse and Eichendorff which he brought together in one final, beautiful and transcendent moment as the *Four Last Songs*.

GUSTAV MAHLER
Symphony No6 in A minor
RICHARD STRAUSS
Metamorphosen for 23
string instruments

New Philharmonia Orchestra;
conductor, Sir John Barbirolli
EMI CLASSICS CZS 7 678162 (2CD SET)
(111.23)

● Mahler's star continues to shine brightly - as least as far as those programming this year's Prom concerts are concerned, for they have included all nine symphonies, Deryck

Cooke's completion of the Tenth Symphony and the major song cycles. And with not a single Mahler anniversary to commemorate: I trust Bruckner will merit similar comprehensive coverage in 1996, his centenary year.

Why does Mahler now enjoy this universal appeal? The contribution of the LP record and stereo recording back in the early 'sixties should not be overlooked, making his gigantic symphonic canvases accessible both physically and aurally. Now though, that we are no longer left open-mouthed and wide-eyed by the panoply of orchestral effects and colours, and by the sheer scale of the symphonies, or left emotionally drained by the inexhaustible melodic riches, perhaps other reasons should be sought. Is his popularity down to the extraordinary contrasts of his sound worlds, where the sublimely beautiful can coexist with the banal, the grotesque, the ironic, the witty and the downright bizarre? Is it because we recognise so many of our own, and the world's, contradictions in the music and character of this Jewish musician from Bohemia, each of whose symphonies seem part of some public process of self-exploration, within whose span it is possible to touch the spiritual heights as easily as it is to plumb the depths of vulgarity and despair?

Of Mahler's nine completed symphonies (ten, if you add in the essentially symphonic song-cycle *Das Lied von der Erde*), the Sixth is unquestionably the most complex in psychological terms. Even Mahler felt compelled to state: "*My Sixth will present riddles which only a generation which has assimilated and digested my*

players thoroughly enjoyed making these recordings comes across very strongly, with the clarinet playing of Kjell Fag us utterly spellbinding, especially in the wistful slow movement of the Brahms. It brought home to me just what wonderful music this is, reflective, tender, glowing in its autumnal colours. And the accompaniment from the Zetterqvist Quartet is quite beautiful.

In the Mozart, Fag us follows the example of several other clarinetists (Anthony Pay, Thea King, Alan Hacker) in using the basset clarinet for which the

work was written. With its extended range (by four semitones) and richer, darker tone quality, this instrument noticeably changes the character of the piece, and its use is not simply an exercise in authenticity. As in the Brahms, Kjell Fag us and his colleagues point up the lyrical side of Mozart's smiling inspiration. Throughout, this is sensitive,

thoughtful and very beautiful playing, sympathetically recorded, and marking a welcome return by the Opus 3 label to the British market. There is always room for recordings which offer this combination of artistic and technical excellence.

first five symphonies can tackle."

Despite its outwardly abstract, four-movement neo-classical structure, the autobiographical nature of the symphony is evident throughout, not least in the half-hour long final movement, where three fantastically orchestrated development sections seem to hurtle headlong and out-of-control towards some terrifying abyss (in fact, the orchestral writing here is as taut and coherent as any Mahler produced - it just sounds wild). And indeed, the abyss awaits in the shape of three 'blows of fate' (Mahler asked for them to be executed by a sledgehammer!) which bring each section to a shuddering halt. Mahler added, by way of explanation (as if any were needed): "The hero receives three blows from Fate, the third of which fells him like a tree".

And with the sense of tragic irony which had haunted the superstitious Mahler throughout even his happiest years, fate did indeed deal him three blows: a year after the symphony's premiere in 1906, he was asked to relinquish his post as director of the Vienna Opera (the position which he had been so ambitious to secure that he converted to Catholicism in order to appease the innate anti-semitism of his employers). Then in July 1907, his daughter Anna died aged four; a few days later, a doctor diagnosed Mahler's own, ultimately fatal, heart disease. Alma Mahler, the composer's widow later recalled: "Not one of his works

came so directly from his inmost heart as this...The music and what it foretold touched us so deeply. The Sixth is the most completely personal of his works, and a prophetic one also."

It is also a symphony which has inspired a variety of interpretations,

Not that Barbirolli glosses over the detail - little, if anything escapes his attention - and the finale is a *tour de force*, with all the nightmarish impact that Mahler could surely have wished for. Returning to Barbirolli's

interpretation after several years (I recall its last incarnation was on Classics for Pleasure), I was surprised just how persuasive it remains. Barbirolli shapes and moulds the music without ever appearing to impose his ideas on it, and even in the comparatively low-powered first movement sustains the flow and the underlying tension.

All this alone would be sufficient to earn this set the highest recommendation, but there is more. First, is a welcome return to the catalogue for one of the finest recordings ever made of Strauss's *Metamorphosen*, ravishingly played and performed with a



from Solti's hard-driven Chicago performance on Decca to Bernstein's idiosyncratic, but utterly convincing reading on DG. There have been other great performances from Abbado, Horenstein, Kubelik, Karajan and Tennstedt to name but a handful. And then there is Barbirolli, measured, even plodding compared to Solti in the first movement but, as quickly becomes evident, - with a clear idea of where the performance is leading. This is cogent, coherent conducting the like of which is all too rare these days, with the over-emphasis on detail.

compelling intensity. Second, to enhance the Mahler, is a Kingsway Hall sound produced by Ronald Kinloch Anderson and engineered by Peter Brown that is more than a match for anything produced in the intervening twenty-eight years and, in the finale, has a scale, clarity and range the like of which I've seldom heard equalled. This is not the only Mahler Sixth I would want in my collection - alternative views of this work are vital - but it is nevertheless indispensable. And the Strauss represents Barbirolli at his treasureable best.

RICHARD WAGNER

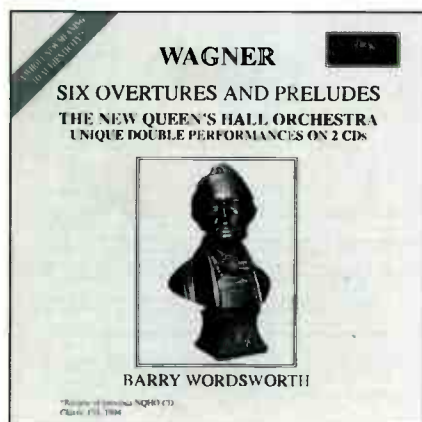
Overtures: Rienzi; Tannhäuser; Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg/ Preludes: Lohengrin (Act I); Tristan und Isolde (Act III)/Prelude and Close of Act III from Parsifal

The New Queen's Hall Orchestra; conductor, Barry Wordsworth
EYE OF THE STORM EOS500I (2 CD SET) (DDD/144.03)

● Six Wagner excerpts occupying over two hours? Either these are

performances at tempos which make Leonard Bernstein's Enigma Variations appear hurried, or there is some other explanation. I'm pleased to say it is the latter which applies to this provocative set from the recently founded Eye of the Storm label. It offers two performances of each work at, I should swiftly add, a single disc price (£14.99), and all recorded by the same orchestra and conductor, and all in the same venue.

So what's the point of the exercise? Before the philosophy, a little history. The original Queen's Hall Orchestra



was founded in 1895 for Henry Wood to conduct at the Promenade Concerts in London's Queen's Hall. The word New was added to the orchestra's title in 1915, but by the late 'twenties, the ensemble was absorbed into the BBC Symphony Orchestra, which became the principal 'Proms band'.

The story now moves forward to 1992. Enter John Boyden, one of the most controversial personalities in classical music, but also someone with an enviable list of credits to his name, not least the pioneering Enigma label. Boyden had become disillusioned with modern-day orchestral performance and recording, especially of the romantic repertoire from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He disliked its bland homogeneity, the way the sound balances no longer reflected composers' intentions. But he reserved his most scathing criticism for what he described as the "de-humanising effect of today's recording process," with its "search for perfection above all".

I should add that John Boyden is not the first to voice this kind of criticism, although he has the capacity to articulate it better than most. The notion that there is something inherently deceitful about piecing together an acceptable 'performance' from a series of edits was put forward by the founders of the Nimbus label over twenty years ago. True, it was some while before Nimbus brought this philosophy to the complexities of orchestral recording, and Boyden's Enigma recordings, with Tony Faulknerr doing the engineering, were probably the first attempts in this country to reverse the trend.

Anyone who has sat in on recording sessions of late will be only too aware of the jiggery-pokery that can take place, although to be fair I have detected a move towards the 'complete take' in some quarters, with editing merely used to 'tidy up' the odd split note or whatever.

However, Boyden's revisionist approach goes beyond the misuse of the digital editing machine. He believes we have also lost much of the character and colour of orchestral playing, that the over-emphasis on so-called perfection has diminished players' scope for individual expression. Not least of the problems was that the instruments



themselves had changed radically over the past seventy years, principally in response to the dry acoustics of recording studios and many modern concert halls. Brass instruments for example have become much louder, as have the woodwinds; to compete with this change, strings have had to exchange the mellow quality of gut strings for the more shrill metal variety.

It was to show that orchestral performance and orchestral sound did not have to follow this apparently inexorable path that John Boyden, together with his associate James Thomson, founded the New Queen's Hall Orchestra. The choice of name was not made out of pure nostalgia; the intention was to replicate the kind of sound and style of performance that its predecessor would have produced at the turn of the century for musicians to play, as John Boyden puts it, "in a way that Wagner, Dvorak and Elgar would recognise".

To this end, instruments of the correct period are employed, along with the requisite playing techniques, the recordings have been made with just three Neumann microphones placed above the conductor, the orchestral balance has been restored to something of an equal partnership, and the barest minimum of editing has been employed. But all these points could have been made on a single disc, so why two?

It is here perhaps that John Boyden makes his most important observation, that in the current quest for the 'ultimate' performance, as perceived by conductors and record companies, if not always by the customer, we have lost the very spark of imagination, intuition, feeling - call it what you like -

that makes for a memorable, affecting, enlightening musical experience. And for what it's worth, I believe Boyden is right, witness the immense popularity of reissues from the fifties, sixties and earlier.

Here, conductor Barry Wordsworth demonstrates how even Wagner overtures and preludes can respond to different, but equally valid approaches, in terms of tempos, dynamics and phrasing. Compare and contrast the more measured approaches to Tannhäuser (successful, I feel) and Rienzi (less so), or the radiant Parsifal excerpt which concludes the second CD. The recording lives up to the expectations aroused by John Boyden's treatise in the booklet, which also contains a challenging essay on contemporary Wagner performance by his son, Matthew Boyden: controversy clearly runs in the family!

The concluding track on the first CD has several members of the orchestra's brass and wind sections demonstrating the differences between their older instruments and the newer variety, and - believe me - you need no special expertise to appreciate them, or for that matter to appreciate the special colours and timbres that the older instruments possess. Unintentionally, this track also provides a telling test of the accuracy of the reproduction system employed.

However, this set is not wholly about groundbreaking and challenging accepted attitudes, it is also musically rewarding. As John Boyden puts it: "It's not simply a matter of recreating a period orchestra as an exercise in accuracy. It's about a return to balance, beauty and above all musicianship." Amen to that.

...Continued from page 92

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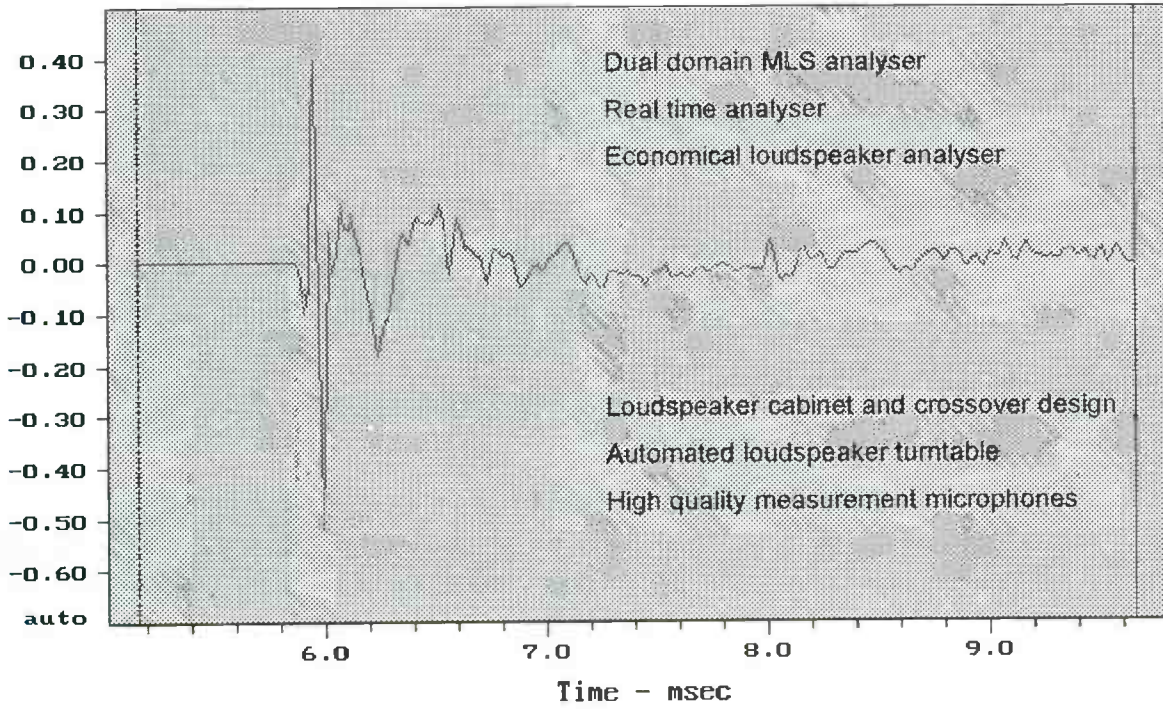
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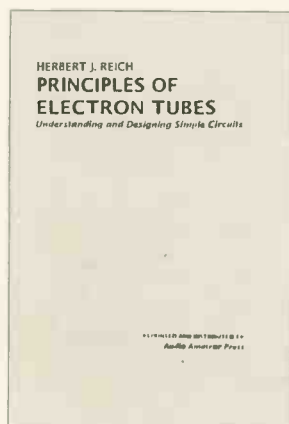
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NEW VALVE BOOKS

PRINCIPLES OF ELECTRON TUBES, by **Herbert J. Reich**
£29.95

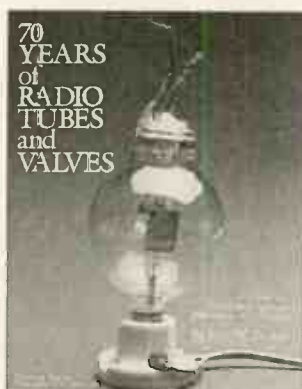


Principles of Electron Tubes first appeared in 1941 as a textbook for beginners studying valves for the first time. The book starts with the basics of how a vacuum tube actually works, including how construction and materials effect performance. Once this basic understanding is in place, Herbert Reich goes on to explain the principles of the simple diode valve, the triode and multi-grid valves. Familiar with the various valve types and their operating principles, the book continues to show how a simple circuit is designed and on to amplifiers, transformers and power supplies. A must for budding valve enthusiasts and an invaluable reference for hobbyists.

70 YEARS OF RADIO TUBES AND VALVES, by **John W. Stokes**
£19.95

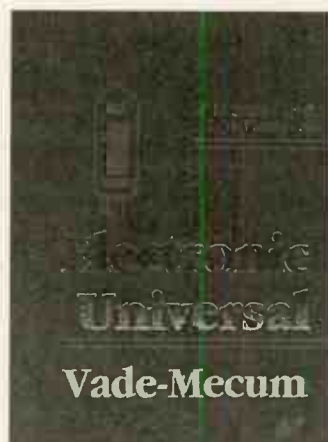
New Zealand author John Stokes, with over fifty years experience, outlines the evolution of radio receiving tubes and the part they played in the domestic radio

receiver in this beautifully illustrated (B&W) book. An ideal reference for those interested in the history and development of valves and for collectors alike.



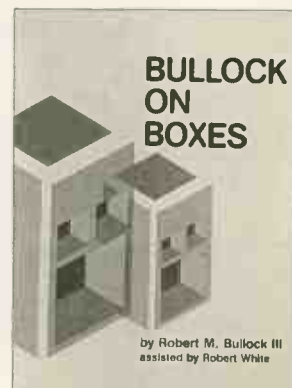
ELECTRONIC UNIVERSAL VADE-MECUM, by **Piotr Mikołajczyk & Bohdan Paszkowski**
£49.95

This sizeable data book contains no fewer than 5693 valves divided into 442 groups. It contains connection details, operating parameters, load lines, example circuits and more making it one of the most comprehensive reference books we've seen, although there are some omissions, such as 300B and 211 valves.



LOUDSPEAKER BOOKS

BULLOCK ON BOXES, by **Robert M. Bullock**
£12.95



This book relies on manipulation of Thiele-Small parameters (supplied with all drive units) to optimise reflex box design, but with a calculator and at high school level. With lots of helpful tables and graphs, this straightforward book is every beginners best bet for getting to grips with sizing the box and port of a reflex loudspeaker.

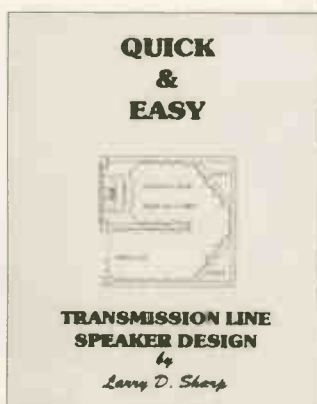
ACOUSTICS, by **Leo L. Beranek**
£39.95

From analogous electrical circuits important for modelling, the author moves through to microphones then loudspeakers. He covers design factors, showing how theory influences practice in drive units. Loudspeaker enclosure types covered include sealed, ported and horn. The behaviour of sound in rooms, very important for hi-fi, is also covered extremely well here.



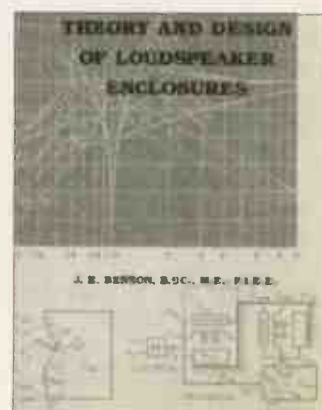
QUICK & EASY TRANSMISSION LINE SPEAKER DESIGN by **Larry D. Sharp**
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A practical approach to designing and building your own transmission line loudspeaker. Covers the background theory, but is very practical in approach. Design examples and equations, even a computer package to run under Lotus 123 which takes care of the maths.



THEORY AND DESIGN OF LOUDSPEAKER ENCLOSURES by **J. E. Benson**
£23.95

This book covers loudspeaker enclosure design; infinite baffle, reflex, passive radiator etc in great detail, with a highly mathematical approach, making it unsuitable for beginners, but highly authoritative to experienced designers with a good foundation in acoustics.



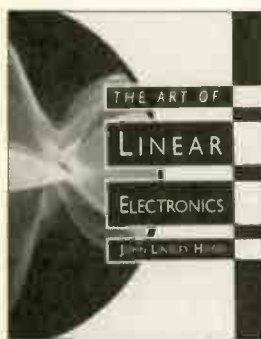
SOLID STATE ELECTRONICS

THE ART OF ELECTRONICS, by P. Horowitz and W. Hill. £35

The definitive electronics book. The Art of Electronics is an ideal book for the beginner through to the engineer. Written in easy to understand English, each chapter takes you from basic first principles through to full design exercises and practical circuits.



THE ART OF LINEAR ELECTRONICS, by J. Linsley-Hood. £16.95



Concentrates specifically on analogue electronics for audio and goes into detail on obscure topics like the drawbacks of feedback, as well as its advantages. Covers mainly solid state but

also includes valves. A must for serious enthusiasts and budding designers.

AUDIO ANTHOLOGIES

Audio Anthologies - When Audio Was Young

There are five volumes of the Audio Anthologies, listed below with a brief description and guide to their contents. They cover one of the most exciting and important eras of hi-fi, from the end of the second world war, through the introduction of stereo, magnetic recording, binaural recording and the FM Multiplex decoder. They contain many ground breaking circuits and theory covering all aspects of hi-fi design. A must for valve enthusiasts.

Volume One - May 1947 to December 1949

The first new audio amplifiers, tuners and speakers designed after the long delays of the Great Depression and World War II.

Summary of Contents: 9.5watt, 5watt and 6.5 watt 6AS7G amplifiers, 30watt 300B amplifier, valve FM tuning indicator, 30watt 211 power amplifier, cathode follower amplifier using 6V6, an adaptation of the Williamson amplifier, valve phono preamplifier, several horn and reflex loudspeaker designs and much more.

Volume Two - January 1950 to July 1952

More great amplifiers, preamps, loudspeaker designs, and the first glimmer of the stereo revolution plus magnetic recording aids.

Summary of Contents: Ultra linear 6L6 design and operation of the Williamson, a direct coupled amplifier, Williamson type amplifier using 6A5s, 40watt 845 push-pull amplifier, valve phono and line preamps, valves and loudspeaker damping, design and construction of reflex and horn loudspeakers.

Volume Three - August 1952 to June 1955

Seven power amplifiers, eighteen preamps, twelve loudspeaker designs, including four horn types and binaural recording techniques.

Summary of Contents: Simple valve phono stage, transformerless amplifier using 6082, 20watt 5881 amplifier, 10watt 6V6 amplifier, stereo valve preamp, high quality valve phono stage, a preamp for the Williamson, low distortion tone control preamp, binaural or stereophonic?, transistor phono amp, corner horn loudspeaker, concrete horn loudspeaker.

Volume Four - July 1955 to December 1957

How to plan an audio system, twelve amplifiers and preamps, solid state techniques and circuits introduced and six loudspeaker designs.

Summary of Contents: 18watt 5881 amplifier, 4watt single-ended tweeter amplifier, budget 11watt amplifier, versatile bass/treble control, transistor theory, transistor preamp, transistor techniques, battery powered transistor phono preamp, loudspeakers explained.

Volume Five - January 1958 to December 1959

Stereo comes to full flower with four FM Multiplex decoder designs, seven power amps, eleven preamps, a commercial killer, five loudspeakers, and theory articles by Olson, Crowhurst and McProud.

Summary of Contents: Stereo valve multiplex decoder, 7watt EL84 amplifier, valve active crossover and 20watt treble amp/50watt bass amp., monaural, binaural, monophonic and stereophonic explained,

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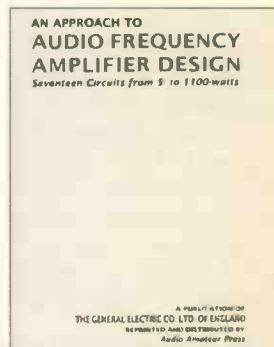
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MULLARD TUBE CIRCUITS FOR AUDIO AMPLIFIERS. £13.95

First published in 1959 by Mullard, this book includes full designs for eleven power and control amplifiers, including the 5-20, using valves. This book begins with a four-chapter tutorial on getting the best sound from valve amplifiers.



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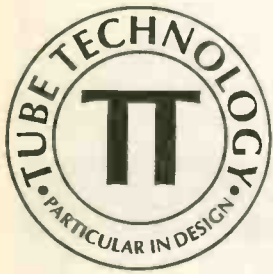
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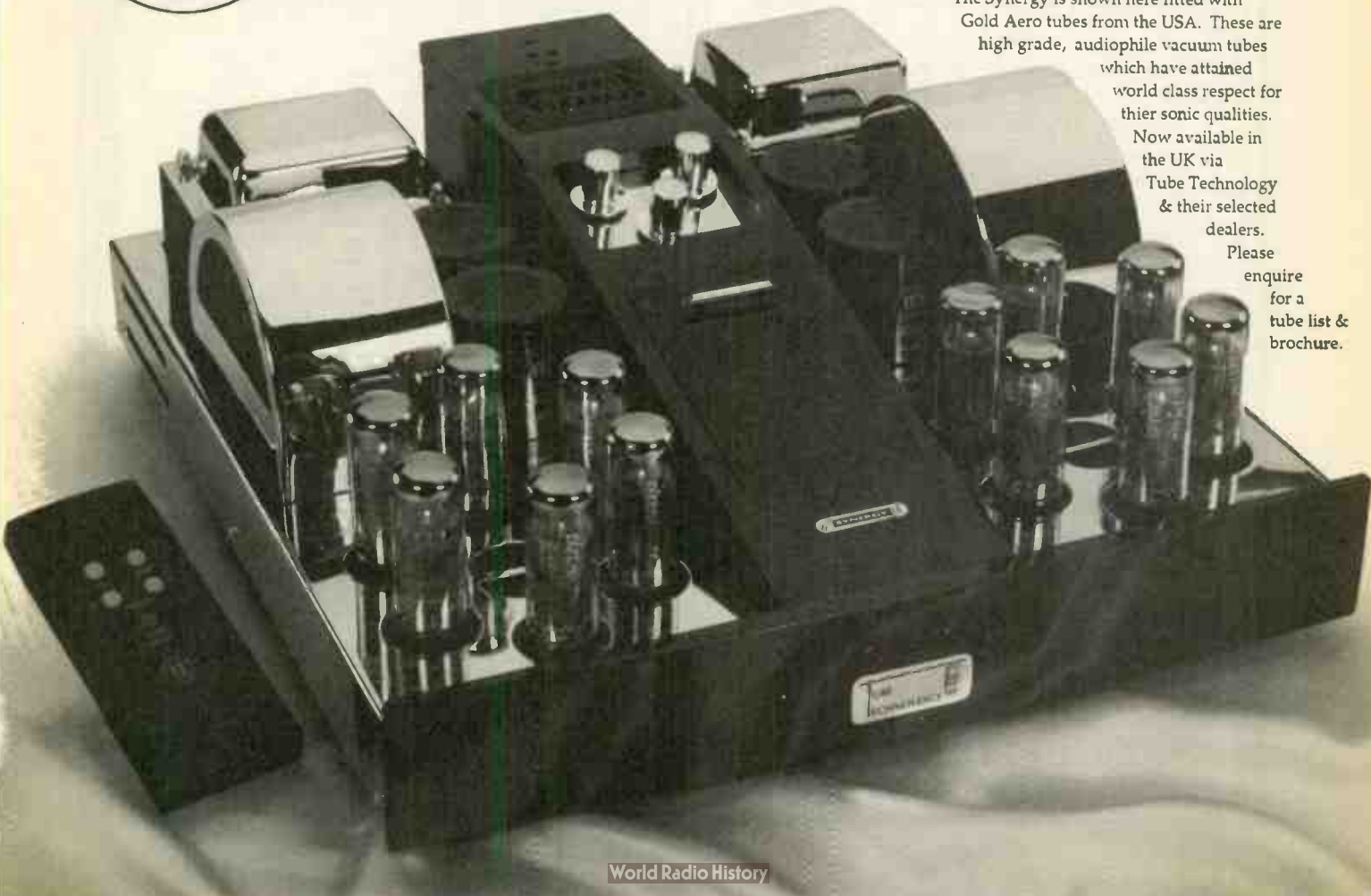
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	E77, E77 Mg	N/A	£36.00	R20 XE, QLM, 34/36, XLM III	£12.50
	P77, P77 Mg	N/A	£67.00	AN 5/11/30/60/8745	£8.00
Audio Technica	AT 95E	£21.00	£12.50	AN 2/50/70/77/01/4932/8743	£10.00
	AT 110 E	£28.50	£16.00	RS 33/35/38/4/85/90	£8.00
	AT 450E	£57.00	£34.00	ST 14/15/16/17/19/21	£3.00
	AT OC3	£92.00	£64.00*	DN 145/155/165E, DN 149 S	£12.50
	AT OC 5	£125.00	£90.00*	Goldring 6800/820/850 (D 110/D120/D130)	£8.00
Denon	AT OC9	£216.00*	£150.00*	6800 Sup E, 6800 - 78pm	£12.50
	DL 110	£85.00	£52.00*	DS-ST 7/12/14/15/26/30/35/102	£8.00
	DL 160	£85.00	£68.00*	DS-ST 5/16/23/24/25/55/103/104	£10.00
	DL 304	£180.00	£155.00*	JVC DT 33/35/36/45/55/60/65, DT Z1 S	£8.00
Goldring	ELECTRA	£24.00	£16.00	Kenwood N 47/48/51/53/60/61/63/66/72	£8.00
	1006	£44.00	£29.00	N 36/37/43/45/56/59/62/67/69/71	£10.00
	1012 GX	£58.00	£38.00	National EPS 23/24/25/30/33/51 CS/270 D	£8.00
	1022 GX	£78.00	£49.00	(Technical) EPS 43/52/75/76/ STSD, P30/33 D	£8.00
	1042	£94.00	£61.00	P30 E(Upgrade), EPS 205/207 E	£12.50
	EROICA (LX/H)	£90.00*	£60.00*	FF 15/MS 10/20 EH, OM/P 20	£12.50
				Ortofon GP 371/400/780/400 IU/III	£8.00
Nagaoka	MP11	N/A	£13.50	GP 330/370/401/401 IU/II	£10.00
	TS 10	N/A	£20.00	PN 210/220/240/K65/250T/295T	£8.00
	OM10, OMP 5E	£16.00	£14.00	SN 27/28/29/33/34/37/41/50/80/101	£8.00
	OM 78 (Stylus)	£16.00	£26.00	ST 80/100/115/130/613	£8.00
	OM10, OMP10	£25.00	£18.00	ST G 8/9/10, ST 28/29/35/37/40 D	£8.00
	OM20	£63.00	£35.00	STY 104/111/116/117/118/123/124	£8.00
	OM30	£81.00	£60.00	N 75-6/C, N 91 G SS C35	£8.00
	OM N'CLUB S	£31.50	£18.00	N 44 E, N 70 E, N 75 ED/EJ T2	£10.00
	510	£31.50	£21.00	N 55 E, N 95 ED/E, N 97/105 ED	£12.50
	520	£54.00	£40.00	VN 15E, VN 35E (v 15 IIIE)	£15.00
Ortofon	530	£85.00	£63.00	NO 133/134/142/150/155/200 G	£8.00
	540	£112.00	£85.00	ND 115/143/148/153/220/250 G	£10.00
	MC1 Turbo	£58.00	£45.00*	Toshiba N 53/55/60 DV, N 62/292 N 71/290	£8.00
	MC3 Turbo	£112.00	£85.00*		
	MC 10 Super	£85.00	£65.00*		
	MC 15 Super	£112.00	£85.00*		
	MC 10 Supreme	£234.00	£186.00*		
	MC 20 Supreme	£340.00	£255.00*		
	MC 30 Supreme	£425.00	£319.00*		
	Shure	VN 35 MR (V15II)	£68.00	£58.00	
	VN 45 MR (V15 IV)	£90.00	£80.00		
	V15 V MR	N/A	£130.00		
Stanton	500 AL Disco	£30.00	£18.00		
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OM Pro S	£20.00	£15.00
OM Nightclub E	£33.00	£21.00
Conc Nightclub S	£48.00	£18.00

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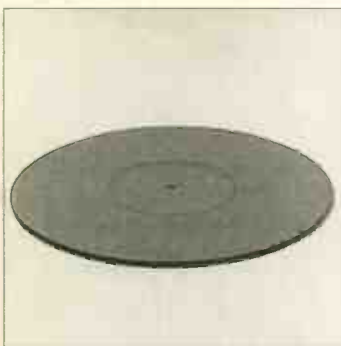
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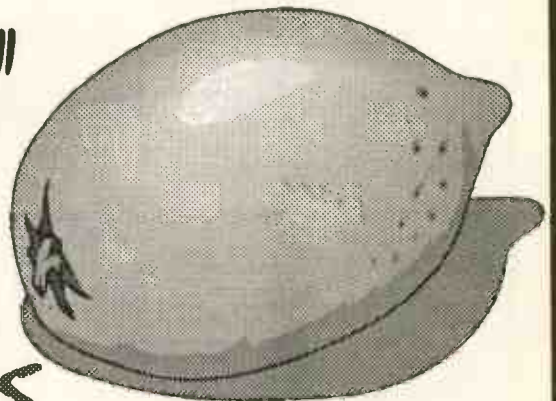
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ALBARRY 1008	x-dem	£650	MARTIN LOGAN AERIUS	mint s/h	£1695
NAIM NAP 140	mint s/h	£395	TANNOY FSM	mint s/h	£1895
NAIM NAP 180	mint s/h	£750	LINN KAN + Stds	vgc	£275
JADIS JA30 monoblocks	mint s/h	£2250	LINN SARA + Stds	mint s/h	£275
JADIS JA500 monoblocks (re-valved, serviced)	mint s/h	£10995	NAIM CDS	mint s/h	£1995
NRG 201S	mint s/h	£2750	ORELLE DA180	mint s/h	£250
KRELL KSA 100	mint s/h	£1495	AUDIO RESEARCH DAC 1	mint s/h	£1295
JADIS DEFY 7	as new	£3500	P.S. AUDIO ULTRA LINK	mint s/h	£1250
RODAR JOHNSON			MERIDIAN 206	mint s/h	£595
PREM 7B	as new	£6500	DELTA/SIGMA	mint s/h	£595
JADIS JP 80 MC	as new	£7995	MICROMEGA TRIO		
COPELAND CTA 401	as new	£995	Transport	as new	£1895
CLASSE DR6 Line/phono	as new	£2500	WADIA 16	as new	£5995
BURMESTER 808			REVOX H2	as new	£595
Line/phono	mint s/h	£2500	WADIA 15 D to A	x-dem	£2250
MARK LEVINSON No 28			MERIDIAN 263	mint s/h	£275
Line/phono	mint s/h	£1895	NAIM CD1	mint s/h	£1200
SONIC FRONTIERS SFL-1	mint s/h	£695	ARCAM ALPHA 5	mint s/h	£295
TESSERAC TALA Ref pre	x-dem	£3995	DENON DCD S1	mint s/h	£3500
GOLDMUND MIMESIS 3	mint s/h	£2600	PIERE LURNE J1/SME V	mint s/h	£1995
JEFF ROWLAND MODEL 1	mint s/h	£1495	ALPHASON SYMPHONY		
PROCEED AMP 2	as new	£1495	HR 100 mcs		
AUDIO INNOVATIONS S 800 MK1	mint s/h	£350	ATLAS power supply	mint s/h	£1295
PROCEED Pre-Amp	as new	£1395	VPI TNT MkII	mint s/h	£1995
AUDIO SYNTHESIS			PIERE LURNE J1/GRAHAM 1.5 (two arm tubes)	mint s/h	£2495
PASSION	mint s/h	£350	LINN LP12/LINGO/AKITO	mint s/h	£795
TRILOGY 958 monoblocks	mint s/h	£1800	LINN LP12/LINGO/ CIRRUS/LVIII	mint s/h	£1295
ARCAM ZETA ONE	as new	£695	FORSELL AIR REFERENCE inc flywheel	as new	£12995
CREEK 4240	mint s/h	£175	GOLDMUND STUDIO T3F	mint s/h	£4250
LINN KARIN (phono)	mint s/h	£750	KOETSU RED	mint s/h	£495
AUDIO RESEARCH			AUDIO NOTE I/O	as new	£795
LS 2B II	as new	£2750	LYRA PARNASSUS	as new	£1295
AUDIO RESEARCH LS 7	as new	£1200	EMINENT TECHNOLOGY		
AUDIO RESEARCH VT 60	mint s/h	£1795	ET II	mint s/h	£695
KRELL KSA 250 B	mint s/h	£3500	LFD MC1 phono stage	mint s/h	£395
NAIM SBL's (Latest)	as new	£1395	AUDIO RESEARCH PH2	as new	£1895
QUAD ESL63	mint s/h	£1795	TESSERAC Phono Stage	x-dem	£995
TDL REF MONITORS	mint s/h	£1795	REGA RB300	as new	£95
IMPULSE H2	mint s/h	£1395	LINN LV II (black)	mint s/h	£250
APOGEE CALIPER SIG	mint s/h	£1495	ALPHASON HR 100 mcs	mint s/h	£350
APOGEE DIVA + DAX	mint s/h	£4995	NAKAMICHI DR1	as new	£495
APOGEE STAGE	mint s/h	£1395	NAKAMICHI 1000ZXL + Dolby C	mint s/h	£1895
MAGNEPLANAR SMG 1.4	mint s/h	£595			

MINT S/H - Second hand as good an

example as we've seen anywhere

AS NEW - Typically less than 4 months

old in new condition

X-OEM - Typically 'as new' but may

be older

G.C/V.G.C - In perfect working condition

but may be marked

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Audio Note

The increase in interest in all things single-ended, especially the triode non-feedback variety, is now so great that even the mainstream valve manufacturers are about to follow suit, so you are looking for a single-ended product because of the false prophet, who speaks of things he does not believe in, until he becomes financially expedient or downright necessary to have a single-ended amplifier in the program. So whether you are building a single-ended amplifier yourself, or looking to buy a manufactured single-ended product, please remember that it was **AUDIO NOTE**, who, in the face of the usual industry hype about continual "progress", brought this technology to the attention of press, public and general industry alike, not because it would lend a quick buck to the purse, but because we firmly believe that it is a superior way of amplifying any musical signal, and therefore deserves to be resurrected as the preferred technology for anyone who want the genuine aesthetics and beauty of real music reproduced in their home.

Now that we stand on the boundary of this, the brave "new" world of 1930's circuitry, we note with interest the number of manufacturers who have manufactured valve amplifiers for many years, but who only now have "discovered" the value of the single-ended stage, and who in the past have been the strongest proponents of the high power "high quality" valve amplifier, watch them as they now, for commercial gain embrace the world of high loudspeaker efficiency and single-ended triode amplification and then draw your own conclusions about their sincerity and competence in overall knowledge of the technology of **AUDIO NOTE**. We were first and remains the last word in sonic quality if you appreciate music properly reproduced.

To enhance your ability to design and manufacture your own special version of any of the single-ended circuits being discussed, whether old or new, we will continue to expand on what is already the most extensive range of ultra high quality components that the discerning "do-it-yourself" valve amplifier enthusiast can use to construct any single-ended (or shame on you!) push pull amplifier, whether triode or pentode. All of these parts are used in various models of the manufactured line of the **AUDIO NOTE** amplifiers. These components include mostly specialty made items like ceramic valve bases with silver silver or gold plated pins, paper in oil aluminum foil signal capacitors, 80/20 silver foil signal capacitors, Black Gate graphite electrolytic capacitors, acid/corrosive-free silver solder, copper and silver wired audio output transformers, non-magnetic tantalum resistors, non-magnetic RCA and speaker terminals, valves and many other useful bits and pieces for upgrading old or constructing new valve amplifiers.

All prices are excluding UK VAT at 17%, which, if you live inside the EEC, UK VAT will be added to your purchase, after the addition of postage and packing costs.

We accept **VISA, Mastercard, Access, Dinars, and Amex**, to pay this way, we will need your address, card no. with start and expiry dates. you can also pay by bankers draft, Euro cheque or cheques drawn on a UK bank account. Please note that there is a minimum charge on credit card transactions of £20.00.

Delivery is normally about 14 days from receipt of cleared funds, but please allow up to 60 days for some items, if not stock at the time or order.

If any of you reading this have possession of any books which contain information relevant to the subject of **AUDIO NOTE** design and which would be useful to share with others, please let us know either by mail or telephone. There is an award of £20.00 (payable in valves or other bits, postage) to anybody who sends us a book which contains useful information to valve amplifier design or theory.

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** pre-amplifier, which is the best pre-amplifier circuit we have come across. Just send a stamped self addressed A4-size envelope, together with 5.00 pounds in small denomination UK stamps, or if you live outside the UK US\$ 15.00 in \$ bills will do, please do not send Bankers Drafts in US\$, International Remittance Coupons or International money orders, as they cost more to cash than their face value.

We have a large number of requests for the circuits of the **AUDIO NOTE UK-made amplifiers**, like **OTO Phono SE, M1Phono, MEISHU, SORO** etc., and since we (unlike the majority of our talented competitors) do not have any secrets in this department, and are only too pleased to help extend the envelope of knowledge in this much maligned field, we shall be happy to send you or any existing or prospective competitor, one or more circuit diagrams, they cost £5.00 each, or you can buy for example all phono-integrated amplifiers, for £30.00 (\$50.00), or all Line-integrated amplifiers for £25.00, all pre-amplifiers for £20.00 (\$35.00), or simply a complete circuit pack, for £50.00 (\$80.00). All can be paid either by credit card, cash, bankers draft or cheque drawn on a UK bank, the cost includes postage.

We can also supply a set of data sheets for the most commonly used valves, **ECG82, ECG88/622, 12AY7/6072A/7025/12AX7WA/ECG33, 6SN7, 300B, 211Y1T/4C, 6X5, EL34/GC/7, 2A3, 6X4, 5U4G, 6CC34/SAR4, EL84/6B05, 6V6G1, 6L6, 5881/6L6WG/C/K76**. Again send a stamped self addressed A4 envelope together with £4.00 in small denomination stamps or if outside the UK another US\$ 15.00 will suffice.

Since nothing really exists which gives a reasonable background to the subject of valve amplifier circuit design, Guy Adams and I have written and assembled a number of articles and extracts from old books which give some background to the subject. The **Reference Amplifier**, is a technical expert, but will serve as a useful reference, for the beginner as well as the more advanced, we have expanded this info-pack to include even more useful information, so if you have already bought the old pack, just send £2.00 or US\$ 5.00. For the full pack a small charge is required, this time £7.00, in small denomination stamps with a stamped self addressed envelope, or outside the UK, please send US\$ 25.00.

We do not accept a UK cheque or bankers draft in US\$, International Remittance Coupons or International money orders, as they cost more to cash than their face value.

SOUND PRACTICES

If you are seriously interested in the subject of valve amplifier design, without the usual preconceived notions of what is "good" amplifier design and technology (the traditional view, which has brought us the blessings of the transistor amplifier, has obviously disqualified itself quite monumentally), then **SOUND PRACTICES** is the magazine to read, here you will find articles about design parameters, DIY articles for amplifiers and speakers, reviews of new and old, in other words the very subjects that none of the self-serving, advertising led traditional press will touch as they do not enhance the business of their normal advertisers. You can subscribe to **SOUND PRACTICES** from us at £5.00 per copy (there are currently 5 issues available) or by subscription from **SOUND PRACTICES P.O.**, Box 180562, Austin, TX 78718, USA. A regular modern world bargain, and there are practically none of these in Audio Today. With enough subscription support **SOUND PRACTICES** may just bring about the "sound practices" that the hi-fi industry has abandoned for so long. So get a subscription!

By the time you read this **SOUND PRACTICES** issue 8 should be here, so this should keep you off the street for the next week! Buy a copy for £5.00 + postage (or self addressed envelope with order if you live in the UK), contains the following articles: Blue Thunder - DIY TAD and Focal Horn System from Zurich, The Lovin'Knox Legacy, Join the Club, Lovin'Knox by Joe Roberts, The Rejected Amplifier, by none other than Herb Reichert, Homebrew Jangle, Photos of Readers Projects and Systems, Rejuvenating Old Trilodes, New Russian Triodes, A Screen Drive Driver Stage, A Cathode Follower/Bridge Amplifier, and much more!

Much good and informative reading as usual, again £5.00 + an A4 size, stamped self addressed envelope if you live in the UK or US\$ 10.00 and a self addressed envelope if you live abroad.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

This is one type of feedback that we are not entirely against! Positive Feedback is the club magazine for the Oregon Triode Society with aspirations towards greatness, not unlike the great underground

magazines of the 1970's. It is a quarterly publication of zany, controversial commentary, by in-house writers, members as well as various industry doctors on the subjects of music, audio, technology and the quest for mystical satisfaction. I for one, think it is an excellent read and provides a good alternative view to most of the established press, which tends to view the world in the context of what new products is available right now, without giving much perspective backwards. Positive Feedback latest issue is just off the press and is available at £6.00 per issue.

COMPLETE KITS

At the current moment the following kits are under development, and should be available during 1994, the sequence of introduction may differ from the number, we have the **KIT THREE** available for shipment now.

KIT TWO 6500 single-ended, 15 watts Class A, in a stereo chassis, expected cost £599.00 incl VAT. Delivery currently underway due to unavailability of Sola 8550A, we can offer it without valves for £570.00.

KIT THREE 300B parallel single-ended, mono chassis, 16.7 watts Class A, cost £1450.00 incl VAT. **KIT FOUR** 6V6 push pull, 10 watts Class A, stereo chassis, expected cost £190.00 incl. VAT. delivery May 1995.

KIT FIVE 211 single-ended, 15 watts Class A, mono chassis, expected cost £250.00 incl. VAT, delivery February 1995. Hope you like it.

KIT SIX 300B single-ended, 18 watts Class A, stereo chassis, expected cost £499.00 including valves and VAT, this we offer our "entirety" or "gateway" to single-ended triode bliss of rock and roll, if you wish. Expected available June 1995.

If you are in doubt as to whether a kit project is suitable for you, we suggest you spend £10.00 on buying the instructions for the **KIT ONE**. This single 300B amplifier, will give you a good idea whether a **KIT** project is for you, if you decide to buy a kit then the £10.00 will be refunded against the cost of the kit. As the other kits become available their instruction manuals will also be available at £10.00 each. We have the **KIT ONE** instructions available in English and Italian.

AUDIO NOTE OUTPUT TRANSFORMERS

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

- Economy range, where the price/quality ratio is carefully calculated to assure audio quality in a compact package. Ideally we will be offering 3 single-ended output transformers in this range. Push-pull outputs are under development, but do not expect to see any on the shelf at August 1995.**
- Mid-price range, which are the output transformers already on offer, we have made a couple of additions to this range, since the last list.**
- High quality range, this will be a range of double C-core outputs for single-ended circuits exclusively, no push-pull outputs will be offered, unless demand justifies it. Again 3 changes initially.**
- Super High Quality range, all-valve outputs of the best possible quality, when I say best possible I do not mean to say that these silver outputs will be as good as the silver output transformers manufactured by Audio Note. In Japan, they had better, they had better they do not carry the price tag either!**

The quality criteria for Group A are 20kHz to 20kHz: 1:1 to 1.5dB, they are IC coated with silicon steel laminations and are supplied with frames and solder tabs, which will allow good audio quality at the cost. The main cost saving being the use of a smaller core, specified to the exact power level required, rather than overspecifying by 50 or 100%, as we do on Group B, the winding quality and copper wire is the same.

Group B are typically 20kHz to 40kHz minus 1.5dB, IC coated with high quality silicon steel laminations, wound with oxygen-free copper wire and supplied with either bell-end or frames always with flying leads.

Group C are typically 12kHz to 70kHz minus 1.5dB, stripwound double C-cores made from the best available silicon steel lamination, these outputs will compare more than favourably with the best available types from days gone by and from other current sources like Partridge, Tampo, Tamura etc.

Group D use **Audio Note** silver wire, need I say more??

Specifications:

PP = Push-Pull, PPP = Parallel Push-Pull, SE = Single-ended, PSE = Single-ended Parallel, UL signifies 43% ultralinear taps, as a general rule we do not conduct the use of UL-taps, as we consider these detrimental to sound quality. ** Dynaco replacement.

All primary impedances are calculated for Class A operation, with the main consideration given to maximum dynamic power transfer ability and minimum distortion, rather than meaningless steady state sine- or squarewave conditions.

All our single-ended output transformers are air-gapped, and the maximum standing current allowed before saturation is shown in column 5.

All our output transformers are tested to insulation levels of minimum 3,000 volts, all 211/845 outputs are insulated to 5kV flash, every transformer is tested to this level of insulation.

We generally overspecify our transformers by 50% power in Push-Pull (which means that a transformer stated as 25 watts will allow about 35-38 watt peaks, our single-ended outputs are generally over specified by 100%, which means that they will instantaneously allow peaks of double the given maximum power through undistorted, this is necessary due to the better clipping behaviour of the single-ended stage.

We do not give any further technical information on our output transformers, as we do not wish to take part in technical competitions, our products are designed to criteria which are and will be understood where they are listened to!

In addition to the output transformers offered below, we offer a design service, where we can supply almost any requirement for wideband transformers, whether for microphones, moving coil cartridges, line input, phase shifter, intercoms, direct drive output, we design and manufacture prototypes in-house, the cost for the paper design is £200.00, prototype cost is calculated on a per case basis. We can also produce production quantities.

Sizes are given as Width/Height/Depth, where depth is the depth of the coil itself and width is the length of the core.

AUDIO NOTE AUDIO QUALITY OUTPUT TRANSFORMERS

Group A	Single-ended Outputs	Recommended Valve	Max.	Prim-Sec Imp.	Size/Weight	Max Current	Price Ex UK VAT
OLA Power	25 watts	6K-4E Dims	106x75x50mm	90mA SE	44.50		
300B/2A3/6B4G	15 watts	2K5-4E Dims	86x75x50mm	90mA SE	44.50		
601A/17E2/3A5	20 watts	6K-4E Dims	106x75x50mm	100mA SE	73.50		
300B/2A3/6B4G	20 watts	1K25-4E Dims	86x75x50mm	150mA PSE	84.50		
Group B	Recommended Valve	Max.	Prim-Sec Imp.	Size/Weight	Max Current	Price Ex UK VAT	
C/A Power	EL84/6B05/6E9	20 watts	2K5-4E Dims	117x90x50mm	110mA PSE	87.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	25 watts	2K5-4E Dims	117x90x50mm	110mA PSE	91.00		
EL34/GC/7	30 watts	1K5-4E Dims	115x90x50mm	90MA SE	113.00		
2A3/6B4G	30 watts	1K25-4E Dims	96x2x95mm	130MA PSE	113.00		
5881/78B	30 watts	2K1-4E Dims	115x90x50mm	140MA PSE	139.00		
211Y1T/4C	30 watts	1K6-4E Dims	117x90x50mm	150MA SE	114.00		
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x150x150mm	150MA SE	124.00		
300B	50 watts	1K25-4E Dims	135x150x125mm	180MA PSE	151.00		
545	50 watts	2K5-4E Dims	137x141x30mm	180MA PSE	172.00		
211Y1T/4C	75 watts	5K-4E Dims	137x141x55mm	240MA PSE	227.00		
EL34/GC/7/8T/8	20 watts	3K-4E Dims	117x90x50mm	130MA SE	104.00		
300B/2A3/6B4G	25 watts	2K5-4E Dims	117x90x50mm	90MA SE	102.50		
6L6	30 watts	3K-4E Dims	115x90x50mm	140MA SE	107.00		
NEW SE Product	5550A/18	60 watts	2K3-4E Dims	110MA PSE	123.00		
Group B	Push-Pull Circuits	25 watts	6K-4E Dims	86x75x50mm	PP	42.00	
EL34/GC/7/8T/8	25 watts	6K-4E Dims	86x75x50mm	PP	59.00		
2A3/6B4G/300B	30 watts	5K-4E Dims	86x75x50mm	PP	63.00		
17E6/550	50 watts	6K6-4E Dims	106x91x50mm	PP	73.00		
EL34/GC/7/8T/8	50 watts	3K-4E Dims	96x2x83mm	PPP	74.00		
845	50 watts	6K6-4E Dims	106x91x50mm	PP	114.00		
17E6/550	60 watts	4K5-4E Dims	125x100x133mm	UL, PP	111.00		
17E6/550	100 watts	2K3-4E Dims	150x47x133mm	UL, PPP/PP	134.00		

Group C	Single-ended output	25 watts	2K5-4E Dims	86x75x50mm	90MA SE	39.00
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	165x140x140mm	150MA SE	41.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	1K25-4E Dims	165x140x140mm	180MA PSE	39.00	
300B	50 watts	1K25-4E Dims	165x140x140mm	180MA PSE	39.00	
Group D	Pure Silver Wound Outputs	25 watts	2K5-4E Dims	117x90x50mm	90MA SE	1545.00
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	2K5-4E Dims	117x90x50mm	90MA SE	1629.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
211Y1T/4C/45	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150mm	150MA SE	1375.00	
300B/2A3/6B4G	50 watts	10K-4E Dims	112x134x150			

Type	Value	Price Ex. UK Vat
Shure Potentiometer/Alternator	500Ohms	221.75
Shure Potentiometer/Alternator	1000Ohms	237.75
2 channel switch	6-way adjustable	98.75
4 channel switch	6-way adjustable	174.75

AUDIO NOTE HIGH QUALITY CERAMIC VALVE BASES

All of our valve bases are of the highest possible quality, made from steatite and using the best metal parts from alloys which retain their spring tension around the valve pin for longer. They are recommended as upgrades to most old valve amplifiers and should be an essential part of any D.I.Y. project.

Type	Mounting	Plating	Price Ex. UK Vat
4-pin UDA for 300B/2A3/801	Chassis	Gold	8.25
4-pin UDA for 300B/2A3/801A	Chassis	Black	7.25
4-pin UDA HE-type for 300B/2A3/801A	Chassis	Silver	8.75
4-pin UDA HE-type with capacitor mounting	Chassis	Silver	48.95
4-pin UDA HE-type for 211/47C/845	Chassis with bypass	Shimmercoat	158.95
5-pin HT for 807	PCB	Gold	9.75
7-pin HT for 6X4, 6A2	PCB	Silver	8.15
7-pin HT for 6X4, 6A2	PCB	Gold	7.85
7-pin HT for 6X4, 6A2	Chassis from above	Silver	6.75
7-pin HT for 6X4, 6A2	Chassis from above	Gold	7.85
7-pin HT for 6X4, 6A2	Chassis from above	Black	7.25
7-pin HT for 6X4, 6A2	Chassis from above	Silver	8.65
7-pin HT for 6X4, 6A2	Chassis from above	Black	7.85
8-pin for EOC83, EOC28, 5687, 6530 etc.	PCB	Silver	3.85
8-pin for EOC83, EOC28, 5687, 6530 etc.	PCB	Gold	5.75
8-pin for EOC83, EOC28, 5687, 6530 etc.	Chassis from above	Silver	4.45
8-pin for EOC83, EOC28, 5687, 6530 etc.	Chassis from above	Gold	6.75
8-pin for EOC83, EOC28, 5687, 6530 etc.	Chassis from above	Silver	4.85
8-pin for EOC83, EOC28, 5687, 6530 etc.	Chassis from above	Gold	7.15

TOPCAPS

For 807 pentode etc. Black 9.75

You may want to start your project with less overall cost, and for this purpose we offer the following "industrial grade" ceramic valve bases:

Type	Mounting	Price Ex. UK Vat
8-pin for 6L6, 6X4, 6Y8, 6U6, 8L6	Chassis with bracket	1.45
9-pin for EOC83, EOC28, 5687, 6530	Chassis with shroud	1.85

AUDIO NOTE CERAMIC STAND-OFFS

In most hardwired valve power amplifiers it is frequently difficult to get the HT and heater rails properly suspended and separated, safely and neatly from the chassis, this especially applies when building amplifiers using the really high voltage directly heated triodes like 211, VTA-C, 845, 848, 304T, 0A100 etc. When planning design like this it is important to incorporate suitable layout from the start, and the AUDIO NOTE stand-offs should be more or less mandatory in that context. They are screw-in type with steatite insulator and either a wrap-around turned "head" on the single way version or separated rod slots on the multi-way versions.

Type No.	Number	Height/Length	Sealer Connection	Chassis/Facing Price Ex. UK Vat
AN-421	1	25.5mm	Wing-round	Screw-in bolt 1.41
AN-422	1	17.4mm	Wing-round	Screw-in bolt 1.41
AN-423	1	22.8mm	Wing-round	Screw-in bolt 1.41
AN-424	2	Adjustable, 17mm	Solder slots	Dual bolt screw-in 2.42
AN-425	3	Adjustable, 24mm	Solder slots	Dual bolt screw-in 3.04
AN-426	5	Adjustable, 32mm	Solder slots	Dual bolt screw-in 4.05
AN-427	8	Adjustable, 58mm	Solder slots	Dual bolt screw-in 5.79
AN-428	10	Adjustable, 72mm	Solder slots	Dual bolt screw-in 7.31
AN-429	6	25mm/45mm	Screw-in bolts	Screw-in bolts 1.35
AN-479	9	25mm/65mm	Solder slots	Screw-in bolts 7.53

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\$ 2.00. 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 air type, 845 Westinghouse, VT25-10/10V, VTA200/1A, WE300B, STC4303A, Mullard GZ34-CV1377, Tungsol 5U4G (best sounding 5U4G I have ever heard), Chatham 5R4WYG and many others.

Standard Stock Items	Type	Price Ex. UK Vat
EC00512A/70A/70Z	double triode	2.95
18BC05/62226/68W/70A	double triode	3.95
6F6/6N7/6Z7	diode	2.45
EC00513A/70A/70Z	double triode, nil spec	5.95
6SN7GT	double triode, USA base	1.75
6SL7GT	double triode, USA base	2.85
5887WA	double triode, very powerful driver	8.75
6X6WB/6A	small power pentode	6.75
6L6AR/6Y8	small power pentode, nil spec version	4.51
6AV6T	small power pentode	2.45
6BE6	medium power pentode	2.75
8181	rectifier power triode	4.51
6CA7/6X4 PL full	power triode	1.85
6CE6	small power pentode	6.45
6ES04T8	large power triode	12.45
6G3T	powerful triode, indirectly heated triode	24.65
6X4/6X00	strong strapping, indirectly heated triode	8.45
2A3 AP	directly heated small power triode	19.95
6AK5 VP00B	directly heated power triode	59.95
5U4G	HT-rectifier	3.25
5Y6GT	HT-rectifier	2.25
92A5T	HT-rectifier	8.75
232A5R4A	HT-rectifier	8.75
6X4	HT-rectifier, very good for pre-amplifier, 7-pin base	2.65
6Y8	HT-rectifier, for pre-amplifier & power amplifier front ends, USA base	2.65

Please note, our 300B's are manufactured in China by Gold Dragon/Shuguang, but are tested in-house under real working conditions to parameters somewhat more stringent than is otherwise done. No, they do not sound quite as good as original WE300B's or STC 4303A's, nor do they carry the same premium price, please consider the following, unless you have absolutely tons of money or you happen to have them in your attic, do not consider original 300B's. It is in most cases far better to invest the money in more permanent features of the amplifier project, like better output transformers, better signal caps or resistors, or the like. Better quality resistors, better signal caps or resistors, last a long time. WE300B's cost at least £1,200.00, on a good day, think in terms of an overall price compromise, you can get some fabulous sounding passives for the difference in cost between a pair of Chinese 300B's and the original WE's, and in many cases the improvement in sound quality is greater than the WE300B's will contribute. AND the contribution to sound is permanent, consider that when you plan your project.

RESISTORS

We endeavour to stock the entire E12 range of all the different makes of resistors that we stock, except the very lowest ohmic values, which are extremely costly, as a rule we do not stock values below 10 Ohms or above 3MΩ. Whilst we always try to have every single E12 value in stock, this cannot be guaranteed, especially on the Holcois and tantalum film resistors can be very long indeed, however, since most are used in our production of finished products, they will generally be stock available within 4 weeks.

BEYCHLAG

We offer three quality levels of resistors, all are 1%, starting with the Beyschlag metalfilm, which are slightly magnetic (45 are the vast majority of other makes of metal film resistors), but nonetheless very good sounding, as used in all our UK-made amplifiers, up to and including quality level 3, the MEI/SHUP/P4, 300B no-feedback triode amplifiers.

Beyschlag 1 watt, 1% resistors up to 500KOhm, E.O.11, above 500KOhm E.O.13 each

HOLCO

Better sound quality can be achieved with the H2 1 watt, 1% non-magnetic resistors, which we regard as the best "industrial grade" metalfilm resistors available. They have one small drawback, as they are quite fragile, and require careful handling, do not draw the legs too close to the body. They may become noisy.

HOLCO resistors type H2 S02PM cost £3.06 each from 1R0 to 5R0, £0.89 each from 5R10 to 199R, £0.36 each from 200R to 23K0Ohm, £1.42 each from 231K0hm to 1M0hm, £1.02 each from 1M1 to 2M0, £1.24 each from 2M1 to 4M0, and £2.21 each from 4M1 to 5M0.

SHIMON TANTALUM FILM RESISTORS

This is definitely the best sounding resistors available, forget the VISHAY, which may be ok in high feedback transistor amplifiers, but in our opinion quite uncomplimentary to the qualities of real AUDIO Amplification (i.e. directly heated triode amplifiers running feedback free in single-ended Class A), this is where you will need the tantalum film resistor for the best results.

The 1/2 watt Shimkon Tantalum resistors are non-magnetic and cost £2.26 each.

Some values are available in 1 watt from Shimkon at £4.00 each. Not all stock available.

AUDIO NOTE 1 WATT TANTALUM RESISTORS

Up to now the tantalum film resistors have been extremely difficult to get, however, after much persuasion and against a minimum quantity guarantee from AUDIO Note UK, the manufacturers have agreed to widen the range of 1/2 watt and reintroduce the 1 watt range which becomes an exclusive range for AUDIO NOTE, we consider this to be major breakthrough, since without a reasonable range of values at the 1 watt rating it is pretty difficult to get the very best out of the best circuits. As with most handmade specialist items, which covers most of this list, delivery can be quite long on some values, so be prepared to wait if the value is not in stock.

The AUDIO NOTE 1 watt 1% tantalum resistor values are £3.70 each. We shall now be working on getting 2 and 3 Watt tantalum resistors made available as well, and who knows perhaps we will be able to build amplifiers in a year's time that have all tantalum resistors in all parts of the circuit.

POTENTIOMETERS

Best available from sound quality - price viewpoint, made by Nobe in Japan, high quality conductive plastic film.

Value	Control	Construction	Price Ex. UK Vat
1000Ohm Stereo	Frame type, PCB mounted	3.55	
1000Ohm Stereo	Encapsulated type, PCB mounted	13.25	
1000Ohm Mono	Encapsulated, High quality	10.45	
1000Ohm Mono	Large Encapsulated	77.85	

Value	Tolerance	Price Ex. UK Vat
6 watt	47R	5%
6 watt	10R	5%
6 watt	20R	5%
6 watt	47R	5%
6 watt	100	5%
6 watt	200	5%
6 watt	1K	5%
6 watt	10K	5%
6 watt	100K	5%
6 watt	1M	5%
6 watt	10M	5%

BLACK GATE ELECTRON TRANSFER, HIGH PERFORMANCE, GRAPHITE FOR CAPACITORS

Firstly, I would like to categorically state that all rumours about Black Gate capacitors being unavailable or discontinued are totally misguided, malicious and incorrect. AUDIO NOTE is currently the sole source in Europe that offers 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 also 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 CO-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.

It is very important to note that all BLACK GATE capacitors take time to charge-up or stabilize, when first put in circuit, depending on type and application this "maturing" time can be between 100 and 300 hours. Black Gate call this the "idling process", see enclosed list of available values. We feel, however, that this process takes longer, no hum!

We are about to stock the entire range of values on the enclosed list, so a separate prolist is attached to the list of Black Gate program available. Asks us to send you this list as it is too long for an advertisement or to incorporate in our standard component list, wherefore it is not included in full. Again, as always, we appreciate a stamped self-addressed envelope, it greatly influences the expediency this end.

IMPORTANT NOTES!

PLEASE NOTE, THE PROLIST FOR BLACK GATE CAPACITORS IS A GUIDE ONLY, DUE TO THE CONTINUOUS STRENGTHENING OF THE JAPANESE YEN, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PUT UP-TO-DATE PRICES MONTHLY, SO ASK FOR PRICES WHEN YOU ORDER.

Value	Voltage	Die-Type	Suggested Use	Price Ex. UK Vat
47mf	25vdc	PL	Anywhere	1.65
33mf	25vdc	PL	Anywhere	1.75
0.47mf	50vdc	PL	Anywhere	1.85
10mf	50vdc	PL	Anywhere	1.12
2.2mf	50vdc	PL	Anywhere	1.23
1.5mf	50vdc	PL	Anywhere	1.38
4.7mf	50vdc	PL	Anywhere	1.54
10mf	50vdc	PL	Anywhere	1.68
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	9.82
47mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.42
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.97
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	4.41
47mf	50vdc	Standard	Anywhere	5.73
100mf	50vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.25
22mf	50vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.41
47mf	100vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.71
22mf	100vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.31
100mf	100vdc	Standard	Anywhere	15.84
22mf	100vdc	Standard	Anywhere	22.18
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	24.55
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.95
47mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.42
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.97
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	9.82
47mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.42
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.97
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	9.82
47mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.42
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.97
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	9.82
47mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.42
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.97
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	9.82
47mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.42
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.97
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	9.82
47mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.42
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.97
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	9.82
47mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.42
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.97
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100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	9.82
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47mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	3.42
22mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	6.97
100mf	16vdc	Standard	Anywhere	9.82
47				

VINYL BARGAINS FROM BLACKMAIL

Snap up these special offers now, we have very limited quantities of some of these titles so order today and list alternatives if possible

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MEASURED PERFORMANCE

It's important to measure products to assess performance, find explanations of sound quality and warn of peculiarities or faults. Only Hi-Fi World has an advanced in-house laboratory with digital signal analysis for this purpose. In conjunction with this facility we assess sound quality in our own acoustically treated listening room. We measure most products reviewed. Here's a simple guide on our test results.

LOUDSPEAKERS

Smooth, flat frequency response is important to ensure a balanced sound. Look carefully at overall trends; rising treble will give a bright sound, falling treble a dull sound. A rise through the midrange normally corresponds with good projection.

High sensitivity (better than 86dB) means less power is needed for a certain volume, meaning a low power amp. can be used.

The impedance curve tells us how easy loudspeakers are to drive. Low or wildly varying impedance is bad; a flat impedance around 8Ω is good.

CD PLAYERS

Even small trends in frequency response of CD players can affect their subjective balance. Generally, those with a gently rolled off treble and, more rarely, a rising bass will sound best. Rising treble can

produce a sharp sound.

The distortion plot we show is taken at -30dB, to represent a typical music signal. High distortion at this level, combined with rising treble, can result in a harsh sound. Yet other effects have to be considered, especially low level linearity, which we also test for, including -90dB signals with dither applied.

AMPLIFIERS

Distortion from solid state amplifiers should be no more than around 0.2%. Even order (2nd, 4th, 6th etc) distortion is aurally innocuous, but odd order (3rd, 5th, 7th etc) distortion makes for a glassy, hard sound, or grittiness.

Frequency response can be band limited, with bass and treble rolled off just out of the ear's range, or wideband. Each has its own characteristics. Small wideband response variations colour tonal balance.

Power output is easy to understand: the higher the figure, the louder it will go. Just make sure there's enough power output to drive any loudspeakers you intend to use.

TUNERS

Frequency response, as always, says much about tonal balance and character traits, like peaky treble (due to a mis-matched MPX filter). Distortion and channel separation need to be less than 0.3%

(according to harmonic structure) and better than 25dB.

Hiss level must be lower than -70dB for Radio 3 silences to be just that - silent. And full quieting, the strength of aerial signal needed for optimum results, should be around 1mV or less

Selectivity, the ability to separate stations under the most difficult conditions should be better than 60dB and sensitivity better than $30\mu\text{V}$ on stereo.

CASSETTE DECKS

Replay performance is measured to IEC 94 Standards using IEC test tapes. This ensures that recordings made on a machine transfer to a car player, personal stereo or another domestic recorder properly, as well as ensuring optimum results with commercially prerecorded tapes. Look for a quoted replay response of 40Hz-10kHz, no more than 1% speed error and hiss in the replay amps lower than -58dB.

Recording quality considers frequency response, bias variation, head performance and alignment. Frequency response should stretch from 40Hz-15kHz or so. Head overload (MOL315) must be above 0dB, reaching around +4dB for good results.

From the transport mechanism look for less than 0.15% wow or flutter. Overall (DIN weighted) wow and flutter should be no more than 0.1% or so.

TUNER

DENON TU-215RD

I wasn't surprised to find the new 215RD had slightly falling treble - Denon seem to understand that with tuners this is the best choice, giving them an amenable sound. Some bass fall will mean this tuner will lack bottom-end oomph, however.

Distortion was low at 0.1% overall, mainly second harmonic, an impressive result for so inexpensive a design. At -72dB, hiss was low too, with 1mV or more from the aerial, a good result. There was plenty of audio output: it measured 800mV.

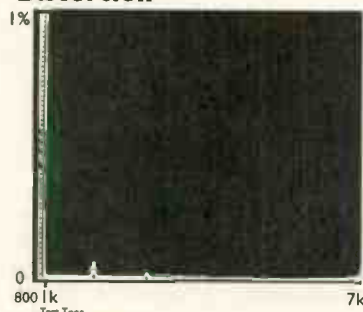
The RF performance was up to scratch as expected with excellent selectivity at 80dB (alternate channel), if not quite class leading sensitivity at $35\mu\text{V}$, due to the presence of RDS which always seems to compromise this parameter.

The TU-215RD measured as well as Denon tuners usually do. It's a fine all-rounder. **NK**

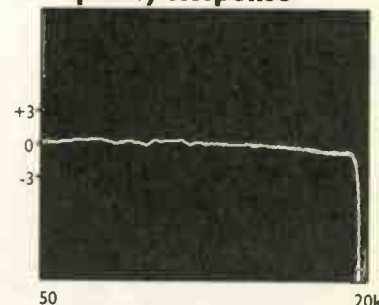
TEST RESULTS

Frequency response	30Hz-15kHz	Sensitivity	
Stereo separation	55dB	mono	$4\mu\text{V}$
Distortion (50% mod.)	0.1%	stereo	$35\mu\text{V}$
Hiss (CCIR)	-72dB	signal strength meter	none
Signal for minimum hiss	1mV		
Selectivity (at 0.4MHz)	80dB		

Distortion



Frequency Response



Continued on page 115

SOUND-BYTES

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As any hi-fi specialist will tell you, to get the maximum benefit from your loud-speaker / speaker stand combination, you should fill your stands with a suitable material. Until now, the most common medium has been sand or a sand-based alternative. The other option was lead-shot that, although very dense, is extremely expensive and difficult to source.

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AMPLIFIERS

ALCHEMIST AXIOM

The Axiom measured well enough in most areas, having wide bandwidth and low noise, but low sensitivity too at 400mV, meaning some budget cassette decks and tuners of 300mV output or so won't match.

But I was most worried about this amplifier's peculiar distortion behaviour, which drifted significantly with device junction temperature, changing its harmonic structure with level. Distortion was severe at high frequencies (around 1.4%), with an extended harmonic structure - not a good omen; it raises the possibility of rough sounding treble. The two channels were quite different from each other as well.

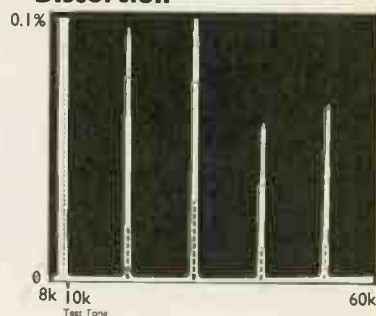
This amplifier appears to be a low feedback design whose basic circuits are unable to support such a purist approach.

Whether the benefits of low feedback can balance the innate problems of solid-state devices - their variability, thermal instability and non-linearity - can only be judged by listening tests. **NK**

TEST RESULTS

Power	32watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	4Hz-47kHz
Separation	80dB
Noise	-102dB
Distortion	1%
Sensitivity	400mV
dc offset	4/6mV

Distortion



McINTOSH MA6800

The MA6800 is massively powerful, producing 200watts into 8ohms and 326watts into 4ohms. That's easily enough to drive insensitive loudspeakers (i.e. 82dB) loud in a large room, as Americans might. Output overdrive (clipping) was held in check usefully by an auto-gain reducer and distortion at all levels and all frequencies - even 35V at 10kHz - was extremely low, a very good feature. This amp is likely to sound clean, smooth and composed.

The tone controls were pedestrian, with poor low level behaviour - unlike Arcam, Audiolab, etc. The Loudness control offers bass boost only and must be hard on its end stop to not affect bass output; a bypass switch is needed. DC output offset was low, as was noise.

The phono stage is MM only and reasonably quiet, if a not a class leader (judged by equivalent input noise).

Frequency response was sensibly wide with good but not excessive bass extension, sensitivity normal and overload margin high.

At heart, the MA6800 is very well engineered, a powerhouse for insensitive loudspeakers, with plenty of lights and buttons and a svelte performance to match. **NK**

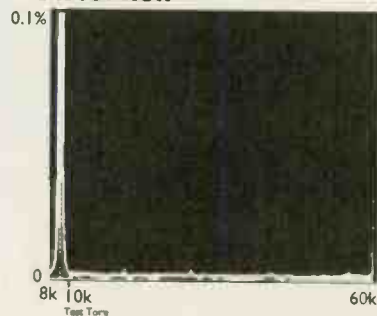
TEST RESULTS

Power	200watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	14Hz-46kHz
Separation	77dB
Noise	77dB
Distortion	0.003%
Sensitivity	280mV
dc offset	1.2/1mV

Disc (MM)

Frequency response	17Hz-45kHz
Separation	70dB
Noise	-75dB
Distortion	0.004%
Sensitivity	2.7mV
Overload	95mV

Distortion



TEAC A-BX10

The A-BX10 is a bridge amplifier that delivers no less than 112watts into 8ohms and 200watts into 4ohms - enough to drive the most insensitive loudspeakers, even in large rooms.

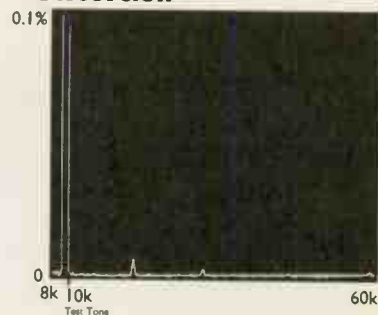
Bandwidth on CD was wide, albeit with some curtailment of subsonic bass, the -1dB limit being at 18Hz, where some amplifiers reach down to 3Hz or so. This will give speedy bass. Distortion was low at all output levels and frequencies, hitting just 0.02% at full output, 10kHz - a very good result. I'd expect a smooth sound.

With low noise, good channel separation and low DC output offset, the Teac measured well all round. **NK**

TEST RESULTS

Power	112watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	18Hz-70kHz
Separation	86dB
Noise	-90dB
Distortion	0.006%
Sensitivity	280mV
dc offset	-1.6/1mV

Distortion



Continued on page 117

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ALCHEMIST	APD-6	KARKEN INTG	279	LUMBLY REFERENCE	ST-70	Power Amp	1699
ALCHEMIST	APD-7	KARKEN PRE	250	LUMBLY REFERENCE	ST-40	Power Amp	899
AUDIO INNOVATIONS	L1	LINE PRE AMP	269	MUSICAL FIDELITY	E-199	INT AMP	539
AUDIO INNOVATIONS	L2	LINE PRE AMP	629	MUSICAL FIDELITY	E-200	INT AMP	539
AUDIO INNOVATIONS	SERIES 200	Power amplifier	429	MUSICAL FIDELITY	E-300	Power amplifier	629
AUDIO INNOVATIONS	SERIES 800	Power amplifier	769	ONIX	OA31-M	Amplifier	279
AUDIO INNOVATIONS	SERIES 1000	Power amplifier	1349	ORELLE	SD101/SP101	PRE & POWER AMPS	499
AUDIO INNOVATIONS	SERIES 300	INT AMP	449	PIONEER	A-300X	INTG AMP	179
AUDIO INNOVATIONS	CLASSIC 25	INT AMP	809	ROTEL	RA-930AX	INTG AMP	129
AUDIO INNOVATIONS	ALTO	INT AMP	299	ROTEL	RA-935BX	INTG AMP	175
AURA	VA-50 CROME	INT AMP	229	ROTEL	RA-940BX	INTG AMP	195
AURA	VA-100	INT AMP	229	ROTEL	RB-970BX	Power amplifier	175
AURA	VA-80	INT AMP	259	ROTEL	RB-956AX	Amplifier	250
AURA	DSP-200S	PHONO AMP	449	ROTEL MICH	RHC-10	Passive Pre Amp	599
DPA	DSP-200S	PRE AMP	449	ROTEL MICH	PHQ-10	Phono equaliser	695
DPA	DPA-200S	Power amplifier	676	ROTEL MICH	RHB-10	Power amplifier	1199
JOHN SHEARNE	PHASE 2	INT AMP	469	ROTEL MICH	TOTAL SYSTEM		2299
				SUGDEN	A-48B	INT AMP	529

CD PLAYERS

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MARANTZ	CD 53	POA	PHILIPS	CD940	179
MARANTZ	CD 63	POA	PIONEER	PDS 703	239
MARANTZ	CD 63SE	POA	ROTEL	RCD 945 AX	190
MICROMEGA	STAGE 2	579	ROTEL	RCD 955	200
MICROMEGA	STAGE 3	779	ROTEL	RCD 965	250
MUSICAL FIDELITY	E 600	539	TEAC	VRDS-10	729
ORELLE	CD 480	299	TEAC	VRD-7	569
ORELLE	CD 160.2	499	TEAC	VRDS-T1	479
ORELLE	CD 260.2	599	YAMAHA	CDX-580	195
ORELLE	CD 10.T	599	YAMAHA	CDX-860	229

SPEAKERS

COMPANY	MODEL	OUR PRICE	COMPANY	MODEL	OUR PRICE
CASTLE	YORK	329	SPENDOR	SP 2/3	825
HARBETH	LS 5/12A	525	SPENDOR	SP 1/2	1099
DYNAUDIO	CONTOR 1.8	1549	UKD	CALLAS (MAH)	675
DYNAUDIO	AUDIENCE 15	899	UKD	CALLAS (WAL)	775
DYNAUDIO	AUDIENCE 5	299	UKD	OPERA PRIMA	399
MONITOR AUDIO	MA202	299	KEF REF. 103-4 (ROSEWOOD)		1,099
MONITOR AUDIO	MONITOR 9 GOLD II	359			
ORELLE	ORATOR	199			
ROYD	SAPPHIRE 2	219			
ROYD	ABBOT	549			
KEF REFERENCE SERIES 1		849			

MULTI CD PLAYERS

COMPANY	MODEL	OUR PRICE
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YAMAHA		239

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CD PLAYERS

ROTEL RCD-975

A CD player with gently rising bass output and smoothly rolled off treble normally makes for a fine subjective balance - and this is exactly how the RCD-975 measured. These characteristics help give good subjective weight to bass lines and smoothness to the treble. But because the overall response is tilted downwards it may well result in an over-warm presentation.

Distortion was low at all levels, although not quite as low as the best. In the plot below, taken at -30dB, there are just a couple of harmonics visible. At -60dB harmonic distortion appears to be extremely low at 0.22%, giving a wide dynamic range of 115dB (EIAJ test). But there was a lot of inharmonic 'distortion' which, when summed, came to around 0.8% and this may well have an effect on the sound. Output was 2.2V.

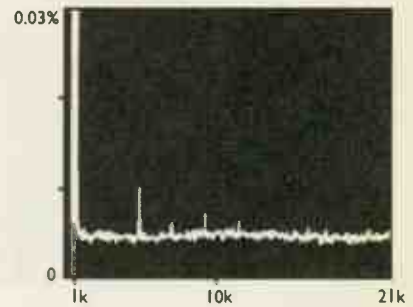
I'd expect the Rotel to have a smooth sound with a full bass, but perhaps it may be

just a little too warm, loosing treble attack and detail. Only listening tests will tell. **DB**

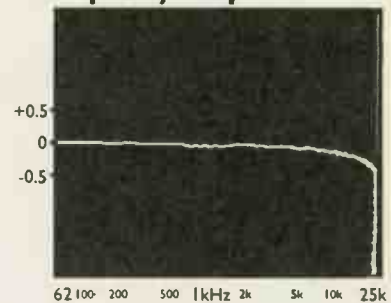
TEST RESULTS

Frequency response	4Hz-21.1kHz	
Distortion (%)	left	right
-6dB	0.007	0.007
-30dB	0.016	0.017
-60dB	0.22	0.22
-90dB	29.7	29.5
-90dB dithered	11	14
Separation (dB)	left	right
1kHz	126	128
20kHz	114	114
Noise		-108dB
with emphasis		-108dB
Dynamic range		115dB
Output		2.2V

Distortion



Frequency Response



TECHNICS SLP-S840

Like most Japanese CD players at this price, the Technics SLP-S840 turned in a fine set of measured figures. Frequency response was nearly flat, with just a gentle lift in the bass and smooth roll off in the treble. These are characteristics that will help it to develop a solid bass, along with smooth treble.

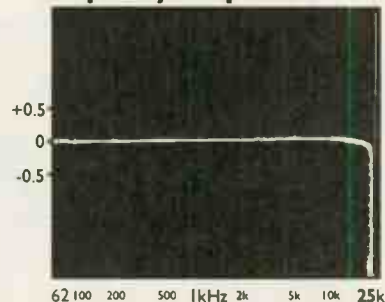
Distortion measured low right across the board, but had a wide harmonic structure at all levels, which may be more audible than distortion restricted to one or two harmonics. At -60dB distortion measured just 0.47% giving a wide dynamic range figure of 109dB (EIAJ test). In all other areas the Technics measured competently. Output was higher than the Philips standard at 2.5V, but this gives useful extra headroom where passive preamplifiers are used. **DB**

TEST RESULTS

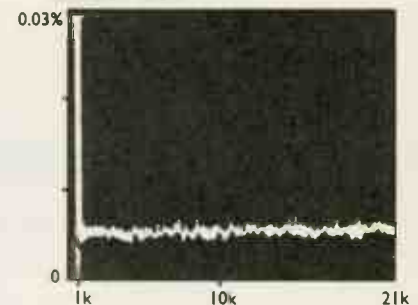
Frequency response 4Hz-21.25kHz

Distortion (%)	left	right	Separation (dB)	left	right
-6dB	0.005	0.005	1kHz	114	113
-30dB	0.018	0.019	20kHz	92	89
-60dB	0.40	0.47	Noise		-116dB
-90dB	29.3	30.1	with emphasis		-118dB
-90dB dithered	15.3	17.7	Dynamic range		109dB
			Output		2.5V

Frequency Response



Distortion



LOUDSPEAKERS

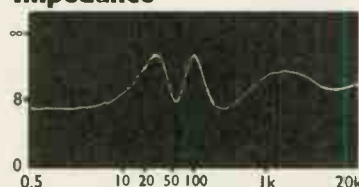
REVOLVER COLT

As you'd expect from a box this size, bass isn't the deepest around. Our response plot shows a falling bass response below 100Hz, but this will be boosted somewhat by near-wall positioning. To balance this subjectively, Revolver have engineered a response that falls gently through the midrange and treble, which should prevent them sounding thin. Their overall response is very smooth, so I'd expect a natural and balanced presentation.

The Colts are relatively easy to drive too, having a high overall impedance of 9.8Ω,

which means they won't draw much current, and around average sensitivity of 86dB. I'd recommend partnering with amplifiers capable of delivering approximately 20-30watts for best results. **DB**

Impedance



Frequency Response



Continued on page 119

LOUDSPEAKERS

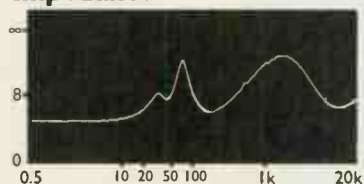
MISSION 734

Essentially a 733 with an extra bass unit, the 734s should offer better power handling with a clearer, more focused sound. The 734s have a reasonably balanced response, that is to say, although lumpy, energy is distributed evenly across the audio band. There are some notable trends; I suspect the most obvious in subjective tests will be the treble peak around 12-16kHz, but this may well add a pleasant brightness to some systems.

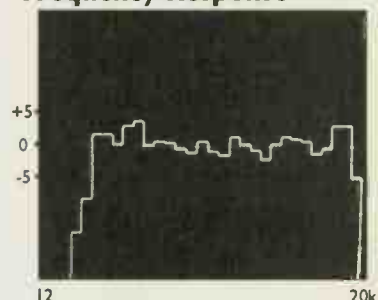
The 734s are sensitive; I measured 89dB at 1m using a nominal watt (2.83V) pink noise signal. This means that for the same volume control position the 734s will go louder than most, and should fill larger rooms well.

Overall impedance is low though at 6.2Ω, most of the impedance curve sitting well below 8Ω, which contributed to the sensitivity. I'd recommend a good amplifier capable of delivering 30watts or more into low impedance loads for best results. **DB**

Impedance



Frequency Response



CASTLE SEVERN

Castle's Severns are a small two-way floorstander, with reflex port tuned bass. They show quite well extended bass for their size, so I'd expect a reasonably full and powerful bottom-end. Above this the smooth and even response is marred by a strong peak centred around 2-2.5kHz, the crossover region. This suggests that the two drivers are overlapping to produce a lift; Castle may need to inspect the tolerances of their drivers and crossovers to produce a flatter, more consistent response.

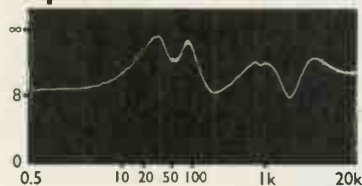
Typical of British loudspeakers, the Severns have a high overall impedance of 11.2Ω. This means they will draw little current from partnering amplifiers. The impedance curve shows the high overall trend, and a notch just above 2kHz where

both drivers are drawing power to produce the peak in the frequency response. Sensitivity isn't as high as some recent Castles, measuring a lowish 85.5dB at 1m for a nominal watt (2.83V) pink noise signal.

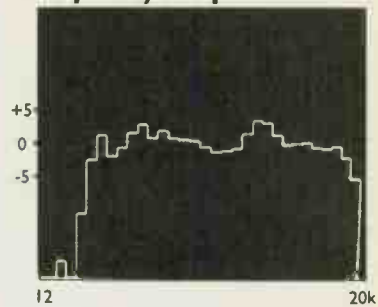
The Severns are reasonably engineered, but Castle would do well to tolerance

crossover alignment more tightly and generally be a bit more rigorous. **DB**

Impedance



Frequency Response



AMBIENCE CADENCE ES

Being a hybrid design, combining a 10" bass driver in a reflex loaded cabinet with a curved electrostatic midrange and treble panel, the Cadences are difficult to measure accurately. With the microphone positioned directly in front of the centre of the electrostatic panel, the only place where there was good integration, there is a treble peak. In practice this will not be as strong at the listening position, so the Cadences should sound reasonably balanced, especially as the rest of their response is so smooth.

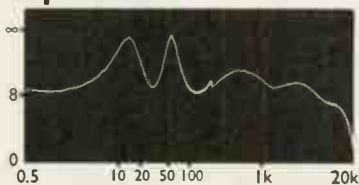
Being an electrostatic, notoriously inefficient beasts by nature, I was surprised to measure 88dB sensitivity at 1m with a nominal watt (2.83V) pink noise signal. This is very good, better than a lot of conventional 'cone' designs. Impedance

measured spot on 8Ω overall, but the plot shows a strong fall above 5kHz, passing through 2Ω at 20kHz. The Cadences may well sound overly dull with some amplifiers which will not be able to develop full power into this kind of load.

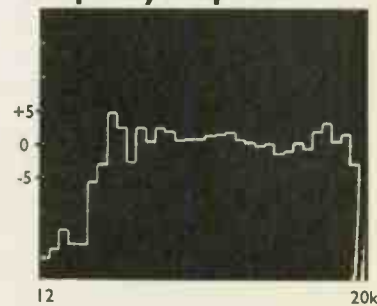
The Cadences are an interesting loudspeaker, but like many high end designs

have their quirks that require caution if a good match is to be found. Partner with care; think Naim. **DB**

Impedance



Frequency Response



Continued on page 121



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Unless otherwise stated all the above items are virtually mint condition, boxed and warranted. Telephone (01634) 389004, anytime. Demonstrations strictly by appointment. Please call for details of full itinerary of brands stocked.

PHONO

ORTOFON MC25E & FL

Like any good fine line - and Ortofon make some of the best - the MC25FL suffers less change in treble response between outer and inner grooves than the less expensive MC25E. Superior tip contact spreads the load, dampening down tip mass resonance and tracking shorter wavelengths better. Subjectively, this usually results in smoother and more detailed treble. And by any standards, the MC25FL has a flat frequency response, as our analysis shows. By contrast, the MC25E tracking outer grooves exhibits a +4dB treble lift at 20kHz, which will probably be heard as a little spittiness in the treble.

Both cartridges tracked extraordinarily well, at low and high frequencies, staying secure in a 25cms/sec torture groove, for example, that nearly all other cartridges fail to negotiate. I'd expect a confidently stable sound, even on 1812 cannons and vocal peaks.

The fine line tip exhibited half the distortion of the elliptical, but at 1% overall it was again exceptional in performance and the E version just normal. Correct vertical

tracking angle (22degrees) helped toward a good result.

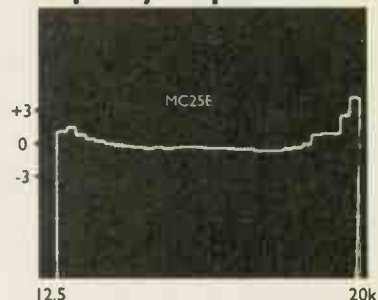
Output was good at 0.5mV at 3.5cms rms (0.7mV at 5cms/sec), but channel balance mediocre at 26dB for the FL and 30dB for the E.

Both these cartridges measured very well, as Ortofons usually do. The FL in particular was impressive. **NK**

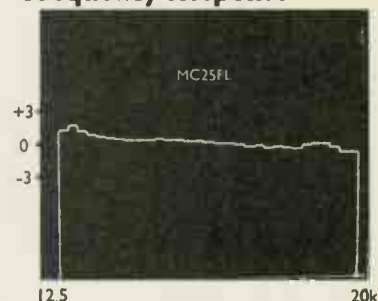
TEST RESULTS

	E	FL
Tracking force	2gms	2gms
Weight	10.5g	10.5g
Vertical tracking angle	22degs.	22degs.
Frequency response	20Hz-16k	20-20k
Channel separation	30dB	26dB
Tracking ability (300Hz)		
lateral	90µm	90µm
vertical	45µm	45µm
lateral (1kHz)	25cms/sec.	25
Distortion (45µm)		
lateral	1.7%	1%
vertical	2%	1%
Output (5cms/sec rms)	0.7mV	0.7mV
Channel imbalance	0dB	0dB

Frequency Response



Frequency Response



CASSETTE

NAD 614

Bias at normal setting was low for today's metal tapes, TDK MA showing a +3dB treble lift at 10kHz and treble overload (SAT10k) measuring higher than midband overload (MOL315). Bias variation was unusually large with metals, but the head couldn't handle it, distorting badly as bias was increased.

Performance was more impressive with chromes. Frequency response was admirably flat and overload levels (MOL315/SAT10k) impressively high. TDK SA chrome-bias tape managed +4/-2, for example - almost as good as metal tape on a budget Nakamichi.

Ferric tape suffered earlier treble overload, but had excellent midband output. TDK AR hit +8 in the midband and exhibited just 0.8% distortion (0VU), even at 40Hz.

The transport performed satisfactorily, but it was a bit erratic, as budget designs often are. One minute the analyser screen looked like a horror movie, the next a clip from Bambi. Our analysis shows the latter - the NAD in a better moment. Longer running-in may have smoothed things out, but all the same, performance was mediocre, wow and flutter measuring 0.08%. Speed was +0.8% fast.

Replay equalisation was accurate and head azimuth correct, giving extended treble

output to 16kHz. Pre-recorded tapes will sound balanced and if they don't, Play Trim - a great idea - offers +/-3dB treble lift/cut.

The NAD614 is well engineered and adjusted. It will provide satisfactory recordings on all tape types and good replay of pre-recorded tapes. But it has some obvious limitations. **NK**

TEST RESULTS

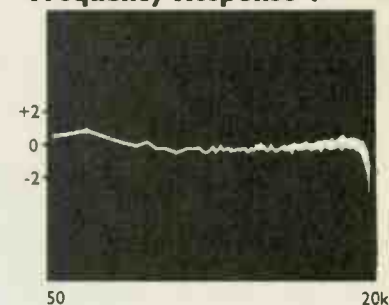
REPLAY (pre-recorded tapes)

Frequency response (-2dB)	30Hz-16.5kHz
Speed accuracy	+0.8%
Hiss (70uS, Dolby out)	-60dB

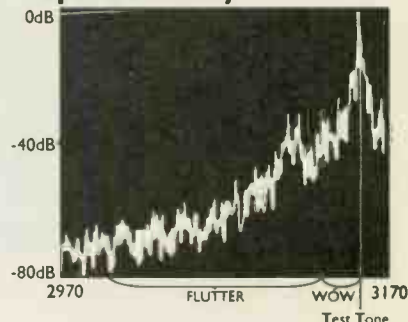
RECORDING (blank tapes)

Frequency response (IEC Primary Refs.)	
ferric (IECI)	30Hz-16kHz
chrome (IECII)	30Hz-16.5kHz
metal (IECIV)	32Hz-17kHz
Separation (1kHz)	-45dB
Distortion (315H)	0.8%
Hiss (70uS, Dolby out)	-55dB
Speed variations (DIN total)	0.08%
Flutter energy (3-3.13kHz)	-25dB
MOL/SAT (IEC Refs)	315/10k
IEC I (ferric)	+5dB/-7dB
IECII (chrome)	+3.3dB/-3dB
IECIV (metal)	+2dB/+3dB

Frequency Response (Metal)



Speed Stability



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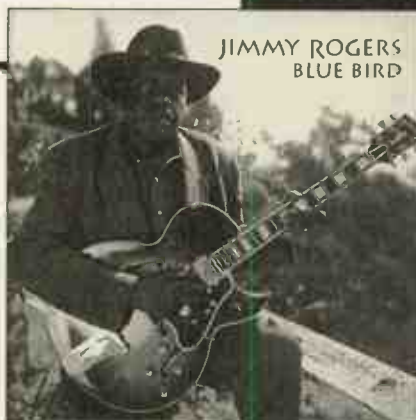
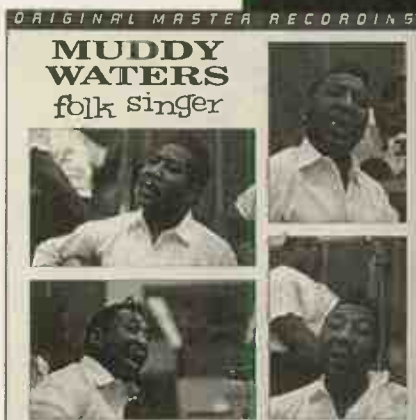
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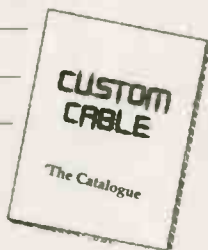
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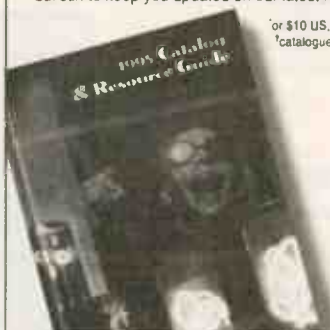


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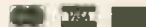
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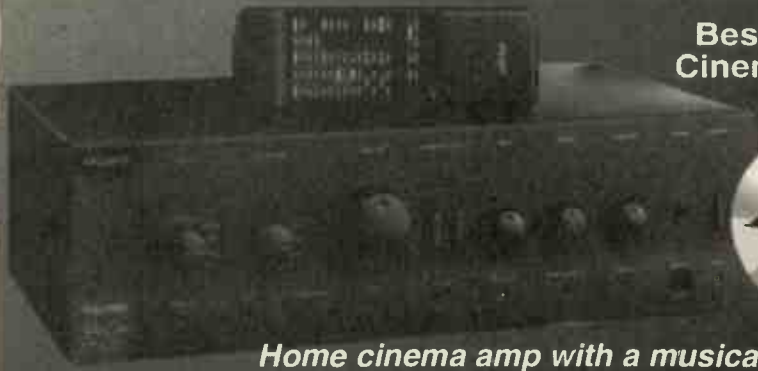
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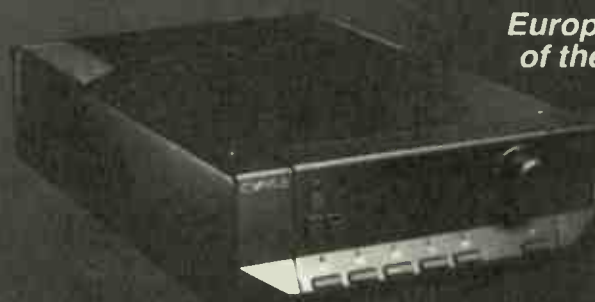


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For details on how to place a Classified Advertisement, please see page 146

ACOUSTIC ENERGY AE2 speakers - externally bonded to plate glass and wrapped in lead sheet (removable) £350. REL Strata sub-woofer - externally bonded to plate glass £200. Can be auditioned but due to weight buyer must collect.
Tel: 01834 812963 - West Wales.

NAIM NAC72 PREAMP, immaculate, boxed, as new, with input boards for CD player and Troika cartridge, £375. Can deliver UK. Upgrading to NAC52? Wanted: Hi Cap.
Tel: 01734 771130 Day/Eve.

ARCAM DELTA 170/3 and Black Box 5 £500. Meridian 200 transport and Mission DAC 7 £650. Rega ELA loudspeakers £330. EPOS ES14 and stands £275. Marantz CD 63 sealed box £185. Possible P/X.
Telford: 01952 502097.

PINK TRIANGLE Da Capo with DC battery power supply. Mint condition 19 months old. £2,130 (new (£3,150) may consider splitting.
Tel: 01284 769985 (Suffolk).

QUAD 34, MINT CONDITION, boxed, £195. Quad 306, mint condition, boxed £175. Linn Nexus loudspeakers, Linn stands, Cable Talk 3 bi-wire cable, mint condition £275.
Tel: (01295) 250 000.

NAIM NAXO 3/6 active crossover. New style case. £250.00.
Phone Mike: 01895 440602, Mobile: 0860 155521.

SONUS FABER MINUETTOS, mint £725, Fidelity Research FRI MK2 cartridge £30, Quad storage rack (grey) for 66 series £30.
Tel: 01603 714528 evenings, before 9.30pm.

MERIDIAN 601 DSP pre amp. Meridian 602 transport C.D. Meridian 605 mono amps. All mint condition with remote £3,750.00 the lot.
Tel: 01527 543442.

LINN SONDEK LP12, Basik arm, A.T. headshell and A&R P77 cartridge. Rosewood finish with black smoke lid £250 ono.
Tel: 01332 834339.

NAIM/LINN Buy/Sell: 52, CDS, 250, 135, 140, ARO etc.
Tel: Bob 0382 819732.

AUDIO TECHNICA OC9 cartridges. Brand new guaranteed £180.00. Naim 42.5 NAP90 £450. Heybrook HBI MKIII mint, boxed etc. £180.00 Deltec DPA 50s mint condition £530.00 ono. Wanted: Cyrus 2 PSX. Cyrus tuner.
Tel: Jules on 01792 280061.

LINN KARIK £1,095, Numerik £795, Kabers black £925, Kaber Aktiv cards £525. Linn Kelteks walnut £2,695.
Tel: 01582 456137 evenings or weekends.

AUDIO INNOVATIONS Series 1,000 MKII, 50 watt Class 'A' monoblocks, re-valved with groove tubes; also Pearl Valve coolers (worth £400.00), including original valve set, £1,095.00. Audio Note M2 valve, line, pre amp, £675.00. All one year old, great sound, excellent condition, boxed.
Tel: (01635) 42278 (Berkshire).

NAIM 72/HICAP. Naim Naxo 2-4/Hicap Naim SBLs. LP 2/ARO/Circus/Armadedon/Dynavector. All new style 24 - 36 months old. Boxed. Will split. Phone for details.
Tel David: 01674 672582 after 5pm.

CONRAD JOHNSON PV10A pre-amp (Line and MM/MC). Boxed, as new, 7 months old. £795.
Tel: 01628 789360 evenings or weekends.

REVOX B260 FM tuner two aerial. Inputs 60 pre sets £720.
North Bucks: 01908 376966.

FOR SALE: Superb turntable: Mentor Reference, plus specially selected Zeta with Van Den Hul cable. Offers? Trilogy monoblocks, magical, six months old, £2,300 (£3,000 new).
Phone: 0181 340 9941.

JOHN SHEARNE PHASE II. High class integrated amp. Six months old £360.00. Rotel BX 990 200 W.P.C. amp £300.00. Meridian 215 phono stage, boxed £70.00.
Tel: 01226 710605 South Yorks.

WANTED: KEF 104 AB speakers. Will collect and pay an excellent price for a mint pair.
Tel: Doncaster 01302 724384.

WOODSIDE STA35 "Radford Renaissance" valve power amp (1992) highly upgraded £500. (Cost new £1,350). Impulse H7 horn speakers (compact floor standers) black £450.
Tel: 01278 786180 (Somerset).

RADFORD MA15 - Mk.II amplifiers (pair), Quad-II amplifiers (pair), Rogers Cadet III integrated (pair), Quad - 33/303/FM3 in afromosia case, Tannoy Little Reds Monitors (pair): offers. Wanted, pair or Quad ESL 63s.
Don 0181-881 3790.

LINN KLOUT power amp, boxed £1,300.00.
Tel: 0161 - 456 1024.

LINN BASIK Plus arms x 2. Both near mint £50 each. Koetsu Black, £50. Nagoka MP II Boron, Stilton solid body £40. Audio Technica AT30HE moving coil £25.
Tel: 01582 792543.

LINN SONDEK LP12, Valhalla power supply, Ittok arm, Linn K9 cartridge, VGC £375. Also Audiomaster ML52 speakers £25.
Tel: St. Albans (01727) 853600 (evenings).

NAIM NAT02 tuner, new style, immaculate condition, superb sound. Costs £950 new, will accept £650.
Tel: 0171 700 0876.

EAR834P VALVE phono stage. Volume control. Stereo/mono switch. Approx 8 months old and 30 hours use. £280. Reason for sale! Going for KLPP1!
Tel: Yeovil (01935) 706163.

GOLD PLATED E.A.R. 509 MKI monoblock valve 100w power amps £1,450. Croft Mega-Micro 2-box valve pre-amp £750. amp combination £2,000 but will split. ProAc Response 1 speakers £550.
Tel: 01664 823282.

QUAD ELECTROSTATIC loudspeakers. Black, with custom stands, original wooden feet, quality cable, manuals and Quad boxes. Good condition, will demonstrate. Best offer over £200. London NW3.
Tel: 0171-722 2736 (evenings).

QUAD 606 POWER AMP £325 ono, Quad 306 power amp £175.00, Spondor BC1 loudspeaker, C/W spendor stands £125.00.
Tel: Martin (01526) 343793, Lincs.

CABLES FOR SALE. Cabletalk Reference 1 metre £80 ono. Cabletalk Professional 1 metre £65 ono, 0.5 metre £45 ono. Wanted cheap Revox H208 remote.
Tel: (01734) 875964.

LEAK TROUGHLINE tuner £60. Hi Fi World design Horn loaded speakers £200.00 ono. Leak Stereo 70 £50. Leak Stereofetic tuner £20. Tandberg Huldra 8, offers. Mission 774 tonearm £40.
Tel: Plymouth (01752) 491924.

AUDIOLAB 8000C two 8000P stereo power amps - 12 months old £1,100 Arcam 170 (Trichord Mod) and Black Box £350. Soundstyle Tripod support light blue £150 (five shelves) Technics Slimline tuner £25.00 or £1,400 complete (cost price in excess of £3,000).
Phone: 01734 773077 evenings.

WANTED ONE LEAK TL12+, gold coloured preferred. One with a faulty mains transformer will be acceptable.
Tel: Plymouth (01752) 491924.

FOR SALE: MARANTZ CD 94 MKII, excellent condition. Cost new £899. £395 ono. Marantz CDA 94, excellent condition. Cost new £899. £375 ono. Contact Sunday or Monday day or any evening.
Tel: 01908 605617.

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Plymouth (01752) 691095.

TOWNSHEND ROCK with Excalibur arm and Anex power supply. £450.00. Apogee Stage speakers, taupe and walnut finish £800.
Tel: 01962 860004.

JAZZ LOVERS! 26 Original 10" LPs, by Glenn Miller, Harry James etc. £10 each, also various 12" LPS. Please ring for list, may swap for decent DAC.
Preston (01772) 252126

NAIM ACTIVE SYSTEM, NAC 82, Naxo, 2xNAP 250, Hi-Cap (all new style). Hi-Cap (old style), NA SBL 'speakers. £5,995.00 ono. May split.
Tel: (0191) 4166866 after 6pm/weekends (Washington, Tyne & Wear).

WANTED ONIX power supply for Onix turntable (12 volt AC), any condition.
Tel: 01324 714752

LINN KANS, MKII stands, black. £165. Gale 301s £95. Arcam Delta 70.3 CD perfect, guaranteed. £350. NVA amps: P60MC/PSU/A60. Mint. £350. Carriage £10/item. Wanted: Saras, NVA speakers.
Tel: (0191) 4141852.

LINN, ITTOK, LINGO, Audio Innovations 200 p/pwr, Audio Research LS1, pre Croft 3R power, P.S. Audio phono stage, various arms and cartridges, Hi Cap/Lingo Pwr supplies, Naim 32/140 - 32.5/250 Stax Lambda Signature inc. valve engr Quad F.M.4.
Tel: (0114) 2486493.

SONY TAE 1000 ESD Pro-Logic preamp with learning remote, £450. Hafler DH 120 mosfet power amps, £200 each. JBL control 4312 loudspeakers - studio quality with amazing bass, high sensitivity (91dB) £550. Linn Axis/Akito and Black Chorus, £350 ono. All excellent condition.
Tel: 0117 9853943.

KOETSU ROSEWOOD - VDH upgrade, will require re-tip (£150) soon - £150. Classic valve head-amp £150. Burmester 785 pre-amp polished brass finish, excellent condition inc. original packing and manual £250. Reviews available.
Tel: 01924 (Wakefield) 279281.

ARCAM TWO PLUS loudspeakers (black ash) £150. Myst TMA 3 amp £130. Exposure speaker cable 2 x 4 metres (terminated) £20. Wanted: Naim Snaps.
Tel: James: 01280 813037/0585 457092.

HIGH-END CABLES Half Price! XLO Signature 5.1 speaker cable, 6 feet length £800. XLO CD to DAC digital interconnect, Signature 4.1, 0.5 metre length £100. Madrigal HP interconnect, 1.5 metre length £150.00.
Tel: 0181-291 1744.

MUSICAL FIDELITY F22/15 pre/power amplifiers. Mint. £2,195 ovno. Tesseract TAHA/TAPA head amplifier and power supply. Mint. Cost £1,800 - accept £800 ono. Roksan Tabriz arm - £95 ono.
Tel: 0181-949 6723 evenings.

BOSE 901 SPEAKERS with Equaliser £185.
Tel: (01834) 812963.

RADFORD RENAISSANCE series valve amplifiers (by Woodside Electronics) SC25 pre-amp with moving magnet input (£950) £400; STA 35 power amp £1,320) £500. Both excellent condition and revalved late 1994.
Tel: 01843 592542 (Kent).

SYSTEMDEK IIX turntable with arm, mint £160. Audio Technica OC9 MC cartridge, new £140. Denon 304 cartridge £50. Dynavector M.C. Step-up transformer £50. Rega RB250 arm £45.
Tel: (01634) 387686. Kent.

QUAD 34 control unit; 306 power amp; FM4 tuner £720 ono.
Tel: Nottingham (0115) 973 4358.

LINN LP12 Valhalla, Ittok LVII. Klyde and Cirkus upgrade November 1993. Very little used since owner enjoys CD. Full service history. £900.
Dave Billinge (01705) 293 646 (Portsmouth).

NAIM 82 pre-amp, including phono boards and remote, £1,500. Naim C.D.I. £1,375. Both as new, boxed. Naim 135 Monobloc power-amps, old-case style but immaculate condition, boxed. £1,400 o.v.n.o.
Tel: 0161-928 8464.

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TECHNICAL INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 1

MANTICORE TURNTABLE POWER SUPPLIES

Manticore Audio Visual's range of power supplies suit all turntables fitted with the Philips Impex range of AC synchronous motors. This includes Manticore (of course!), Linn, Rega, Logic, Ariston (not all models), Systemdek and many more. Our power supplies can also be adapted to other AC synchronous motors and we have built up a lot of experience over the years in this area.

The entry level model, the MB5i, is a quartz crystal based amplifier that runs at 33 and 45 RPM. The highly sophisticated MB6 in addition, has a computer referenced phase lag and separate amplification for each set of poles of the motor.

Manticore has the policy of helping our customers to progress along the upgrade path, and we will always take an MB5, or MB5i in part exchange at full cost price against an MB6. Consequently, we often have pre-owned MB5 or Mb5i in stock at very good prices.

A detailed specification sheet is available for both current models.

We believe the MB6 to be the finest turntable power supply on the market. Our customers agree, and we have many testimonials to that effect. A sample of these is contained in the product information pack.

Our products are very reliable. At the time of placing this advert, no production MB6s have ever gone wrong in the field.

All Manticore Audio visual products come with a lifetime guarantee. This is qualified in the following way - electronic components, such as transistors, are guaranteed until the end of their reasonable working lifetime. Mechanical assemblies for the most part manufactured by us are guaranteed until the reasonable end of their specified design life. The first Mantra was produced 12 years ago and is still in fine shape,

SONY TAF 540E amplifier built specially for British market, solid, heavily built, minimalist design, genuine 90 W.P.C.. Will drive any 8ohm speakers M/M M/C phono stage, boxed, manual, two years old, £110 (£250).
Tel: 01268 479 744.

QAD ESL - 63 speakers, dark brown, excellent condition, £1,200.
Tel: (01622) 832356 (Marden, Kent).

MARANTZ CD10 compact disc player £650. Audiolab 8000T tuner £450. New. Boxed. Will demonstrate.
Tel: 0181-949 7809 (Kingston).

GARRARD 401, SME 3009/11 in substantial plinth. Very good condition, deck unmarked. £175.
Tel: 0181-747 4764.

REGA PLANAR 2 with AT110E cartridge boxed £95; Linn Ittok LVII with Linn K18 cartridge £195 boxed; Target (28 inch) speaker stands £40 all in excellent condition.
Tel: 01257 263403 (Lancs).

NAIM NAXO 3/6 new style, active crossover, V.G.C. £285. Meridian 105 Monoblocks 100 watts/channel V.G.C. £265 o.n.o. Meridian 101B pre-amp for above £75 o.n.o. or the pair for £300. Creek T40 tuner £75 o.n.o. Wanted: Kimber Cable 4TC and 8TC.
Bognor Regis (01243) 262235.

LINN HI-FI: Karik III (3 months old) £1,095; Kairn (inc. brilliant) £950; Klout £1,195; Kabers (passive, polymer stands) £795; Kaber Aktiv Modules £475; LP12 (Valhalla, Cirkus) £495; Ekos £795; Klyde £195. Mostly 12-18 months old.
Tel: (01922) 640737.

SONY TC 399 reel to reel. Recently serviced. Offers. Glover
Tel: 0181-940 4384.

LINN LP12 turntable, Valhalla PS, Akito arm, K9 cartridge. Latest spec bar Cirkus. Pristine condition with boxes and receipts. Costs £1,270 new. £500 ono.
Tel: 0171-258 7300 (O) or 0181-464 3969 (H).

GYRODEC BRONZE, Kuzma arm, AT-OC9 and QC power supply. Perfect £650.
Tel: 01372 373069.

EXPOSURE 7 AND 8 pre/power amp, early model with balance controls, £225. Linn Kan speakers, MK1 with MK2 stands - Rosewood. £225. Linn Akito pick-up arm £65. Sound Org. T/T wall shelf £25. Demion Pro Gold headphone/speaker switching unit £25.
Tel: 01902 374786 (Nr. Wolverhampton).

HEAVY DUTY 4 shelf equipment stand, plus dedicated CD turntable support, fully welded £150.
Tel: 0115-9463693.

WANTED TONEARMS, BREWER, Fidelity Research, Ortofon. Cartridges, Decca, Koetsu, Ortofon SPU (any model). Turntables. EMT 927, Technics SP10. Amplifiers, Audio Research SP6, Naim Nap160, Lux LX33. CDs, Marantz CD80.
Tel: 01642 559543.

CELESTION SL600s, crossover upgraded with Solen Polypropylenes, £225. Cambridge CD2 CD player, light use, vgc., £230. QED Digit and Positron, vgc. £110. Sony Walkman Pro and heavy duty external PSU, £200.
Tel: 0171 286 4143, C Scott.

ROTEL RCD 9658X CD player, boxed, very little used £165.
Solihull (0121) 7331961.

PROAC RESPONSE 3 speakers, mahogany, lovely condition, £2,250. Tube Technology Genesis valve monoblocks, 100WPC, excellent condition, £1,600. EAR 834P phonostage, as new, £225. Silver Sound 14/4 speaker cable, 2 x 4m, terminated, £200. Great sound deal £4,000 for all.
Tel: 01474 327286 (private answerphone).

QUAD II/2/FM2 Multiplex decoder £395. Avo Mk4 valve tester, data book £275. 401 chassis £95. TD125, SME3009, plinth, lid £125. Various Troughlines from £60. Pye black box £50. Wanted: single Radford MA15/3, PX4 Valves, new/used, (swap GEC KT88's).
Tel: 01550-740272.

CROFT SUPER MICRO pre-amp, Croft series five amp - £350 o.n.o. Mitchell Focus One turntable and Maywire arm and Mayware cartridges - £100 o.n.o. Rotel RCD 865 CD player - £150 o.n.o. All in excellent condition.
Dave 01902-29665 (Wolverhampton).

WANTED: Revox B790 or B795 turntable. For sale: Uher 4400 Report-IC £100. Fons CQ30 3-speed (variable) turntable with SME 3009-II arm. £120.
Lloyd. 01424 843587.

ROGERS STUDIO 1 speakers, Teak, Target HJ15/3 stands, 2 x 4m Linn LK20 cable, £200. Rogers A75 series 2 amplifier, fine complement to speakers, £50.
Tel: 01276 29922 evenings/weekends (Camberley, Surrey).

BRAND NEW AUDIO Technica OC9 cartridges £175 inc P&P. Quad 34/306 mint condition £380. Heybrook HB1 MKIII mint condition, boxed etc. £180. Naim 42.5/90 £450. Wanted: PSX. Wanted: Cyrus Tuner.
Tel: Jules (01792) 280061.

GARRARD 401 DECK and SME 3009 arm. Both in excellent condition, very little used. £145. Includes Shure M55E, plinth and cover.
Tel: 01442 846881 (office) or 01462 456357 (home).

HIGH END Hi-Fi collection for sale. Total range of equipment and styl, cables. Ring with requirements. All privately purchased new in UK most boxed and mint, no traders.
Further details: 0973 390962.

ROGERS LS4a/2 speakers. £110. Nakamichi IA3 amplifier with separate phono amp £125.
Tel: 01948 667521.

SNELL TYPE E II speakers complete with Pirate stands, immaculate condition £700. Very sensitive - make ideal partners for Audio Innovations amplifiers. Please call Mark on 01252-845128 (Fleet, Hampshire).

NAIM 82 (MC + MM), HiCap, 250 - £2,400. LP12 Valhalla, Ittok, Kiseki Blue - £550. Epos ES14 + Stands - £400.
Tel: 01752 789100 evenings/weekend (Plymouth).

ARCAM ALPHA S CD player, mint condition, boxed £250 o.n.o. Linn Majik-1 amplifier, with phono module, mint condition, boxed £500 o.n.o. Will accept £700 for the pair.
Phone 01628 890858 (daytime)

NAIM NAC72 NAP 180 SBL speakers, Linn Sondek, Mission arm. Ortofon cartridge, five months old, sale due to emigration. May separate. £2,400.
Tel: Stoke-on-Trent (01782) 787087.

PIONEER PD 802 CD player £230. Origin Live OLI loudspeakers £275, plus dedicated stands. Kelvin Labs class A Integrated amplifier (original model) £150. All boxed.
Tel: 01489 572958 (Hants).

NAIM NAP160 power amp V.G.C. Can demonstrate £225 ono. Also approx. 300 Hi-Fi magazines £100 ono.
Nigel 0181-384 2717 evenings.

NAKAMICHI CR7 cassette deck, mint condition, boxed with manual and remote £850 ono. Dais turntable with Zeta tonearm and Audio Technica ATOC9 cartridge (hardly used), boxed £450 ono.
M: 0141 621 0480

WANTED: Valve compressor, working or not, circuit diagrams for same, equalisers, and early transistor examples. All sought by enthusiasts of limited means.
Clive: 0181-692 8129.

QUAD 33/303/FM3 mint condition. Handbooks. Unused since full Quad service. £225. Audio Technica OCS, few hours use. £75. Shur V15/III good stylus. £30.
Phone Barry: 01604 411194 (Northampton).

SUMPTUOUS CASTLE Trent II loudspeakers and Creek 4240 amplifier. Both barely used and boxed. Will sell both for £350 including cables. May split.
Tel: Lee on 01475-707319.

KELVIN LABS M60 monoblocks £695. LFD Linestage LS2 pre-amp £595. Nottingham Analogue Spacedeck with Mentor arm and Tracer 3 MM cartridge £800 complete.
Tel: 0116 2811736.

MERIDIAN 207CD, 203DAC, 209 remote control. £540. Linn LK1, Dirak power supply, LK2/75. £425. All in excellent condition, boxed with manuals.
Tel: 01582 762 962.

QUAD 606 MARK two power amp, new February, long guarantee. Save £240 at £450. SME V arm, fine condition, £690.
Tel: 0181-659 9538.

KEF REFERENCE 107/2 black, as new. Upgraded to MK2 last August by KEF. Complete with Kube 107/2. Boxed. Instructions. Can demonstrate. Would cost £3,800 new. Quick sale for £1,295 ono.
Tel: 01279 724804 evenings/weekends. Herts.

ITEMS FOR SALE: Linn Isobariks, black, external passive crossovers, panel stands. Price £900. LK600 10 metres x 2. Price £100. Isobariks Aktive crossover and Dirak. Price £450.
Tel: 01895 444911

MICROMEGA DUO CD3/DUO BS. Very little use, boxed £950.00. Nakamichi DR2 £375.00 boxed. Sony Professional Walkman £160.00. Boxed. All immaculate.
Tel: 01753684887 (London, Heathrow).

ROXSAN DPI compact disk transport, black, boxed, £700 ono. Can demonstrate.
Jon 0181-888 2537 after 6.00pm.

MUSICAL FIDELITY MC2 loudspeakers £130. Musical Fidelity pre-amp 3B £130. Rotel RT-83AL tuner £50. Rega RB300 tonearm £50. Heybrook HBSI stands £40.
Tel: 01634 811456 (evenings and weekends).

WANTED: PROAC EBS loudspeakers and stands. Must be in mint condition, late model (1988) and preferably one owner. Excellent price paid for the right pair. Vincent Poole.
Tel: 0151 423 1391 (work) or 01606 782877 (home after 7pm).

AUDIO INNOVATIONS T2 moving coil transformer, absolutely brand new, genuine reason for sale, happy to demonstrate, cost £400 will sell £299.
Tel: 01784 447354 (work) or 01734 665988 (home).

ROCK REFERENCE, Sykline Platform £1,150 SME 4 with 5 Wiring Trough £695 Dynavector XX-C £295, Sumo Polaris £225 MF MVT III £495, Genexa (Lineaums) Alphason Stands £175.
Tel: 01273 515095.

ARCAM DELTA 290 integrated amplifier, boxed, £300 ono. Apollo 3 tier equipment rack, square section construction 220mm, 320mm shelf spacings. £25. All as new.
Tel: 0121-605 5218.

RUARK SWORDSMAN, black £160, Linn Isobariks DMS, mahogany £750. Linn stands £150. V.D.H. Clearwater cables 2 x 10m £50. Minolta X700 camera, Macro bellows outfit. Half price, all excellent condition.
Tel: 01206 861457, Jim.

MUSICAL FIDELITY "Studio T" power amp. £400. MVT pre-amp with Stax SR84 headphones £450. A1 integrated amp £125. Marantz CD 873 LE disc player £125. Technics ST E4S0L tuner £75.
Tel: 01635 36019 evenings (Newbury).

MAGNEPAN 1.5SE, 1 1/2 years; Dac-In-The-Box, once used, Yamaha tuner TX 580, new; Chord Company Flatwire 4 x 8m; Monster Phono Link M 1000, 3 pairs; all 30% off.
Tel: 0171 439 7986

RADFORD STA25 valve pre, power amplifier with matching valve tuner, excellent £575. Cambridge R50 speakers £240. Oracle Delphi with Syrinx arm and Ortofon MC cartridge £450.
Tel: 01274 545219.

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NEWSLETTER NO 5

After many years of listening to various audio systems, I have concluded that for ultimate sound quality the amplifier involved in the system should be pure class 'A' in its operation!

A bold statement, and I can feel the readers of this, cringing in their armchairs, however think on this. If you go along to your local High St. friendly dealer, and audition say, 4 amplifiers in the same price range, it is no wonder that you will become confused.

It is very probable that these 4 "best buy" products all sound very similar. If you then ask to hear a genuine class 'A' amplifier it will become obvious instantly, that this is right and the others are wrong.

So why do manufacturers bother using this "wrong" technology. Put simply, sound quality is often further down the criteria than other factors, like styling, ergonomics and build costs.

Surely, the reason for making an amplifier is to produce better sound quality. I think many companies miss the point completely, perhaps because of commercial decisions.

Unfortunately what we, the listeners end up with, is masses of products that all sound much of a muchness! It is no wonder that I come across so many average sounding but expensive systems, to put right for their disappointed owners.

This leads to the next question, why aren't there more class 'A' amplifiers available. Well I reckon it's because not enough designers have 'cottoned' on yet. Class 'A' incidentally means that the output devices are constantly in the 'on' position, therefore electrons are available to carry the smallest of signals, without the interaction of switching distortion. I believe this is a major contribution to "mechanical sounding" hi-fi, which is the culprit that causes us to watch telly, earlier than anticipated. So, ban switching distortion and listener fatigue by auditioning a class 'A' amplifier. Then, magically the contents of what you are reading will make utter sense.

Musically there are less compromises with the class 'A' products, they tend to be as deep in bass content as they are open in the treble. Basically these amps tend to be linear across the musical spectrum. Fine low level detail is retrieved far more convincingly with this technology. There can be one or two drawbacks of the technology, such as physical size.

If for some reason, 100w is required, then the amplifier becomes large. This is because the output devices get very hot, and require large heat-sinks or fans for dissipation.

Luckily, most of today's loudspeaker designers are opting for more sensitive, easy to drive units, thus creating a more efficient transducer. This then allows amplifiers of a lowly 20 watts or so to produce high sound pressure levels.

Class 'A' output technology allows the listener greater access to the enjoyment of reproduced music through hi-fi. If your system sounds great, really dynamic etc, but you can only listen for an hour before fatigue sets in, or the television beckons, then there is something wrong! In most cases you are hearing the shortcomings of class 'B' amplification which runs cool, fits in a small case etc. but does not reproduce music anywhere as convincingly as class 'A'. Remember you bought a hi-fi to enjoy the music.

The debate for many years has been Valve versus Transistor. Again I believe this to miss the point. The real argument lies with class 'A' versus anything else.

J.E. Sugden invented the class 'A' output stage, and that breakthrough is still used in their products today. Their technology is so far ahead of most of the competition that a comparison becomes amusing.

AudioNote also are very switched on to the class 'A' argument, and provide us with the best sounding class 'A' single ended valve amplifiers on the planet. No switching distortion, means less listener fatigue.

If you have read this with bewilderment the only way to understand my ramblings is to book a demonstration, and experience for yourself, non-mechanical hi-fi. You'll be surprised to find, that it costs less to get it right, than to make a dreadful mistake.

As ever, a musical month to you all.

Kind regards

David W. Speirs

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AURA VA100 amplifier	£300	£199
AURA TU50 tuner	£300	£195
EXPOSURE 18 power amp	£795	£525
EXPOSURE 15 amplifier	£750	£550
KEF Reference 2 speakers	£1500	£1199
ROKSAN Xerxes/Tabriz	£1125	£625

The above is a selection of the ex-demonstration equipment offers we have in our Summer Sale a full list is available on request.

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Lumley ST-70 Stereo 70 Watt Valve Amp- Stunning £1950.00
Lumley 120 Monoblocks - Yes, 120 Watts From Valves! £3350.00

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Musical Fidelity E-10 New Budget Integrated Amplifier £299.00
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ART AUDIO QUINTET Plus VPI valve amps, Sonic Link Violet interconnect £775 o.n.o. Pentachord 'A' speakers (black ash) plus stands plus cables. £275 o.n.o.
Garry, Wakefield #01924) 290949 day. 365376 evenings.

NAIM NAIT 3 FITTED with MM phono boards. Mint condition £390. Townsend Seismic Sink isolation support. Standard size £80.
Tel: 01256 461453 (Basingstoke).

LEAK TROUGHLINE Stereo 3 tuner C/W Leak Stereo 30 Plus amp in double black Ash sleeve £130.00. Leak Stereofetic tuner C/W Leak Stereo 30 plus amp in double black ash sleeve £85.00. Both in excellent condition.
Tel: 0181-669 1088 anytime.

QUAD II VALVE bi-amped system. 4 x Quad II's into Monitor Audio R552 speakers. Electronic crossovers. Sounds fantastic! £700 ono. Leak Troughline 3 Stereo tuner £100. Sony Profeel component TV £450.
Tel: 0171 263 2831.

MISSION CYRUS 2 plus PSX (Mk 1). Mission DAD 7000 CD player. Spondor SP2 speakers. Foundation speaker stands. All in excellent condition. £400 the lot. May split. East Sussex.
Tel: 01825 890667, evenings after 7pm.

N.V.A. T.D.S. amplification system, pre amp with 4 x PSU pair A50 monoblocs with 2 x PSU, smooth, effortless sound, lack of space forces reluctant sale, £1,150.
Tel: 0585 802136 Suffolk.

QUAD 33 AND 303, FM3 tuner and pair of Quad ESL (Bronze) manuals and Quad boxes for speaker transport. £475 o.n.o.
Leeds (0113) 2454 829.

FOR SALE: Sony STS-311 R.D.S./E.O.N. tuner - 'What Hi-Fi?' award winner, excellent condition, boxed, complete with all accessories and instructions, £130 o.n.o.
Tel: Coventry (01203) 678094 after 6.00pm.

ENTHUSIASTS CLEAR OUT: Tannoy 609 IIs £200 o.n.o.; Celestion DL3IIs £75 o.n.o.; Mission 760; SE £75 o.n.o. All boxed, as new. Wanted: Goodmans Maxim IIs.
Tel: 01202 475781.

CHORD 1000 poweramp. 250 watts per channel. Magnificent sound. Glowing reviews (see M. Colloms HFN June 1992). Mint condition. Boxed. £1,000 (new £2,400).
Tel: 01206-825887 (Colchester).

QUAD 22 & PAIR IIs with GEC KT66 £325, ESLs pair in bronze £323, excellent condition, all original manuals, receipts, boxes. Garrard 301 "Strobe", original manual, receipts, very good. £140 Linn LP 12. Grace arm, little used £180. Ortofon 212 arm £20 Marantz PM44SE amplifier as new £120. Will demonstrate any.
Tel: 01934 626959 (Weston super Mare).

WHARFEDALE SPEAKERS, one pair Dovedale IIs, solid mahogany cabinets 14" x 12" x 24", very good condition, £250 o.n.o.
Tel: 01405 768845.

RESTORED CLASSIC EL84 valve power amp. Extensively updated with modern components. Very good sound quality £240.
Tel: 01403 891349 (Sussex).

PINK TRIANGLE LPT: black acrylic top plate, Pink fabricated lid. Rega RB300 brand new A.T.O.C3 Lentek moving coil pre-amp. £420.00 o.v.r.o. Sound Organisation table and wall shelf. Tel: 0181-669 1088. Anytime.

LINN LP12, Valhalla, Ittok, Troika. £400.
Tel: 01982 553170. Sutton-Croydon.

CLEAROUT! CONCORDANT

Exquisite valve pre-amp (with Doug Dunlop's final mods) £1,200 (£1,950). Meridian 263 DAC £200 (£495). Cary 5500 valve line-level pre-amp £450 (£1,500). Rotel 965 BX I.E.-D CD player with Trichord 2 modification £300 (£566).
Tel: 01372-468266 (home).

QUAD ESL63/AUDIONOTE PI: ESL63 loudspeakers, black, custom stands available, immaculate, (£3,000 new) £1,400. Audionote PI valve power amplifier, new, sadly unwanted prize (£699 new) £500.
Call Simon 0171-603 3755.

ROGERS STUDIO 1A monitor speakers plus stands £325 (cost over £700). REL 'Stadium' sub-bass speaker £350 (cost £795). Would exchange either for Quad 606II. Also wanted: Kef kube 200 equaliser.
Southampton (01703) 738935.

KOETSU RED M/C cartridge (careful, limited use) £225 o.n.o. Koetsu tonearm SA1 100D MKII boxed £120 o.n.o. (boxed) Mission 773 high output M/C £60 ono. Wanted: Naim M/C boards (late).
Tel: 0191-4877796.

NAIM HI-CAP £300, Naim 62 (new style) K boards £250, Naim 32.5 MC and K boards £170, Denon TU260 tuner £60. All good condition and boxed.
Mike 0171-775 3616 (office).

EXPOSURE MONO-BLOCKS VIII reg. Available through upgrade. Superb dynamics, versatile "sound for all seasons". Good condition, boxed. Can demonstrate. £650 ono.
Tel: 0181-341 7037 evenings.

ION AMPLIFICATION SPI/X-Pak 2/4xT 750/4xSAM 40/active crossovers. Stunning sound £1,295.00. FMT-2 tuner £150. Immaculate condition. Guarantee and professional service back-up. Wanted: five tier Mana Acoustic; Roksan tall tables; Moth record cleaning machine
Tel: 0161-432 0744.

SUGDEN SDT-1 integrated CD player in excellent condition £500.00. Mordaunt Short MS 5.40 speakers (shielded magnets) with rosewood effect finish and Sound Organisation sand filled stands £250.00.
Tel: 01702 463232 (Essex).

AUDIO INNOVATIONS 700 integrated amplifier, excellent condition, recently serviced, £540 ono; Pandora mains filter and Kimber 4TC mains lead, £60 ono; North London.
Tel: 0171-704 6775.

ARRIVAL OF FURNITURE in small cottage forces sales of prized Hi-Fi. Linn PI2 VAL/NIR Ittok/Asaka 1990. Electro pre3/power 25 amp. Mission 770. Will include NAD 4020 tuner Dual 814 tape and Denon CD player together with Apollo tables. £800.
Phone: 01342 718864 evenings. Copthorne-Sussex.

SONY WMD6C Professional Walkman. Rechargeable batteries plus mains power and recharger unit. Very clean recently serviced - little used but much cherished £200.
Phone: 01703 260446 (Southampton).

LP12 AFRO LINGO EKOS K9, excellent (boxed) £1,150. Magnum Dynalab FT 101 tuner and 205 Signal Sleuth aerial pre-amp tuner (black) inc. Whip aerial £450.
Tel: John 01686 413568 anytime. Can demonstrate.

MOVING ABROAD! MUST SELL: Elite Rock turntable. Excalibur arm. mint £400. Acoustic Energy AE1 monitors. bi-wire £380. Linn Intek integrated 50w amp £150. Technics RSB 350 cassette £35. Various accessories and records.
Tel: 0181-299 3642.

MUSICAL FIDELITY MC2 speakers original Martin Colloms design with Heybrook HBS1 stands, £195. B200 amplifier, £195. Pioneer PDS801 CD player, £195. Technics tuner, £39. All received excellent reviews.
Tel: 01642 532696

TEAC VRDS10 CD player £450.00, Technics PS 700 C.D. player £170, Creek T40 tuner £100.00, Linn Kairn pre amp £750.00, Linn LK280 power amp plus Spark power supply £650.00, Luxman 507X amplifier £120.00, Technics ST9600 tuner £100.00.
Tel: 01977 643629.

AUDIONOTE A.N.L speaker cable. 2 x 4m bi-wire with gold plugs. £300 o.n.o.
Tel: Guildford (01483) 572796.

CABLES PLUS - Phono: 6m Sharkwire 91 x 0.08mm OFC, £75; 1m DNM Solidcore, £10; Speaker: 4 x 5m Sharkwire 10 AWG/0.08OFC, £15, £50 all; 2 x 5m DNM Solidcore, £25; Solidcore 'S', £25; Ortofon T4PMC; QED, RSC, NAD items.
Tel: 0121 350 9230.

TANNOY GOLD MONITOR dual concentric loudspeaker pair. Original near mint condition. With LSU/HF/IS/L crossover. Asking \$US2500.00 OBO. C. Phaneuf 972 Guillaume Boisset Cap-Rouge (Quebec) Canada G1Y-1Y9.
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AUDIO INNOVATIONS 1000 monoblocks £750 pair; Quad FM4 £200; Quad 44 £130; Quad 405II £220; Quad 33 £80; Denon DCD1000 £80; Marantz CD63 (original) £80; Garrard 401/ Mission 774 Arm / Plinth / Cover £170; Thorens TD150/SME £60; Mission 770 £80; Hi Fi Answers R50s £140; Linn Index II £150; TDL NFM £75; Sequence 30 £120; Rogers Cadet II £50.
Tel: 0121 353 4942 (Sutton Coldfield).

MERIDIAN 201 pre-amp. £250. 204 tuner £225. 209 master control £15, Audio Alchemy DAC in the box £135. All books, boxed and pristine. Bert. Weekdays 0181 853 4646. Evenings/weekdays 0181 473 4057.

WANTED DESPERATELY: Belt for Ariston Forté turntable. Where did all those spares go? Will pay over the odds. Phone 01728 830778.

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Adam 01737 843601.

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LINN KAIRN (Phono "Brilliant") £875. Linn LK100 £325. Naim NAP 180 £600. EPOS ES11 + Stands £325. All VGC boxed. Spondor BC1s Teak, gc, no stands.
Tel: Barry 01256 882607 (Basingstoke).

QUAD ELS-63s with new unused Arcici stands £1,400.
Tel: (Oxford) 01865 63160.

QUAD 44/405 £299. Marantz CD-75 £49. Nakamichi BX150E £59. KEF 101 speakers £99. Teac CX400 £39.
Tel: 01283 73 2622 (Evenings), 01332 340178 (Daytime).

AT OC9 CARTRIDGES, brand new £180.00; Heybrook HBI MKIII brand new £180.00; Naim NAC62 preamp, mint £340.00; Roksan Darius IIs, black, £1,100.
Tel: Jules on 01792 280061.

ENTHUSIASTS HI-FI Clearance - moved house! Includes speakers, tape recorders; reel and cassette, tuners and other components, everything in good order, some as new.
Tel: 01323 769793.

GOLDRING-LENCO 88 deck. Original instructions, plinth template, lid, Thorens arm £30. Armstrong FM56 tuner (mono) with valve power supply £25. Solid state phono £10.
Tel: 01480 460502 (Cambridge area).

BARGAIN! MERIDIAN 207 PRO CD/ PRE-AMP. Meridian 209 MSR remote control. Both mint condition and boxed! £1,100 new a bargain at only £399. QUAD 606 power amp boxed only £349. Yamaha DSP E300 Pro Logic sound processor mint, boxed with remote £560 new only £299.
Peterborough Tel: 01733 322334.

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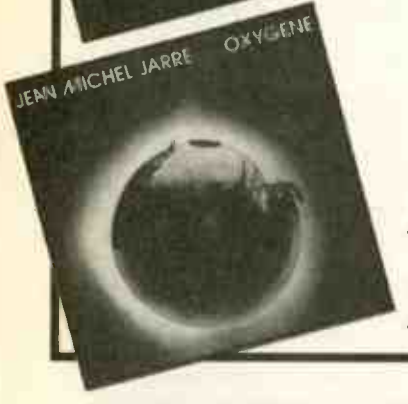
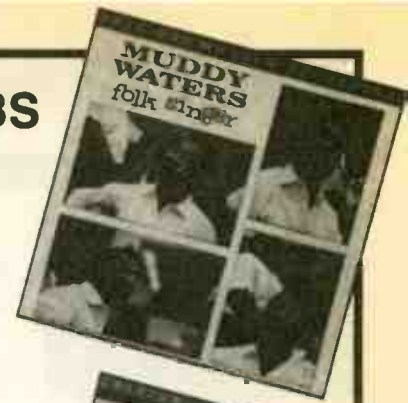
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PRIVATE

NAIM SBL LOUDSPEAKERS, black Ash in original unmarked condition £900, Naim IBLs black Ash £350, Naim Naxo 2x4 active crossover with Avondale power supply suitable for SBL or IBL loudspeakers £275
Tel: 01524 381389

BOSE 901 IV vgc (new £1,600+) £495 ono. Quad 33/303 vgc £175. Croft valve pre £125. Wanted AVI tuner/CD or good DAC.
Evening 01452 812618 (Gloucestershire).

ARAGON 4004 power amp, 200 WPC, recently serviced, £750. Matching Aragon 24K pre-amp with external PSU, £550. Both boxed, approx. 3 years old, good condition. Both £1,895 new.
Tel: 01483 825234

CAMBRIDGE CD3 (grey) MC remote £350. Sendor P reide speakers (real walnut veneer) £150. Cliff Stone Foundation speaker stands £50. All boxed. Excellent condition including instructions.
Tel: 01244 681805 (Cheshire)

ARCAM ALPHA 5 Plus CD player £315. Micromega Microdac £125. Theta TLC Jitter Buster £175. Audioquest Crystal speaker cable 4m single bi-wire £60. All items vgc and postage included.
Tel: 01534 66238.

AUDIO INNOVATIONS S.500 Int valve amp. Woodside STA 35 Renaissance Series valve power amp. Ruark Tallman I speakers in Ash etc. Wanted: Best Naim equipment W.H.Y. 01626 774246 Devon.

LINN LP12 (BLACK), Ittok, Stilton AT-F5, boxed £550. Meridian 200/203, boxed £695, SD Acoustics SD1 floorstanding loudspeakers, superb, boxed £695 (£1,700 new), Mission Cyrus I amplifier £125
Tel: (01449) 676335.

REGA PLANAR 3 with RB300 arm £175 o.n.o.
Tel: 01352-754274 (Chester, North Wales).

AUDIO INNOVATIONS S500 New Sovteks £475. Arcam Delta 170 transport £225. Deltec PDMI/II £275. Yamaha OSR70 Prologic £75. Mission 73C £125. 2 x 9m Soniclink Brown £150. All boxed, upgrade clearout. Wanted: Leak TL12, REL Stentor/similar.
Tel: 01 773 609104.

CROFT Micro Valve pre-amp. Recent Mil.Spec valves. Gold/PTFE phono. £125 Sony ELCASET EL5 Recorder + 29 Tapes £55. Target Stand, 5 shelves 20 x 16" £35. JVC KD-V44 cassette, auto reverse £25.
Tel: 01628 82 2040.

REL STRATA Subwoofer, active, 7 months old, excellent condition, £340 ono. NAD 304 amplifier, 1 year old, vgc, £130 ono.
Tel: 0171-387 7189 (London).

WANTED: MUSICAL FIDELITY MC4 loudspeakers (transparent cones), also Audiomaster monoblock valve amplifier (one) with Partridge transformers and cherry red base. For sale: Rotel 965BX CD Player £150 (300).
01566781275 Cornwall.

LINN LP12 VALHALLA/Ittok/Asaka; Linn LK280; various Hi-Fi magazines, 1970s onwards - offers?
Northampton (01604) 403947 weekends or after 7pm.

TOWNSHEND ELITE ROCK MKII turntable, excellent condition, armboards for Roksan/Rega/Helius arms £225 ono. Goldring 1006 stylus (new) £20. AT110E cartridge £10. Mike 0181-777 5423 (Croydon).

PROAC RESPONSE 15 speakers, latest specification, including Target R1 stands, all items boxed and in mint condition.
Tel: 01582 592211. Evenings.

NAKAMICHI 1000 ZXL the cassette deck. Rare. Truly little used, unmarked, mint. (£1,850.00) £1,250.00 ono. One owner from new. Original manual and boxing.
Tel: 01364 72292.

NAKAMICHI 1000 ZXL with remote control just serviced by B&W. £1,800. Pair Musical Fidelity MA50 power amps £400. Pair Quicksilver power amps £750. Original type Meridian tuner £150.
Tel: 01923 826830

MISSION SPEAKERS 753 rosewood £530, Quad preamp 34 £250, Quad power amp 405-2 £260 - ono. All mint boxed, must sell, upgrading.
Tel: 0121 357 9561.

MOTH SERIES 30: phono stage MM/MC; passive pre-amp; power amp. One year old - £350 (£590). May split. Linn Nexus LS250 speakers. Black Ash veneer, Ku-stone stands - £285 (£600). Soundstyle Tripod 2 shelf stand. Spiked top shelf. £50 (£100+). Goldring Elite MC cartridge. Low hours - £85 (£200). All perfect, can demonstrate. Near offers invited.
Tel: 01455 636695.

LINN KAIRN, latest spec £900 ono. Linn Klout, two months old £1,300 ono. Can dem.
Ring 01480 351781.

LINN SONDEK LP12 £200. Rega RB300 £65. Meridian M3 active speakers with 101B preamp, IXOS module, cables £295. All V.G.C. Wanted: Gale GS401C. P.S. Audio 4.5. Robertson 4010.
Tel: 01280-706488.

HFV 4WSE (performance checked by HFV) £450 (Upgrading). Leak Troughline 3 stereo (GT Audio) £275. Troughline 3 Mono £50. Wanted: Audio Innovations S400 or S300MKII.
Tel: 01834 860681 (Dyfed).

WANTED LEAK Troughline stereo tuner. Must be mint and working. Cash for best example.
Kevin Yates 0171 222 0777 (day)

AUDIO RESEARCH SP9 MK1 preamp mint £895. Pioneer PD-91 CD player mint £450. B & W Solids, loudspeakers mint £120.
Tel: Tony 01229-833168.

MUSICAL FIDELITY MVX.2 pre-amp and PSU, mint condition, boxed with manual (£2,500 new). Bargain £750.
Tel: 01263 512815.

SYSTEMDEK IXE/Moth arm/Linn K9 (excellent, boxed) £195; Armstrong 521 amplifier, Armstrong 524 tuner - £40 each.
Tel: 01970 832694 (Dyfed) after 6pm.

NAIM 250 AND HI-CAP (old style) and NAC72 (new style). All in perfect condition £1,390 ono. Tandberg 3011 tuner £160. Available in Dublin.
Tel: 00 3531 4591432.

PRIVATE SALE: ProAc Mini Towers MKII, black ash, condition mint £475 o.n.o.
Tel: 0181-854 6738.

ARCAM ALPHA 5 CD player, still under guarantee, immaculate condition, upgrade forces sale. £300.
Phone: 0114 255 3464 evenings (Sheffield).

WANTED USED or second hand SME IV arm, also Naim Fifty Two and Eighty Two must be in good condition, used or second hand.
Tel: 0161 747 5679

ARCAM DELTA 170.3 transport and black box 5 Boxed in good condition. £500.
Tel: 01705-382025.

CELESTION 100 SPEAKERS. Sound great. As new/mint/any test/boxed. Less than two years old. Book price £539. Absolute bargain £220. No offers please.
Tel: 01777 818153 (North Notts).

ROGERS LS 3/6 BBC monitor loudspeakers, genuine BBC design, superb condition, including stands £325.
Tel: 01603 714 528 evenings/weekends.

TOP MERIDIAN SYSTEM. Pair 605 power amps £900. 601 digital pre-amp £1,500. 602 CD £900. 504 radio £225. KEF speakers 107 MK2 £1,500. Superb condition. Mike O'Driscoll. Eastbourne: 01323 712865 this number first 11am - 5pm daily or 01323 842227.

NAKAMICHI CR7E, mint condition, hardly used £900. Nakamichi DRI cassette deck still under one year guarantee. Almost new, boxed £500. Lodnon 0181-543 8625.

SME 309 TONREARM £449. SME V tonearm £900. Sony 715E CD player £179. Pioneer A400X £210. Moth 30 Series amp £250. Townshend Seismic Slink £134. Deltec Black Slink balanced £150.00. Mission 780 SE £199. All guaranteed. Credit Cards
Tel: 01582 24414.

KEF MODEL 1 Reference speakers black Ash, boxes and manual. November '94, as new condition cost £995 sell £600. Genuine sale reason.
Tel: 01604 753391.

CONCORDANT EXHILARANT line level valve pre-amp. Superb sound. Unmarked wooden and/or metal surround case. £450 ono.
Tel: 0181-202 3307 (Hendon).

T.D.L. MONITOR loudspeakers, dedicated stands, black Ash. As new £1,250 or exchange for Quad ESL 63 loudspeakers.
Phone: 01772 315723.

DPA T1 with PDM I Series 3 £850. Impulse H2 speakers as new £1,000. Second Audio triodes, mint £1,000. Must sell.
Tel: 01425 470907 Hants, after 6pm.

TRIO L-07D D.D. turntable with L-07D power supply A.D.C. cartridge £350. Pre-power combination L-08C control amp + 2X L-08M mono block power amps £750. Vinyl junkies need only apply (may split).
Tel: Richard 0155 9376212 (day).

AVI S2000MP pre-amp £350. Perfect Pitch Francinsten CD enhancer with 0.5m DNM interconnect £95. Alphason R5555 MDF rack £75. MAF 12 Inch speaker stands £75. Bournemouth 01202-767315 (evenings).

TEAC 73002T STUDIO quality open reel tape deck, two track, two speed. Built in mixer, excellent condition, superb sound two available £275 each, £495 pair.
Phone after 6pm. 01704 563178.

RADFORD RENAISSANCE Series valve amplifiers by Woodside Electronics SC25 pre-amp (M.M. input) £400. STA 35 power Amp £500. Both in excellent condition. Recently revalued. Purchased new 1991.
Tel: 01843 592542 (Kent).

MICHELL ISO phono stage, as new, 6 months old, was £415, now £300.
Tel: Bucks 01296-86211 (evenings).

LINN TUKAN with Brakits. New £390. Kaber active crossover £490. Quad stands for ESL63 £100. Hafler DH101 pre amp £100.
Tel: 01753 851429 after 6.

AUDIOLAB 8000P 2.5 years old, mint, boxed £325. Target and S.O. wall mount table £20.00 each.
Phone 01422 203057 (W. Yorks) evenings.

PINR TRIANGLE DA CAPO/1307 £1,100. Orelle CD-10T £450 SP200 power £400. SC200 pre/MM/MC £250 Orator speakers £300. Target R2 stands £200. Sonus Faber Electa £1,000. Copland CSA14 £750. All boxed, as new.
Tel: 01252 311016.

CYRUS II. NUMBER 7 circuit board/PSX power supply, excellent condition, boxed, £300. Audioquest Quartz Interconnect, one metre boxed £40.
Tel: 0181-644 3678. After 6pm.

LINN ISOBARIKS and stands. Teak Finish. 2 x 7.5m NAIM A4 cable. Very good condition £700.
Tel: 01299 401939.

DENON 24HX dual capstan cassette deck (light use) £125. Audio Technica ATH70 Electret Condenser headphones £85. Mod Squad (passive pre) line drive £200. Bruce Rae Audio Active Cable drive with 5 metres cable (adds guts to passive pre amps) £250. Denon 250L tuner £60. Audioquest Sorbothane turntable mat £25. BLQ I speakers (similar to Linn Kans) £60. Robin 500T multimeter £25.
Tel: 0181-502 3017.

definitive audio nottingham

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Import/Export

SECOND HAND EQUIPMENT

# Denote full warranty	Price	RRP
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SME IV Tonearm - Boxed, unused - Save £100	# £768	£868.56
Sony 29" SVA 2942 Dolby Pro Logic TV - New, Boxed	# £880	£1000
Yamaha DSP A2070 - Boxed, unused x 3	# £950	£1100
Yamaha NSE 80 Centre Channel speaker - new, boxed	# £150	£200
Bose 901 Vi speaker system (2 prs), boxed, unused inc. eq+stand#	# £1450	£1650
Pioneer CLD 2950 Laser disc players x 2, boxed, unused	# £600	£700
Sony MHC 7900 AV Mini system x 2, boxed, unused	# £1200	£1500
Snell All Mahogany - Excellent condition	# £1700	£4500
Audio Innovations 1st Audio 1 7/2w Triode - ex dem	# £800	£1555
lowther Acousta - New PM6A drive units - excellent cabinets	£390	
Drange Valve pre amp	£400	
EMT 930 St. Turntable + eq. + tonearm	EPDA	
Micromega Solo - Excellent condition	# £650	£1500
Moth Series 30 phono/passive/power	£350	£590
Hellus Scorpio - needs attention x 2 each	£50	£190
Hellus Aurum Tonearm	£130	£300
Hellus Aurius II Tonearm	£190	£400
Souther Linear Tracking arm	£400	£1300
Croft pre amp - super micro	£150	
Sony 715 CD player - 30 hours use - HiFi Choice Best Buy	# £180	£250
4 Vitavox AK127 Alnico Drive Units. Each	# £150	£300
Audio Innovations 200 pre power	# £400	£850
Audion 300B Silver Night (p/p) 2 pairs	# £1250	£2000
Audio Innovations Series 1000 MC Transformer	# £190	£300
Ortofon MC 2000 boxed, unused	# £550	£700

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LIVING VOICE - Large domestic horn loudspeaker applications. Beautiful furniture, elegant design precision engineering. The finest sound quality available. 2 models Tone Scout and Air Partner from £7,500 to £20,000

HDRNING - Danish loudspeaker systems with beautiful cabinet work and artful acoustic engineering. High sensitivity and even, easy load, £2,000 to £10,000

DALI 104MS - 93/94dB/W floorstanders. 'Hi-Fi Choice August 95 5 Star review' an underlying sonic beauty which far surpasses many sleeker rivals ... an uncanny ability to suck you into the musical experience.' £650.00. An audiophile bargain.

WADIA - The most intelligently and completely designed digital source components currently available. Models 23, 21 and 16.

MONARCHYAUDIO - A selection of excellent digital products including the model M18 DAC and the DIP. The latter is used between the transport and DAC, providing excellent improvements to the dynamics, band width and coherence. The better the existing components, the greater the improvement.

MICROMEGA - Upgradable digital source components from £550 to £1750.

AUDIO INNOVATIONS - AUDIO NOTE - BORDER PATROL - An extensive range of high quality valve amplification.

VOYD - After 10 years in the market place, this turntable design still represents the most intelligent choice of analogue source component.

XLD - Digital Interconnects. **LIVING VOICE** analogue Interconnects. tonearms from SME, Wilson benesch and Rega, Cartridges from Ortofon, Lyra, EMT, Goldring. Digital from Audio Alchemy

LOWTHER - Full range of drive units always available PM4, PM2, PM6, PM7, (Alnico) usually in stock. Enclosure drawings £29.00 - Mini Acousta, Acousta, TP1 (Audio Vector Auditorium £39.00)



V' audio

Hi-Fi Consultants

Ian C. Vaudin
36 Druid Hill, Stoke Bishop,
Bristol BS9 1EJ
Tel/Fax: Bristol
(0117) 9686005

SALE OF P/E EQUIPMENT

PAIR OF NAIM 135 MONOBLOCKS (OLD STYLE)	£1200
NAIM HI-CAP (OLD STYLE)	£350
NAIM 72/HI-CAP/180 (1YR OLD)	£1500

QUAD ESL63's (TEAK - IMMACULATE)	£1500
MARTIN LOGAN AERUIS (6 MONTHS OLD)	£1500
TRESHOLD FET 10e + PHONO + SA4E (100W CLASS A)	£5000
RUARK ACCOLADES (BLACK)	£1500

AUTUMN LEAVES?

Sorry about the heading, I just couldn't think of an appropriate one this month! It's quite difficult to think of something new to say every month, as much of the time we are actually working and don't have time for analysing new equipment. Last month therefore I re-used an older advert extolling the virtues of British hi-fi, but we must not ignore the rest of the world. Of course the Americans make excellent hi-fi, but by the time it reaches the UK, the price can be increased by 50 to 100%. It's very frustrating reading reviews in 'The Absolute Sound' of all the US equipment that doesn't reach these shores!

European equipment, in comparison, can be quite reasonably priced, such as the excellent Triangle range of speakers from France, starting with the Titus model at £325, while Opera from Italy start at £450 for the Prima, and Unison Research from Italy have some cute valve amps, starting at £995 for the Simply Two.

ELECTROCOMPANET NEWS

In comparison the Electrocompaniet amplification from Norway, has been more expensive with their line stage pre-amp (EC-4) at £1315 and their least powerful amplifier the AW100 at £2030. However, the integrated amplifier EC1-1, which offers comparable performance to the above pre/power, i.e. 100 watts/ch + 80 amps current, comes in at a more affordable £2100, while the new EC1-2, which should be in by the time this advert appears, gives 50w/ch and 35 amps for £990. The great thing about these amps is the large current delivery which allows them to handle speakers with low impedance characteristics; for example, the large AW250 will deliver 1100 watts into 1/2 ohm! Also due in are the Qube, near field monitor, two way speaker with 89db sensitivity at £1265 and an interesting DAC, with user adjustable clock, and input impedance trimmer for £1240.

All should be on display at Ramada, and I expect to be flitting between their room and those of ATC/AVI and Ruark, so if you wish to have a chat leave a message.

Happy listening!

PRIVATE

KOETSU ROSEWOOD cartridge, recently rebuilt by Koetsu, superb £290. Fisher 500c valve receiver (18 valves) 2S WPC with original walnut case and service manual, £250. Will consider part exchange. Tel: 0181-8835618.

QUAD ESLs, BRONZE, good condition, never overdriven £300. Quad IIs and 22, resistors and capacitors replaced, recent new valves £300. Tel: 01243 576073 Chichester.

FOR SALE: SPENDOR BC1 new reflex £270 ono. Linn Intek pre-amp still under warranty. Boxed £280 ono. Tel: 01753 856809.

BRYSTON 4B NRB £1,150; Audio Research SP14 £1,500; Gradient sub-woofers for Quad ESL-63s with crossover £1,000; Bryston 10B professional crossover (nearly new) £1,000; all boxed and being sold by original owner. Tel: 01865 63160.

MUSICAL FIDELITY 2A preamp. Mint condition. Boxed. Surely the best available at £85. Leak Stereo 30 £35. Audio Technica in line transformer, boxed, mint £40 o.n.o. Tel: 01280 706488.

SONY TAE1000ESD Digital Processing pro-logic AV pre-amp. Built in DAC, full remote £475. Kenwood DP-X9010 transport £300. Both boxed and mint. ATC 50 actives in mahogany, stands, cables. Not current specification (1992). Excellent £2,650. All items ono. Tel: 01527-523268 evenings and weekends (Redditch area).

AUDIO ALCHEMY DDE V1.0 DAC £200 ono (£400), Tannoy 611 MK2 speakers fitted with Deflex panels £290 ono (£480). Tel: Milton Keynes 01908 678628 (evenings).

LINN SONDEK LP12, EKOS, AT OCS plus Linn Lingo power supply. Fully serviced by Audio Counsel August '94 - boxed since. £750 ono. Ring Dave 0161 799 0710 evenings only.

NAD 1000 PRE-AMP, NAD 2100 power amp. One & half years old £300. Rotel 965 BX CD player £175. SEAS H392 tweeters. £15 pair. Tel: 01205 750314.

AKAI M9DX REEL TO REEL stereo tape recorder with 35 tapes. Cross flow head, VU metres and many more features. Definitely a collectors item. Offers - 01423 771474.

SUGDEN P28/C28 amplifier £300. Rotel RT850AL tuner £80. SME Series 3S new £80. Cartridges Ortofon, A&R Arcam, Nagaoka, AT, Shure, Rata, Glanz. Unused, cheap. Half price. Ring 01352 761887 for details.

MARANTZ CD 94 II with Trichord clock mod, instruction manual and remote. A classic. £475. Tel: Guildford (01483) 267516.

FOR SALE: QUAD 22-11-11 amps. 1 KT 66 valve. 1 Connoisseur amp. 1 Stereo tuner (Mullard). £300 the lot. Tel: 01132 403496.

AUDIO RESEARCH SP8 All valve pre-amp £750. Wanted: Gyrodec. Tel: Alan 01661 852874.

ATC 100A in personally selected Mahogany (new £5,000+) earlier model, therefore £2,500 o.n.o. - Meridian 602/606 boxed and mint, only £1,250 o.n.o. Contact Tel: 018-888 3715. No time wasters please.

SUMO ATHENA PRE £250 o.n.o. Sumo Andromeda 1 pw £350 o.n.o. (Rare) Sumo Aurora tuner £300 o.n.o. Contact Tel: 0181-888 3715. No time wasters please.

NAIM AUDIO NAIT 3 including M/M phono stage (£625) accept £375. Wanted: Shearne Phase 2. Tel: 01642 542395 day; 01429 274638 evening.

MERIDIAN 206 Delta/Sigma £550, Audio Alchemy DDE DAC plus uprated P/S £200, Linn Sara Nine including stands £395. Deltec little bit DAC £175. Rega Planar 3 £160. Tel: 01926 831388.

CROFT SERIES V (2) stereo valve power amp £275. QED MA34PG passive pre-amp £25; Sennheiser HD480 headphones £20; Deltec 'Slink' interconnects (half metre pair) £15; QED 'Digiflex' £9; Sorbothane feet (set of four) £15. All as new. Tel: (01978) 750151.

LINN LP12 WITH Akito/K9/Valhalla. Excellent condition, little used with all original boxes. £350. Hampshire 01329 835039 evenings/weekends.

MERIDIAN ARGENT I. Piano black. Excellent (see Hi Fi Choice buyers guide) £550. Linn LP12 (black). Valhalla. Itok. LVII. Shure. VSTV (new stylus). Mint. £550. Quad 22 preamp/FM tuner/AM tuner. One Quad II poweramp (needs attention) offers. (Devon) 01803 770006.

MARANTZ 7G imperial speakers made in the USA. Rebuilt to original specification at the cost of £200 and polished V.G.C. offers: Tel: 0171-790 3404.

NAIM HI-CAP, 3-NAP 250s, and 32.5 wanted (old style), also CDS, DBL. 82 and AEI's considered, cash payment, can collect/meet half way whatever. For sale: 4 new style NAPI35s £925 ea. Tel: 01924-271043 evening. 01924-274887 day, Paul.

TANNOY ARDEN 15" D/C recently re-coned £1,000. Tannoy Devon 12 D/C £300. KEF Cantata £100. Quad valve tuners AM/FM £25 each. Quad 33/303 pre-power £100. Thorens TD160 SB £50. Thorens arm on TD 124 arm board £30. Plinth for TD124 £40. Teac A2300 reel-to-reel £200. Phone: Paul Harris on Cardiff: 01222 770428.

HITACHI PCM digital audio recorder, very rare, brilliant sound quality and reproduction. Uses VHS format. £2,500. Nakaimichi ZXL 700 computing cassette deck, also rare with all above qualities £1,800. Tel: 01202-290091.

NAIM 250, HI-CAP both old style NAC 72 (new style) all in excellent condition £1,300. Naim CD3 brand new £760. Thorens TD160/Grace/Supex 900 excellent £200. Meridian 200 transport £450. Available in Dublin. Tel: 00 3531 4591432.

CABLE SALE X.L.O. Signature digital link B.N.C. to phono half metre £150, balanced half metre £175. Mandrake interconnects half metre balanced £275. All one month old. Van den Hul The First interconnects metre £120. The first Digital 0.6 £50. Tel: 0113-2682287.

ROTEL RCD965 BX LE Discrete CD, (£425) £225. Rotel RC850 pre/RB850 power 50 WPC stereo, 150 watts bridged mono. £175. Audio Innovations series 200 MM preamp immaculate, £220. Mission 753 speakers, black. 150 WPC power handling, 90dB sensitivity, immaculate. £475. All boxed. Tel: 01706 345418.

KEF CODA 7 AS NEW £95. Revolver Purdey mint condition £250 sell £149. Royd Sintra II bi-wired approx. 2 years old. Excellent condition £375 sell £175. Boxed, demo, no offers. Tel: 01865 59737 Steve.

REL ACTIVE SUB-WOOFER £285 (re-advertised). Aura Evolution 100 amplifier £185. 2 x 8 metres. 'Origin Live' speaker cables with gold banana plugs £28. Tel: (01794) 514916.

CAMBRIDGE CD2, immaculate condition, only £220. Sony WMD6C professional walkman + microphone, spare 'phones, £150. Call C. Scott on Tel: 0171 286 4143.

WANTED: PAIR OF Decca/Kelly "Ribbon" H.F. loudspeaker. D.K. 30 with crossovers. Tel: Peter 01227 374838.

BARGAIN: COMPLETE SYSTEM in excellent condition. CD: Rotel RCD-965BX; tuner: Quad FM4; amp: Arcam Delta 60; speakers: Celestion SL6; turntable: Thorens TD 150; cartridge: Goldring 920; black Ash cabinet. Cost when new £1,590, sell £575. Circenster (01285) 659704 (near Swindon).

FOR SALE: AUDIOLAB 8000A amplifier, excellent sound, also Arcam Alpha II tuner with FM-MW-LW, and Technics cassette deck RS-B465. All in good condition. £350. Tel: 01 354 57636 (near Peterborough).

MERIDIAN 208 (DAC7) CD/preamp etc. Boxed, mint, very little use, £745. Retired owner purchased 602/603 to match 605s. Tel: 01202 470789.

TRADE

V.R.R. IKON 5+5 SI. New, 5 watts per channel, single ended, integrated valve amplifier for only £395 built. Quad II, Rogers Cadets, KEF B139s. Repairs, custom design and manufacturing. Tel: 01903 501158.

Hi-Fi Loudspeakers repaired and upgraded, bi-wiring and active conversions a speciality. Tel: Immortal coils 0480 497730.

SNELL K £250; Heybrook HBI/3 £150; HBS1 stands £60; Judos 16 inch stands £95; Musical Fidelity A1 final edition £275; A1 MK2 £95; Audioplan Super AF (1m) £65; Silver Sounds 16/4 (1.5m) £95; NVA Sound Pipe (2m) £70; K/CAG Digilink (0.5m dual) £90; Masterlink Black Digital (1m) £45; Cogan Hall Spk. cable (3m) £150; V.D.Hul SCS12 (2m) £50; plenty of other spk. cables (Cyrus, Ixos etc.) in short lengths; Michel spk. plugs (8): £5; Michel Tenderfeet (9) £1.50 each. Call Steve on (01685) 385898 after 6pm.

TUNERS. ARCAM DELTA 280. £239 Aura TU50 £210. Both display. Arcam T21 £89. Armstrong 624 £69. Cambridge T50 £149. Cyrus I £99. Denon TU400L £119. Musical Fidelity T1/II £219. Quad FM4 £219. Sony STS770ES £199. STS311 RDS £139. Other items available. Objective Audio: 01279 426647 or 0973 452368.

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IMP LOUDSPEAKER testing system, complete with MLS upgrade, power supply, cables and microphone. £175. Audio Physics 01895 637 846.

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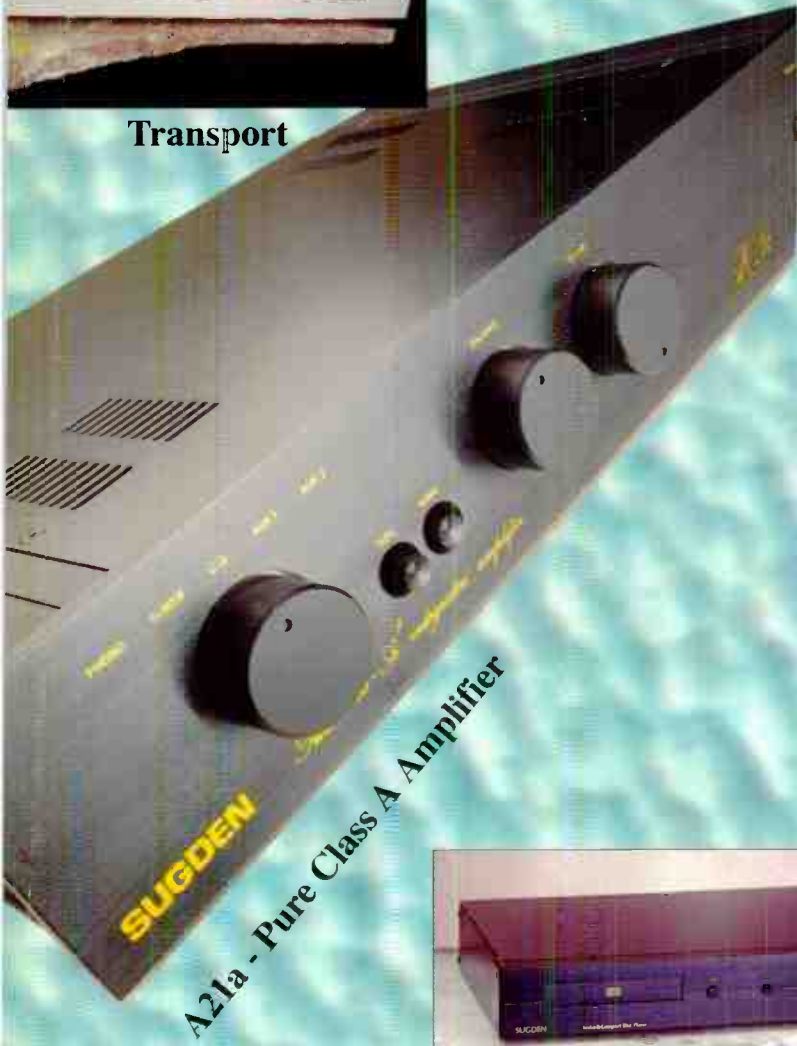
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