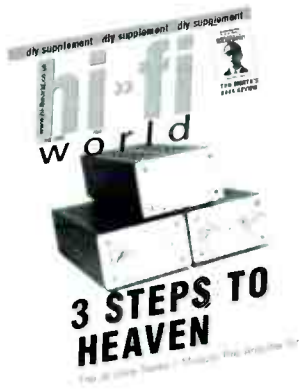


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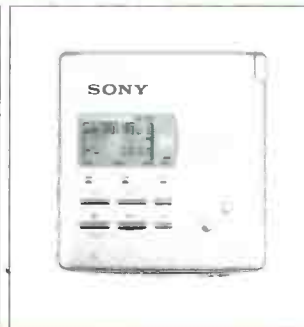


**DIY SUPPLEMENT NO.51
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world

6 TO GO

WE TEST six ultimate portables from Aiwa, Diamond, Pioneer, Select and Sony.



NAD S500 SILVERLINE CD PLAYER

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- Hadcock GH242 SE Tonearm
- ALR Jordan Note 3 Loudspeakers

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First it was vinyl, then cassette, now the consumer electronics industry will have you believe that CD is dead on its feet. The amount of DVD players now available at a fraction of the cost of a £1000 CD player can be counted on, oh... twenty five hands and feet. There is, however, one fundamental problem with this. Few of them will play music as well as a similarly-priced, dedicated CD player. After the past few weeks of listening I've come to a conclusion that won't really surprise the majority of our readers. If you want to get the best from your CDs at present, stick to something that plays CDs - and only CDs - alone.

But it seems that the larger manufacturers are abandoning the production of CD players and concentrating their efforts on DVD audio and video players. At the moment there's still a market for new CD players, and it will

continue for some time to come. After all, there are apparently many people who buy DVD players not realising they will actually play CDs as well! The fact of the matter is that many people both in and out of the 'hi-fi as a hobby' school still use vinyl and cassette. This goes to show that CD has many years left in it still. This may start to change with the introduction of a reliable, quality sounding, and more importantly, affordable format with plenty of software to choose from. We'll then have a transitory period as people gradually change their consumer electronics purchasing habits.

With the current situation involving the progression (or stag-

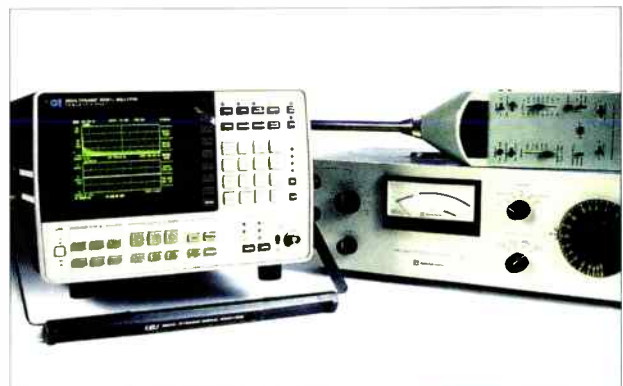
naion) of future audio formats, it seems that there's plenty of life left in the silver disc yet. And even though we have a deep interest in the technology, MP3 still has a long way to go in the sound stakes. Remember though: it took at least eight years to get CD sounding right!



Simon Pope

How we test the products

- Hi-Fi World has its own advanced test laboratory and acoustically treated listening room.
- Hi-Fi World has a dedicated in-house team of experienced listeners. We review thoroughly by extensive auditioning, rather than by quick-fire group listening tests.



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

 NICE PRICE - Represents excellent value for money	 EXCELLENT - Superb sound, among the best available	 VERY GOOD - Well worth a listen	 ADEQUATE - Room for improvement	 POOR - Seriously flawed. forget it!
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Half globes are added for those products that we feel are between categories

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13...GROUP TEST

This month, to greet the warmer weather, the World Team escape from the stuffy office to try out some portable sound sources. Undaunted by the slush and sleet of a typical English summer, we bring you our verdict on the best carry-ons on the market.

AMPLIFIERS

25...MONRIO MP1 MONOBLOCS

There is still a good case to be made for monobloc power amplifiers, especially if unmeasurable crosstalk is your aim. Richard White wires up these modest looking boxes from Monrio to discover whether two amps are still better than one.

27...MVL A2+

With their previous models still basking in the plaudits of the hi-fi press, MVL unveil their substantially updated A2+. Deja vu all over again, or will the improvements make themselves heard? Jon Marks investigates.

CD PLAYERS

23...NAD S500

This £1000 player is the CD spinner in the top of the range Silverline series. Simon Pope listens in.

41...MYRYAD MCD500

Another top of the range player comes under the scrutiny of Mr Pope . . .

LOUDSPEAKERS

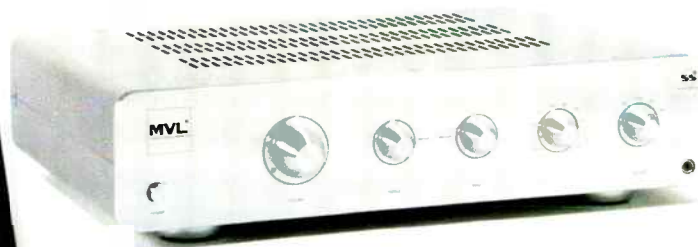
37...ALR JORDAN NOTE 3

An old idea brought up to date; the ALR Jordans use a passive bass radiator to help shift air at the lowest frequencies. Richard White hangs on to his hat whilst giving these solidly built 'speakers their head.



37...ALR Jordan Note 3 'speakers

volume 10
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June
2000



27. . .MVL A2+ Integrated Amplifier

25. . .Monrio MP1 Monoblocs



39. . .Final 0.3 Electrostatics 'speakers

39...FINAL 0.3 ELECTROSTATICS

In the eyes and ears of many people, hybrid loudspeakers are a mixed blessing. Simon Pope takes a long hard listen at these stylish-looking electrostatic/reflex 'speakers from Final. Powerful bass and sparkling treble, or just a 'curate's egg' - good in parts? Find out on page 39.

VINYL

35...HADCOCK GH 242SE TONEARM

With the year 2000 still ringing in everyone's ears, George Hadcock offers a new tonearm to greet the Millennium.

With re-optimized geometry and stylish

chrome-plated bodywork, will the new model catch the buyers' ear? Richard White threads his needle.

49...COMPUTER AUDIO

Three pages of wonders from the fast-growing computer audio sector. David Price taps in to the web consciousness for more thrills and spills in the world of on-line digits.

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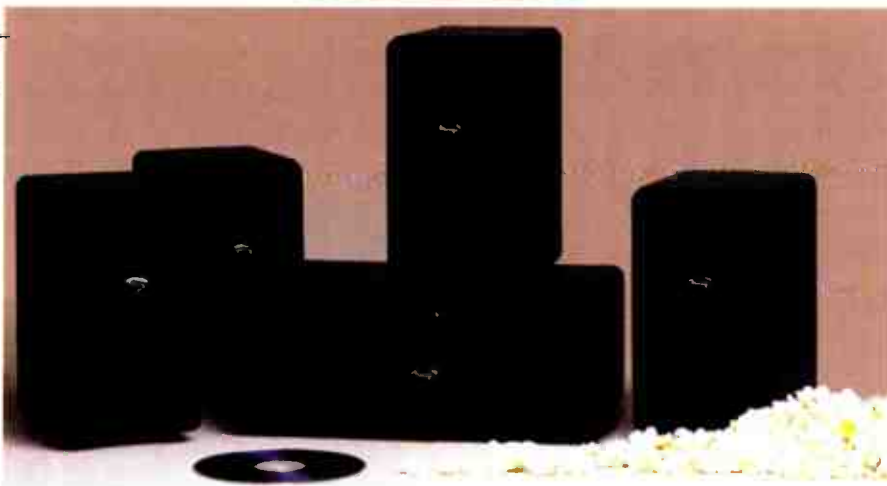
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Getting a better, more involving sound often means spending a lot of hard earned money. It's such a waste, because every system can benefit from our cables and accessories, at a fraction of the cost of some new "black box". Here are some of the ways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

We have Linear Crystal Oxygen Free Copper interconnects (£12.48) up to High Purity Silver cables (£89.00) and high definition loudspeaker cables in Silver Plated Copper or Pure Silver. Our mains cables add weight, power and scale,

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THE LINKS EFFECT

IXOS have a new digital coaxial interconnect to show off. The 1051 Argento is the latest version of the award-winning 105 interconnect. It's priced at £39.95 per metre and features a new silver-plated, oxygen-free-copper solid-core conductor with twin oxygen-free-copper braid screens designed to increase noise rejection. IXOS also claim that it's engineered to deliver a "pure 75ohms impedance across the bandwidth".

It's designed to be used with latest generation DVD players for connection to DTS/Dolby Digital receivers and processors and "top line" CD transports to DACs.

**Path Group Plc,
Unit 2, Desborough Industrial Park,
Desborough Park Rd.,
High Wycombe,
Bucks HP12 3BG
Tel: 01494 441736**



RECORDED MESSAGE

TEAC have two new compact disc recorders on the market which are new additions to the 300 and 500 Reference Series. Both, however, are available separately.



The RW-H300, priced at £399.95, for the 300 Reference Series features an on-board frequency converter (32 or 48 kHz to 44.1 kHz). Erase function for CD-RW-DA, CD sync. recording, auto or manual

Track Increment, TOS-Link optical digital input and output and independent left/right recording level control. The RW-H500 CD recorder, for the Reference 500 series, is priced at £449.95 and features the same facilities as the 300.

**Teac UK Ltd,
E Martin House,
The Crowley Centre,
Watford,
Herts,
WD1 8YA
Tel: 01523 815630**

PASS THE BUCKS

These brutes are the new X1000 Monobloc amplifiers from Passlabs of California. The Passlabs X Series consists of the biggest and most powerful amplifiers the company has ever made (and they've made a few heavyweights). They claim to have a tremendous dynamic range of >150 dB to do justice to the 24 bit recordings of the 21st Century.

The X1000 monobloc has only two gain stages: a single-stage front end which provides all of the voltage gain, and a high current follower stage.

The output follower stage consists of four banks totalling 80 power Mosfets, rated at 12 kilowatts for class A operation to 120 watts peak. The input and output of the amplifier is direct coupled, and the connection is by balanced output only. For higher power operation, X1000s can be operated in an array producing up to 2000W per chassis. Two X1000s can therefore deliver a claimed 4000W into 8 ohms or 2 ohms. Four X1000s can deliver 8000 watts into 4 ohms, and, if you're really rich and hard of hearing, sixteen X1000s can deliver 32,000W into 1 ohm(!)

The X1000 is provided with a dedicated high current 20-amp power cord that mates to a standard receptacle at the rear of the amplifier and it needs a high current wall socket. The cash required for such powerful luxury - £10,500 for each monobloc.

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Classic

JOIN THE Q

KEF have a new loudspeaker range in full production. The KEF Q.2 Series attempts to bring new aesthetics to the ever-popular Q Series. The patented Uni-Q technology is now in its fourth generation. For those unaware of the technology, it features a tweeter that is mounted at the "exact" acoustic centre of the midrange cone.

This is to apparently create a broader and more detailed sound stage throughout the whole listening area. This, claim KEF, makes the 'speaker less directional and an easier load to drive. The Q.2 Series features an improved tweeter with a larger magnet and a new midrange unit in a new silver finish.

Prices start at £199.99 for the Q15.2 two-way compact, through to £699.99 for the Q65.2 three-way floor-stander. There's also a rear surround closed box model, the Q85s, at £179.99



and the Q95c two-way centre channel at £199.99.

**KEF Audio Ltd.,
Eccleston Rd.,
Tovil, Maidstone,
Kent ME15 6QP
Tel: 01622 672261**

Panasonic

LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY!

Panasonic has re-focused itself on the CD-ROM market with a new 40X speed drive. The CR-593 is available for just £29.99 and comes supplied with an ATAPI interface and uses Constant Linear Velocity and Constant Angular Velocity techniques, which apparently achieve data rates of up to 6000kbytes per second.

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KARMA CHAMELEON

At a recent Frankfurt show Chameleon Audio displayed their new rugged-looking D777 power amplifier. This can apparently deliver - surprise, surprise - 777W per channel into 4 ohms. Surprisingly for such a powerful beast it weighs less than 10 kilos and fits easily into a standard size equipment rack.

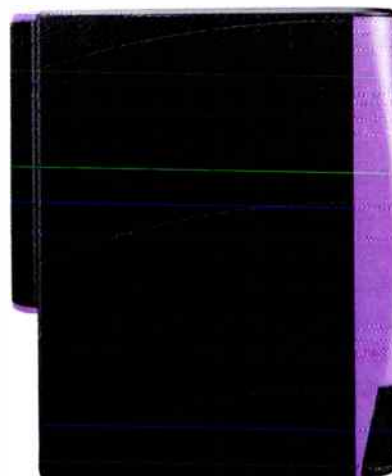
The 777 features a lightweight linear power supply which they claim will be hard matched by even switch-mode amplifiers with similar dimensions. There's also variable forced heatsink cooling and quadruple bi-phase rectification for a quicker current delivery. They are very proud of their new baby, with designer Paul Houlden describing the D777 as a real breakthrough and an "ultra-compact package with high reliability levels, producing the best sound around."



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Cinderford Mitcheldean,
Glos,
GL14 3JA
Tel: 01594 827602
e-mail: cameleon@ftch.co.uk

MONITOR WIZARDS

The Professional Monitor Company have launched their first compact monitor. The AML1 boasts an impressive build quality with custom drive units and OS-Con capacitors used in key design areas. The bass driver is a flat, piston design made from carbon fibre and a Nomex honeycomb. In a break from the professional monitor norm, the tweeter is a soft dome model. Quoted sensitivity is 106dB with the amplification - 100W - being supplied by none other than Canadian professional amp designers, Bryston. There are also three by-passable user controls for input level, LF roll-off, LF tilt and HF tilt. The AML1 is available now priced at £3000 plus VAT.



PMC Ltd.,
Unit 72 Haslemere Industrial Estate,
Tewin Rd.,
Welwyn Garden City,
Herts AL7 1BD
Tel: 01707 393002

NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

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

Samuel Johnson Audio pre/power amps

This new high-end company have launched themselves onto the market with a very stylish pre/power combination. Will they sound as grand as they look?

Tannoy mx2 loudspeakers

Tannoy have updated and re-designed their budget models, building on the success of the m Series. We give a listen to the middle-priced speaker.

Zingali Overture 0.3 loudspeakers

These chunky floorstanders hail from Italy and feature beautiful cabinet work and a horn tweeter. Read what we think of them in four weeks time!

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KEEP ON MOVIN'

Summer's here and the time is apparently right for dancing in the street. So Simon Pope and David Price round-up six portable players and boogie on down the road!

Portable audio players have changed a lot since their inception. Gone are the days when portable meant something that was either very small, expensive and unreliable or something that was reliable but resembled a Revox A77 strapped tastefully to your trouser belt - and wore all for the humble cassette.

Portable now means digital, very light, very small and mostly affordable. After the initial plague of portable MiniDisc recorders, to quench the thirst of those who require ever decreasing size, we now have a trend for beautifully sleek and sexy player-only models. Many people now have a dedicated MiniDisc recorder firmly settled between their other ancillaries at home and crave something they can plop in their pocket with out inviting the question "Is that a MiniDisc recorder in your pocket or are you just..."

Portable also now encompasses two of the fastest growing mediums in consumer electronics, DVD and MP3, both of which are featured here. There are a number of portable DVDs on the market, perhaps the most stylish of which we have captured for this little round-up. And David Price gives his valued opinion on two of the most popular portable MP3 players.

Make no mistake, portables will be around as long as music itself exists, which is some time yet. Their ever-developing attraction and quality make sure of this, and with MP3, for example, they are also at the forefront of new technology. And partnered with a decent £40-50 pair of headphones such as those from Grado or Sennheiser, the sound can be spot-on. As a current advert for an international bank rightly says, we as customers always want the biggest of everything. This may be so, but we also want the smallest.



AIWA AM-H50 MINIDISC PLAYER

It's now that portable MD players are coming into their own. Rather than purchase a more chunky recorder, more people now have full-size recorders at home and are plumping for portable MD players as their preferred choice for music on the move.

It's hard to imagine a portable MiniDisc player being any smaller than this sexy little number from Aiwa.

Described as Ultra Slim, you can literally slip it in your shirt pocket without creating a bulge or a sag as it's almost as light as a feather. If your top criteria for a portable is sheer portability, you can't get much better than this. The problem that can occur with ultra thin and light gear is that often something has been sacrificed for size, and it can often be sound quality. In this case, it's a display window on the main body of the player. It's found instead on the small and functional remote con-

trol which has slightly more usable buttons than the necessarily miniscule offerings found on the player itself. A blue velvet bag of the expensive Scotch whisky

hefty battery life of fifty hours playback time (rechargeable Ni-MH battery included, plus attachable AA battery pack), forty seconds anti-shock and Aiwa's Dynamic Super Linear bass. Dealing with the digits inside the casework is a 1bit D/A converter.

As far as sonic performance is concerned, the AM-HX50 keeps up the tradition of Aiwa's high quality performance in the portables market.

The supplied earphones are some of the better examples of the in-ear genre and

deliver a bright and exciting sound with a sensible bass balance - as long as they stay in your ears, that is! Excerpts of Bach's B Minor Mass gleaned from vinyl sounded refreshing and clear, with space and air. This is a great little player, tiny enough to be stored almost anywhere. It has the knack of looking sexy and sleek and also delivering the goods in the sound stakes.

variety is supplied to plop the whole shebang into for transportation purposes.

A host of functions are crammed into such a small space. There is a



SONY MZ-R55

Personal MiniDisc players and recorders have a short shelf-life. They may sell like hot cakes and have the most up to date features but manufacturers can't resist trying for improvement by adding maybe one more feature, reducing the size by 2mm or the weight by 2 grams. As it goes this excellent little recorder will probably be replaced in the near future by something only marginally different. Manufacturers should get a grip on this. I really can't see a personal MiniDisc recorder getting beneficially any smaller or more feature-packed than this, and it's also coupled with a light-weight stylish design. The phrase "if it ain't broken, don't fix it" springs to mind.

The MZ-R55 is as stylish, if maybe a fraction more functional-looking, as the sexy little Aiwa player expect that it has slightly more girth to accommodate the recording technology. Features abound, including an optical digital input, a microphone input and also a 'proper' line out for linking to a hi-fi system. There's also a

switchable volume limiter for protecting one's lugholes. As far as recording facilities go, most of the facilities to be found on a full-size recorder are present in

miniature form here, including editing and track naming.

Apart from the functions, the other area in which the Sony shines is sound quality. It has an open and clean sound that manages also to be smooth and sophisticated. Harpsichord and strings, for example, possess none of the brittleness that digital compressed sound can sometimes bring. The Mega Bass Boost (in two stages) benefits from not being too Mega. Hence the tight and controlled low end that never becomes over-balanced against the rest of the sound. Chuck in a remote that manages to be sleek and modern without looking like an unused prop from Blake's Seven and you have a very sensibly-priced package, not particularly cheap, but very good value when it comes to features and sound quality. This has to be a 'must buy' if you require a portable recorder, and although there's some strong contenders out there, not much on the market can touch it.



ultimate



PHILEX MPRESS3

Although it arrived at the same time as the new Rio, the MPress3 is more of a swish first generation machine than a true second waver. One for iMac fans, its silver and translucent blue front panel make it look sweet as cherry pie. Unfortunately its overall build and durability don't seem as hot as comparable MD portables which routinely sport metal casings. Nor are the ergonomics quite so good, but in defence, the MPress3 costs just £149 and comes with a handy 128 minute voice recorder.

It also comes supplied with a manual in PDF format which you can read with the aid of the also-supplied Adobe Acrobat reader! The MP3 files are opened into the software database and can be loaded from it in any desirable order. The clear LCD indicates track number and the remaining playing time,



whilst smaller icons are present for volume level, battery level, bass and treble. There are also the various preset EQ modes and a user mode can be set, also.

Sound is comparable to cheap MiniDisc portables - a touch cold and unforgiving but still listenable. Indeed, get yourself a decent Fraunhofer CODEC-equipped ripper (like MusicMatch Jukebox 4.1) and use the preset EQs sparingly, and you'll find it quite musically engaging. It's a neat little player with an excellent selection of features, and the supplied earphones are one of the better examples on the market.

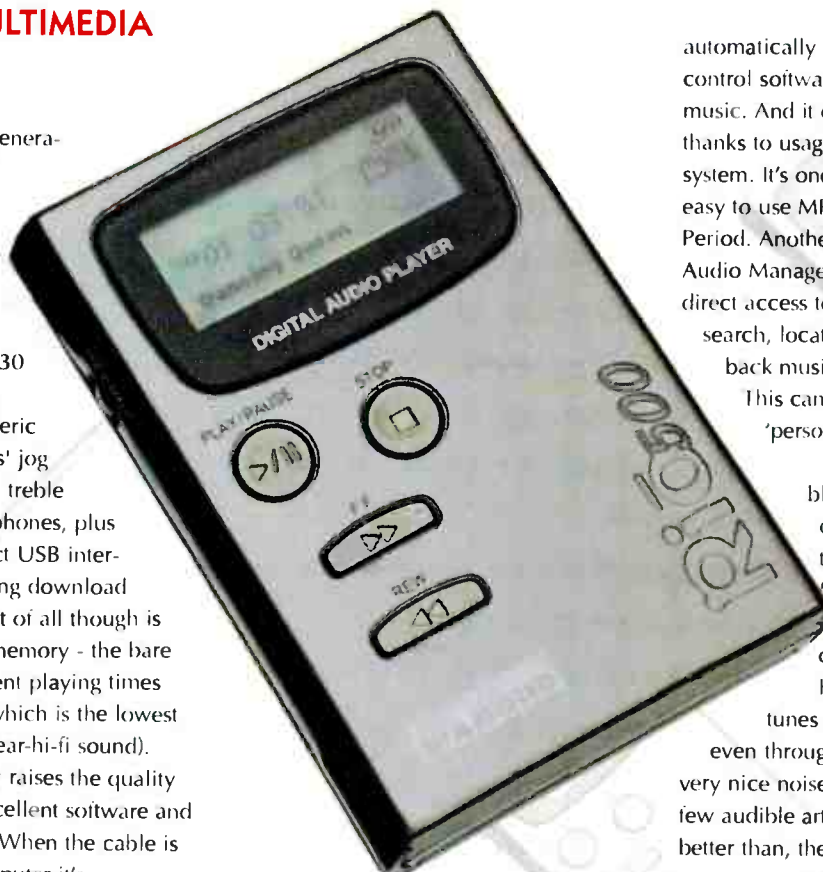
The only real downer is the paltry 32MB of memory - the player is near-useless without the optional 32MB add-on card available from:

www.input.solutions.co.uk

DIAMOND MULTIMEDIA RIO PMP500

The first true second generation MP3 portable - lighter, smaller and better made than its rivals - the new Rio combines top ergonomics and fine sound. Its high £230 retail price buys you a nifty backlit alphanumeric display, 'turn and press' jog dial, separate bass and treble controls, decent headphones, plus a superb direct-connect USB interface which gives blazing download speeds. Most important of all though is its standard 64MB of memory - the bare minimum for half-decent playing times from 128kbps MP3s (which is the lowest sampling rate giving near-hi-fi sound).

Something also that raises the quality of this player is the excellent software and connections supplied. When the cable is plugged into your computer it's



automatically recognised and the Rio's control software is ready for downloading music. And it does this with great speed thanks to usage of the direct-connect USB system. It's one of the fastest loading and easy to use MP3 players on the market. Period. Another great bonus is the Rio Audio Manage software which gives direct access to RioPort.com. This lets you search, locate, locate create and playback music in a simple application.

This can then be stored in your 'personal jukebox'.

As with all MP3 portables, sound quality comes down to a combination of the CODEC used to rip the MP3 and the player's on-board DAC and analogue output stage. Give the new Rio 192kbps (or better) tunes and it positively sings - even through high end hi-fis you get very nice noises. Warm, sweet and with few audible artifacts, it's as good as, if not better than, the latest MiniDisc portables.

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WorldRadioHistory

PIONEER PDV-LC10

This, basically, has to be the ultimate portable. Not perhaps in its capacity for being carried around, as if you used it on the move you'd either get very tired or be run over by a vehicle. But when it comes down to sheer versatility, the PDV-LC10 takes some beating.

What we have here is, by all means, a toy for the upwardly-mobile, thirty-something Clapham bachelor (not that I'm one to stereotype). It's without doubt the best looking portable DVD on the market. Slimline, with a 7" 'wide-screen' flip-up LCD screen, it's the epitome of technological cool; and - take it from first hand experience - is a very desirable gadget. I'm not particularly upwardly-mobile, nor do I dwell in Clapham and I'm married, but it's firmly established on my wish-list just for the sheer hell of it.

As well as the slimline casework, there is a credit card-thin remote that deals with the usual array of DVD functions. If you're a portable audiophile with money to burn, this is the ultimate 'take where

you want' digital playback machine. It will play DVD video discs, VCDs, CDs and CD-Rs. With the inclusion of a



24/96 DAC it also

means you can play high resolution audiophile DVD-V audio-only discs! The quality of both video and audio playback is excellent for a portable. With a good pair of headphones, both CD and 24/96 discs (such as Rachmaninov's Symphonic Dances on the Classic DVD 24/96 label) are played with control and a rare sophistication. Although a little 'dry' at times there is detail relayed (especially with 24/96 discs) that other portables can only dream of. The supplied multitude of cables mean that connection to a hi-fi is easily achieved. And, although the sound isn't as good a full sized £500 player, it's better than most other digital portables

I've put through a hi-fi. The screen also, considering the size, is clear and detailed with good resolution.

It comes with a chunky-ish (yet stylish) battery pack, which the unit fits into (supplying three-and-a-half hours of continuous play with screen). The price isn't cheap but even the most cynical and doubtful among you could well succumb to its charm!

SONY PBD-V30

This portable DVD player has been on the market for a while now, and we reviewed it last year, but it still remains the best screenless DVD portable on the market. It's a small and functional little machine with lid-mounted controls that are easy to use - indeed, it's an all-round user-friendly machine. Weighing in at just over a kilo with the 7.2v lithium battery pack, the case encloses a twin laser mechanism and Dolby Digital output (no DTS - this shows its age). There's an A/V out socket with supplied cable for connecting up to your hi-fi and telly, and a full remote control

The performance using the lithium battery is very good indeed and it seems that Sony's experience in all things portable really pays off. Playing audio discs it's a surprisingly musical customer with both



CDs and, even more, with audio only 24/96 DVDs. Using Musical Fidelity's A1001 integrated and a pair of Tannoy mx2s, basslines were delivered with tautness and depth. The top end could sometimes err a bit on the shrill side with violins and strong female voices, but overall the V30 does a very good job with musical playback. With video discs, the result is a clean and detailed picture but can't quite compete with the results supplied by a full size player.

With miniturisation there's usually a sacrifice to be made somewhere, and whilst it's a very small sacrifice it comes in the form of pictures with the V30, as the Sony's sonic performance is very good indeed, with the emphasis on phrasing, making it very well suited to vocal music of all kinds.

CONCLUSION

Times change, of course, and now we have a whole host of portable audio items that reflect the fast-developing world of consumer electronics. Zippy, jelly-coloured personal cassette players sit on the shelves alongside portable DVD players, which in turn sit alongside watches that will download and play MP3 files as well as tell the time. The theme of our round-up was ultimate portables, so we picked the best available of each type and assessed them in their

own right, so there's neither a winner or a loser, as such. One of the items that stood out for its sheer 'wantability' is the Pioneer portable DVD complete with LCD 'widescreen' monitor. This played movies and audio discs (including CDs!) with equal aplomb and really impressed us with both its performance and sexy looks. Yes, it may be a rich boy's toy, but who cares?

On the MiniDisc side of things, the two samples we managed to listen to

were both exemplary. The Aiwa player has a style that's sleek and cool and sounds equally sophisticated, whilst the Sony is probably the best personal MD recorder around at present - it's easy to use with excellent facilities, great sounding and as small as you'll ever need a recorder to be!

And the two MP3 players here are, we think, the best currently available. Check out our World Verdicts.



Sony PBD-V30 £700
Sony: 01932 816000



Select MPress 3 £150
www.inputsolutions.co.uk



Aiwa AM-H50
Aiwa: 0208 897 7000

WORLD VERDICT



Great performer, attractive but a little dated compared to the competition.

Measured Performance see page 111

WORLD VERDICT



Style, sound and speed make it one of the best at the price.

WORLD VERDICT



If you're after a player in this price range this could well be the one to go for.

Measured Performance see page 111



Pioneer PDV-LC10 £1000
Pioneer: 01753 789789



Diamond Rio PMP500 £200
Diamond: 01189 444477



Sony MZ-R55 £250
Sony: 01932 816000

WORLD VERDICT



One of those, 'must have' executive toys. Great if you can afford it.

Measured Performance see page 111

WORLD VERDICT



Superb look, software and sound make it the best all-rounder.

WORLD VERDICT



Stylish and small, yet feature-packed. Highly recommended.

Measured Performance see page 111

PORTABLES PAST AND PRESENT

The act of taking recorded music with you wherever you may tread has been around in one guise or another for a very long time indeed. Think of Edison's early machines or, going back even further into the eighteenth century, musical boxes.

The main development was the inception of the Sony Walkman nearly twenty years ago, which heralded the dawn of the personal "hi-fi" (as it used to be known) phenomenon. Whilst the original Sony was sleek, sophisticated and sounded great, there were the minor reliability problems that come with being the smallest and first of anything.

Times change, of course, and now we

have a whole host of portable audio items that reflect the fast-developing world of consumer electronics. Here we highlight two classic bits of portable kit. One is something that could shape the future of how we listen to music on the move, and the other is a piece of pure portable history - the recorder that showed the world excellent things can come in small packages!

CASIO MP3 WATCH

Noel Keywood lends a critical ear to Casio's answer to music on the move - and ends up pleasantly surprised!

We couldn't pass up the opportunity to have a quick listen to Casio's new MP3 watch for this report. It's one of those 'must have' gadgets - 'till you've got it perhaps. At 19mm thick you'll need to consult your tailor about this one, or stick to tee shirts. It's not as if the rest of the

with a USB connector. You'll need Windows 98 or higher for USB, plus USB sockets on

The buttons are small, need a firm push and were fiddly.

Our first question was "where's the headphone socket". Then we noticed that it's on a carrier that clips on separately. The reason for this escapes us. Our early sample came without handbook or software so mysteries like this remain unexplained for the time being. It could just be that Casio are planning to supply alternative output connectors on different pods.

Who knows, perhaps you'll be driving your hi-fi from a watch soon!

Without software we were unable to load music or test files, which limited our assessment. The watch had just one music track onboard to prove it worked and, with decent hi-fi headphones, quality seemed very good.

There was deep bass and quite definitely some sweet sounding high treble. A few minutes hooked up to our spectrum analyser was enough to show that the WMP-1 delivers musical energy from 30Hz up to 16kHz, the full musical range. It's fine as a minimum standard, so quality wise the WMP-1

looks good - it's no toy. Full volume was loud but clean, tests showing the player didn't overload and distort like some MP3s we've reviewed.

The Casio's 16MB doesn't give much playing time and you can't pop another tape in when the music stops, but it is a bold attempt that delivers a decent sound. So plug your hi-fi system into your watch, sit back and enjoy! The idea might just catch on.

world won't notice of course: the £230 WMP-1 looks like a divers watch complete with emergency oxygen supply onboard. It's not fresh air you'll find inside though but 16MB of computer memory, enough to hold 16 minutes of music encoded at 128kbts/sec, so called CD quality. Halving the data rate extends this to 30 minutes, with loss of quality.

Our review sample came with a docking station, which also serves as a charger when connected to a 7.5V power supply unit. The station has a cradle for the watch and hooks up to the computer through a lead

your motherboard of course, or MAC OS8.6 or higher and an iMac or G3 with USB sockets.

The watch's fascia has a Mode button that toggles from Time to Alarm to Stopwatch and back. Hold it down and the display suddenly animates with a dancing icon, plus MP3 track number and playing time. A Play button gets things going; it also serves to Pause. Track Skip buttons reset to zero (i.e. Stop) and there are small volume 'up' and 'down' buttons.



UNBIASED REPORTING

Nothing added, nothing taken away, promised Sony's WM-D6C 'Walkman Professional' cassette portable. David Price investigated.

It was dark, windy night in 1986 when I first identified the suspect in a Tottenham Court Road shop window. It was an unassuming little thing, giving no obvious visual clues as to its capability. Only on second appraisal, some days later, did I realise what this machine was capable of.

Consider the evidence - a black, brick-like 180x90x40mm Walkman with a metallised case, when all others were smaller, brighter and plasticky. Then there was the extra Record button - something you almost never saw on a cassette portable of this type. The Dolby selector was another give-away, offering both B and C noise reduction systems on a little slider switch. Then there was the bank of little oblong LEDs, with peak indicators flashing at +3dB and +6dB. Hell, three out of the five meter segments weren't even in the minus zone! What did it all mean?

Looking around the back was no less intriguing - a facility to switch off the quartz-lock speed control to allow variable pitch playback. Variable pitch? Quartz lock? What would these be doing on a Walkman? You don't even find them on two head Nakamichis! Then there was the mechanical tape counter, the large battery box packing four AA cells, and a long volume slider controlling one of the beefiest headphone amps I'd heard. Forget the overgrown earphones of other walkies, this output stage could drive the meanest of high-end hi-fi cans. It was a highly suspect device. After much head scratching, I was forced to conclude it was not actually a Walkman at all, but a real hi-fi cassette deck in disguise.

Inserting a pre-recorded cassette

into the Sony's transport only served to confirm my suspicions. The transport, with its beefy capstan and expensive looking heads, seemed quite unlike those of other portables. Indeed it proved clunky in an over-engineered sort of way. Just as

switched off the Dolby B, whacked the record level up until the +6dB was flashing on and off like a Christmas tree, and cued up my turntable. The results were little less than astounding - so tight, so powerful, so clean, so dynamic, so musical. The usual cassette nasties (wow and flutter,

tape hiss, compression) seemed comprehensively banished. I was amazed, I'd only ever heard the top, three-head Nakamichis do better.

It was all becoming clear, and the facts slotted in to place. I realised the Walkman Professional was Sony's very best high end hi-fi cassette trans-

port, squeezed into a box and run from batteries. Its record/replay head was also a top dollar laser amorphous affair, and to compensate for the lack of dual capstans (too tricky to fit into such a small box), the WM-D6C had the first quartz-lock servo control to grace a Sony cassette deck. This explained its superb speed stability and fantastic overload figures.

These days, I see large numbers of Sony Walkman Professionals in the course of my investigations. The lagging popularity of cassette means people are selling them on the second-hand market. But it's a shady business, buying a used example. Despite the beefy build, they still aren't quite man enough for the punishment the pro audio guys hand out. The transport breaks easily, the lack of proper auto-stop can wreck the motor and the heads don't last forever either. So be warned. A newish, mint, low use example is worth £200, but there are dodgy characters out there passing off fifteen year old nails for upwards of £150 - don't even think about it. Case closed.

From the moment my pre-recorded tape spooled off its leader, I detected something distinctly different. Instead of the usual splashy, mushy treble, it was sparkingly clear and vivid. Gone was the traditional wobbly walkman midband with vague imaging and fuzzy detail, in its place a clean, confident soundstage with bold lateral and front-to-back imaging. Whatever could be going on? Then there was the bass, oh that bass! Run from batteries or a high quality DC supply, low frequencies had a speed and power like few other cassette machines I'd heard. The facts, ma'am, were plain to hear.

A lucky break, I thought, so I swapped to a Sony Metal ES blank, slid the little tape selector over to Type IV,



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HI-HO SILVERLINE!

The Silverline Series marks a distinct change from the usual marquee of NAD. The familiar functional grey box has been replaced by a white matt box of fairly substantial build that, yes, does bear a passing resemblance to silver in a certain light. Actually the whole design looks a little classier in it's chosen hue than it would in stainless steel. It's a very streamlined look with heat

sinks incorporated into the side panels, a thick, overlapping fascia and a matching slim-line drawer. Adding to the style appeal is the simple-but-effective blue dot-matrix display window which spells out operational instructions, such as play or pause, plus the time durations. It's a committed progression towards the high-end for NAD, and I think it works. Indeed, the only recognisable bit of NAD the S500 has is the familiar 'pregnant rhomboid' grey remote supplied.



Simon Pope takes a trip down memory lane with the flagship CD player from NAD - the Silverline S500.

took me a while to put my 'air-violin' down and remember that I was supposed to be reviewing the CD player rather than the recording. There was a rich and natural tone to the instruments, that seemed untouched by any deliberate internal component tweaking to give the player a 'distinctive' sound. The S500 brought me into the music with its simplicity of performance, the highlights of which included natural sound staging and a intricately detailed midrange.

Lose. The clean sounding drum kit and bass guitar powered the groove through the 'speakers to create a real drive to the open and spacious sound. Similarly uncompressed was the Cleveland Orchestra with Mahler's Seventh Symphony. The orchestra had space and transparency which helped to deliver all the intricacies found in the orchestration. Tonal balance was excellent, with violins and brass rich, yet detailed, whilst woodwind floated weightlessly over the double basses, growling for all they were worth. Great stuff.

I can highly recommend the S500. Even though it has recently taken a price drop, it's still quite an expensive player. It's a tough job for a budget/mid price company to take the plunge and go for the upper scale of the market, but in this instance NAD have made a good shot at it. The S500 will play all CDs with excitement, good tonal balance, an open and spacious sound and, above all, simplicity.

NAD S500 £1000

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Balanced outputs are just one of the S500's high-end features

I've found throughout my time in the hi-fi reviewing business that very often the best equipment is not that which grabs you immediately with its out-and-out glitzy sound and wacky styling; these are undoubtedly the fun items. But when I want to listen to music at home, I tend to choose something that's reliable in sound and simply plays music without any raised eyebrows or sharp intakes of breath. The NAD S500 is one such bit of kit.

I have a recording of Mozart String Quartets played by the Franz Schubert foursome that has some wonderfully delicate and balanced playing coupled with so-so recording quality. On hearing it through the S500, I wasn't listening to flaws in either the player or the recording but my attention was instead grabbed by notes, phrasing and musical dynamics. It

The way in which the S500 will play both rotten and demonstration recordings with equal attention was brought to light with Radiohead's OK Computer, the opening track of which - Airbag - sounds like it was recorded in a bungalow garage with the aid of My First Mixing Desk. Again, my attention was taken away from the highly compressed recording and focussed upon the music, which was opened up by the S500. The drum kit powered away skillfully and Thom Yorke's whines seemed, for once, to actually mean something. All the aspects of the muddled mix were as discernable as intended by the engineer, and there was an excitement and frisson to the sound which is often lost on lesser players.

This excitement remained with the excellent rock-out recording of the Foo Fighter's latest album, Nothing Left To

WORLD VERDICT



A great little player with excellent performance and sleek looks. Highly recommended.

Measured Performance see page 111

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THE ROAD TO MONRIO

Monobloc power amplifiers have an enthusiastic following in hi-fi. Richard White listens to Monrio's MP1s to decide whether these two can tango.

It is very tempting to describe these monoblocs as grey lumps and let it go at that. Not that I see any reason to be ashamed of their appearance. After all, a power amp is intended to perform a task which doesn't of necessity include looking pretty. Anyway, grey lumps.

Solid ones, mark you with an encouraging weight to them and a well-crafted face plate containing only a couple of LED beacons and the standby/on switch. Things aren't much more crowded on the back, with just the rocker power switch, kettle socket, phono input and loudspeaker terminals. As regards setting up, the Monrio's are one of the simplest jobs I've tackled - apart from lifting the things!

The Monrio MP1s can deliver of a very capable 120W each of solid state power. As the switching from 'standby' to 'on' is accomplished internally by a buffered relay, there's little danger of unwanted surges escaping in the direction of your loudspeakers.

Having had such an easy job installing the amps, I had plenty of time to give them a thorough gallop through the riches of the musical spectrum. First stop, pot luck on the radio. With "In Tune" presenter Sean Rafferty on holiday, there was time for more music and less chat; the first movement of the recently re-constructed Third Symphony of Elgar providing a good solid meal for any amplifier to deal with. Central to Elgar's orchestrations is the wonderful 'thickness' of the string texture, a satisfying feast provided it doesn't overstep the mark into muddiness. Happily the Monrios were well up to this; the enormous textures washing out of the loudspeakers still kept all components distinct. 'Cellos and double basses particularly benefitted from the breadth-with-detail which the amps were providing. Needless to say, you can't churn out Elgar, or any of the Late Romantic masterpieces with a two-valve Dansette - you need assured

power. Even with the volume turned up uncomfortably high, there was no sign of breathlessness.

Finding some fusion rock on the go (not on Radio 3 you understand) gave the Monrios the chance to demonstrate their speed. We've noted before how certain amplifiers (Musical Fidelity's for example) always impress with the immediacy of their performance, and the Monrios seem set fair to join this nippy club. Although I couldn't entirely agree with the sentiments of the track being broadcast - indeed I doubt if it's physically possible - nevertheless the message came over good, fast and clear!

Vocal music next: Linn's HDCD Airs de Cour, a collection of 16th and 17th Century courtly songs, has

Back with more customary sources, I wheeled out some Haydn string quartets on Naxos to see if the amplifiers would communicate the slightly Fortnum and Mason sound to my loudspeakers. Here, with music of limited dynamic range, the Monrios perhaps felt a little under-used. To describe the sound as grey is an overstatement but there was certainly a shadow of a shade about it. Not enough, it is true, to fundamentally detract from one's enjoyment, but just a hint of not quite getting the full story of the music. As I've remarked, these amplifiers excel on beefier material, so perhaps it's just a question of horses for courses.

As regards, speed, power and sheer push, the Monrio monoblocs leave little to be desired. They are a convenient and compact way to follow the monobloc route, but they do not sound valve-like - indeed why should they? Putting

aside my reservations - all of which might be modified with a different pre-amp and/or loudspeakers - the Monrios are well constructed and competent beasts and will suit a wide variety of systems.



Monrio MP1s monoblocs £600 each

some very carefully recorded examples of both male and female voices, with a range of detail which makes for an excellent test for hi-fi, regardless of the at times rather samey musical content. Here the voices, accompanied only by a lute, were clear certainly; possibly there was also a hint of the slightly metallic sheen which the very richness of what I'd listened to earlier had masked. Ears out on strings, I listened further. This sort of recording is not common. In other words, there is a touch of the metallic to the amps' sound but I think it's only with this sort of source material that it would irritate, so it's probably nothing to worry about.

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WORLD VERDICT



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Measured Performance see page 111

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hey, good looking...



Can MVL keep their footing in the hi-fi world with the updated A2+ integrated? The odds are in their favour, reckons Jon Marks.

Looking fetching in its upmarket satin steel garb decorated with chunky, machined knobs, the latest of MVL's A2+ integrateds has been working out in the FET gym - an increase in the number of output devices means a satisfying jump in maximum power from 100watts to 150watts.

The extra grunt on offer took barely a bar or two of the sound track CD from the film *Run, Lola, Run* to show through. Whereas the first A2+ into HFW's listening room had failed to really get Magneplanar's MG12/QR panels properly fired up, this newcomer injected much more impact and speed into their music making. Apparently, some would-be fans of the MVL sound felt there was a certain, vital something missing from the bottom-end of the original models, an ingredient which is definitely not lacking in the new recipe.

Mixing it up with this greater control was an improvement in clarity of the 'grimy window freshly cleaned' variety. Desmond Decker's *Rude Boy Ska* compilation is a fine example of content over presentation. The tonal richness which characterises this amp made easy work of turning these tracks into gems of the Ska world, rather than an obstacle course for the ears.

On the other hand, if the recording happens to be something along the lines of Eric Bibb And Needed Times' *Good Stuff* - captured with crystal clarity by Opus 3 - then you're in for a seriously life-like listening session. Spartan arrange-

ments such as 'Saucer And Cup' highlighted the natural, unprocessed way in which the MVL handled string instruments in particular, Bibb's guitar possessing a rare harmonic complexity and transient speed.

The A2+ came up trumps on every input (each of which features the company's Sound Sentinel system, which "improves" the signal passing into it). Showing the biggest gains were the inputs for CD, LP and FM. The first had a refreshing freedom from typical digital failings that flow undisguised through the majority of amps - deficiencies in tonal colour, sound stage depth and image precision to name the worst offenders.

Plying the Phono stage with millivolts from a Technics SL-7 direct-drive parallel-tracker in addition to a Music Maker on an SME V/Trio L-07D, I discovered low background noise married to a real ability to swing dynamics and keep the musical heart of a song beating. But even more successful were the sockets for Ye Olde wireless transmission, where humble solid-state tuners from the Seventies shed their thin and crispy or fat and bloaty colorations to give an altogether more involving, balanced picture of the ether.

The changes wrought inside the A2+ are more of everything desirable in the bass, increased three-dimensionality and wider compatibility with tough speaker loads. Seeing as a plain black A2+ will still set you back the £1250 of the original, it looks as if MVL have succeeded in making a fine amp even more versatile.

THE TECHNOLOGY

The A2+ amplifier has MVL's own Sound Sentinel enhancement circuits that, they told us, improve the sound quality of sources.

Measurement with noise, impulse and sine wave test signals showed Sound Sentinel applies bass and treble boost under all circumstances, gently with the bass control turned fully anti-clockwise, which also negates treble control action. With full bass dialled in the treble control would then alter treble lift, so these controls are confusingly interactive.

Subjectively, small amounts of bass and treble lift add presence, but detract from fundamental accuracy and are very much a matter of taste.

MVL A2+ (Satin steel finish) £1450

MVL A2+ (black finish) £1250

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WORLD VERDICT



A controlled, powerful sound ensures that the A2+ remains well up in its price range

Measured Performance see page 111

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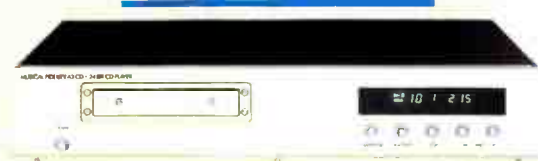
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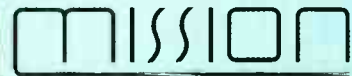
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World Radio History

PUT THE RIGHT ARM IN

Richard White sticks his arm out to hail the latest unipivot offering from G. C. Hadcock, the GH242 SE.

Unipivot arms have, as the name implies, one universal pivot which permits the arm to rock about the bearing in any direction. It's an attractive arrangement in many ways: for a start it is simple; second, provided that the bearing is properly designed and made, friction can be minimized to exceptionally low figures. Lastly, the set-up is inherently self-balancing - there is no tendency for gravity, acting through a fixed-axis pivot, to push the arm across the record in either direction.

Of course, it can't be all smiles: the very fact that the arm is not rigidly mounted means that portability tends to go out the window, although what portability has to do with a hi-fi set-up is open to question. A unipivot's self-balancing properties can also mask a deck not strictly on the level. In short, a unipivot tonearm needs careful setting up and careful checking from time to time - but don't they all?

General considerations aside, back to the arm in question, the GH242 SE (£689.73). At the centre of the design is George Hadcock's patented bearing, a component of his tonearms for decades now. This elegantly simple device ensures minimal friction and consequent wear, in addition to accurately centring the main components on the hardened needle point. Encasing the bearing is a massy cylinder of chromium-plated brass, into which are fitted the arm proper, the counterweight stub and the anti-skate out-rigger.

Two weights are provided for adjusting playing force. The larger of the two provides both the coarse adjustment and, being underslung, the dynamic balance. The smaller weight is for the fine adjustment. In use I found no difficulty in repeatedly setting the playing weight

within a tenth of a gramme with this arrangement. Both weights are 'O' ringed to the stub, which in turn is decoupled from the main bearing housing. The jury is still out on the practise of decoupling counterweights - some arms, notably the Rega, seem to benefit from a completely rigid coupling - but with the Hadcock (a much lighter device) the results are

beneficial. A simple weight and pulley arrangement serves to set the anti-skate bias.

The playing arm itself is manufactured from seamless drawn stainless steel, critically damped and wired with van den Hul silver leads. As can be seen in our photograph, a plug and socket arrangement makes it a simple matter to completely detach the arm while leaving the base and pivot in place; a major boon when it comes to setting up different cartridges.

It is in the geometry, perhaps, that the latest Hadcock edition breaks with its antecedents. For more years than we need recall, the 228 bit of a Hadcock arm has stood for 228mm - in other words, about 9 inches. The new 242 chimes in at about

half an inch longer. There is no 'right' answer to tone arm configuration but a moment or three I spent with the back of an envelope and the set-up instructions showed me that the latest Hadcock has been shrewdly re-optimized for minimal tracking error and well-placed null points. This

isn't just a question of 'longer tonearms are better'; the theoretical benefits of increased length are often cancelled out by the commensurately greater mass involved. The Hadcock 242 treads this fine line very gracefully.

All this care in design and manufacture need not, of course, produce a listenable result. How does it sound? Properly speaking, it doesn't. For an arm which will happily carry rather stiff MCs right the way to exceedingly compliant (30c.u.+ variable reluctance types, the

Hadcock 242's modesty is startling. Having tried it out with an extensive variety of cartridges, from a £30 MM Stanton to a £1,700 MC van den Hul,

all I can report is that, if the Hadcock is adding any coloration, the result is only an improvement. As regards its tracking ability, the new geometry is spot on, with the inner zero error point coinciding with the 'worst' groove on most LP records - a very happy result.

The Hadcock's price is roughly comparable with the Rega 900 and the SME300 range and, in my opinion, it is both more versatile and more able than either. In truth its performance places it in a higher class altogether. All-in-all, whether you view it as a bargain high-end or as an improbably musical medium-pricer, the GH242 SE deserves a long, blissful listen.

Hadcock GH242 SE £689.73
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WORLD VERDICT

£ 

Utterly musical high-end performance, with a very tempting price tag attached. Very little serious competition at the price.

Measured Performance see page 111



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CROSSING THE JORDAN

Richard White looks at ALR-Jordan's Note 3 loudspeakers, which feature a new form of an old idea.

AL R-Jordan's Note 3 loudspeakers incorporate an update of an old idea in the form of a passive bass radiator sited on the rear baffle. Although they were never universal, various applications of this idea were popular in the early seventies - Celestion made some prime examples. After the truly horrendous reflex designs of the 1950s, the so-called infinite baffle cabinet had come as a breath of comparatively undistorted air and before many years had passed, bass-reflex designs had been chopped up for firewood and every maker had at least one 'box' in its range - even Tannoy!

The only problem with an infinite baffle cabinet is its woeful lack of efficiency - 3% is good! - and ideas were investigated to keep the well-behaved response of the enclosed box whilst beefing up the output a little. ABRs (auxiliary bass radiators) are one such method - in essence a loudspeaker cone and surround bereft of coil and magnet. Inasmuch as they are coupled to the air mass in the cabinet, they behave a little

like the air mass in a reflex port - at certain frequencies their mass is too great to permit significant movement, whilst in the nether regions the cone moves with the air, either in or out of phase with the main driver, depending on the resonances of the various masses. An interesting refinement adopted by ALR-Jordan is a method by which the mass of the ABR can be trimmed; a selection of washers are supplied to be fixed on to the centre of the cone with the thumbscrew arrangement shown in our picture.

Auxiliary radiators aside, the ALR-Jordans are an exceedingly solid job - they certainly won't blow away! Two drivers do the main work, with the tweeter one of the now favoured soft-dome types.

Provision is made for bi-wiring with heavy duty cable terminals properly anchored to the back panel.

I don't know whether it was the weight of the Note 3s which made me think of Wagner, but the Philips recording of Siegfried was close to hand so I tried out the inevitable sword-forging sequence. It was obvious from the word go that these 'speakers are capable of a real sense of



grandeur; the descending scale passages were rendered with an entirely appropriate primeval feel, and Wagner's enormous orchestra threw out crushing blocks of sound: all quite exhilarating.

Staying literally with the big guns, I tried a dose of Tchaikovsky's 1812 as a cross reference. There's no doubt about it, these 'speakers can put over some very powerful arguments when fed with the might of 19th Century orchestral pieces. Experiments with the washer arrangements on the passive radiator proved a little inconclusive. Musical signals are such fleeting things that it is difficult to say whether changes in the perceived bass response were due to the variation in cone weight or just our old enemy psy-

cho-acoustics. Certainly the Jordans are not lacking in bass response; if anything they are inclined towards over-emphasis, although with an effective doubling of the cone area at the resonant frequencies, this shouldn't come as a surprise.

Away with the heavy artillery and on with The Art of Fugue, with Neville Marriner's very satisfying orchestration of Bach's masterpiece on Philips. With all the subtleties that the small-scale mix of strings, woodwind and harpsichord provides, accuracy is the main desideratum rather than power. Here there was a slight hitch. Whether or not it was the fractionally overweight bass or something more difficult to pinpoint, the Note 3s tended to sound just a bit 'lazy' on these pieces; some slight lack of presence and incisiveness left me feeling that I was 'thinking' the music rather than actually hearing it.

If power and weight are high on your wants list, these 'speakers are a strong possibility; well-made and with an appropriately weighty sound. If chamber music is your tittle, though, the slightly 'recessed' treble sound might become irritating after a time.

ALR-Jordan Note 3 £1000

**ALR-Jordan
Audio Plus Distribution Ltd.,
PO Box 902,
Sutton, Surrey SM1 2UQ
Tel: 0208 642 4436**

WORLD VERDICT



An intriguing 'speaker with plenty of bass power and weight. Rocks aplenty, but the balance isn't ideal for classical chamber music.

Measured Performance see page 111

replay



The now-classic Sugden A21a is, as far as we know, the only Class A, single ended solid state integrated amplifier available. Don't be fooled by other so-called Class A amps; they usually switch to class B after a few watts! The warm, lucid sound of the A21a is way ahead of these pretenders and costs a very reasonable £850. There is also an excellent CD player to match it, the CD21 at £899. For Sugden's ultimate Class A amplifier, there is the Masterclass pre/power, a genuinely world-class system for £4995.

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THE FINAL FRONTIER

From the land of Tulips, windmills and liberal attitudes comes the Final range of electrostatic speakers. Simon Pope goes Dutch with the baby's of the range.



Firstly, I have to admit to being a bit of a panel fan. Like many of my fellow flat-heads, I bought a pair simply because they looked and sounded different. I soon began to appreciate the benefits that can be reaped from a pair of electronic ironing boards at their best, such as beautiful transparency, air, space and detail. However 'pure' panels - such as Quad electrostatics and Magneplanars have a tradition of quirks that some consider problems. Low sensitivity (necessitating powerful amplification), positioning sensitivity (they can be very directional) and a lack of bass. On the other hand, in my opinion nothing can play unaccompanied sacred choral music (my Desert Island genre) quite like panel 'speakers. Others may consider that all the detail and refinement from a single radiator won't compensate for the sheer kick that a drive unit can deliver. Hence what is commonly known as the 'hybrid'. This is a design used by the Finals, among others, in which a powered electrostatic panel is used in conjunction with a bass drive unit. In the case of the Finals, the drive unit is intriguingly on top of the cabinet, which is situated behind the main panel at an angle.

On first listening to these 'speakers I immediately noticed they have one of the traits I mentioned earlier, namely directionality. There was undoubtedly a 'hot-spot'. With the vast spacial effect of Messiaen's Chronochromie on DG with Pierre Boulez and the Cleveland Orchestra, the Finals did a grand job of relaying the shimmering upper treble of the vast percussion section, but I felt the spacious nature of the recording was being held back. A quick tweak, as suggested by the distributor, worked wonders, however. By changing the phase of the bass drivers via the cable at the 'speaker end, the Finals made a grand job of the air and space in this marvellous

recording. This demonstrated the benefits of the electrostatic sound. Flutes and other woodwind floated naturally in the room, no matter where you stood or sat, and the violins were as transparent as possible.

The firm lower strings and percussion showed that the bass driver delivers the goods. Good extension was present, accompanying the spacious, open sound of the panels with bass depth. Maybe the two didn't amalgamate quite as naturally as you'd wish, but the bass certainly wasn't ploddish, which kept the sound as a cohesive whole.

Playing rock music in the form of Soundgarden's Superunknown CD saw the Finals reacting in quite an unexpected way. Feeling that the nature of the sound suited classical and light jazz music far better than rock music, I was pleasantly surprised that they fared very well with Soundgarden. This CD has a very complex and at times confused mix, with heaps of studio compression - not ideal panel material. But the bass driver took hold of the bass guitar and drum kit to deliver an infectious, driving groove to the music. I have rarely heard the drum kit on this album with such detail and excitement, it was a complete surprise. The only small gripes I would have here were that there were definitely two elements to the music, and you could hear at which point the bass driver took over.

If you want to invest in something entirely different from the square cabinet with drivers norm, then you should without doubt give these a listen. Yes, they take a bit of driving and are placement sensitive to a point at which you may pull

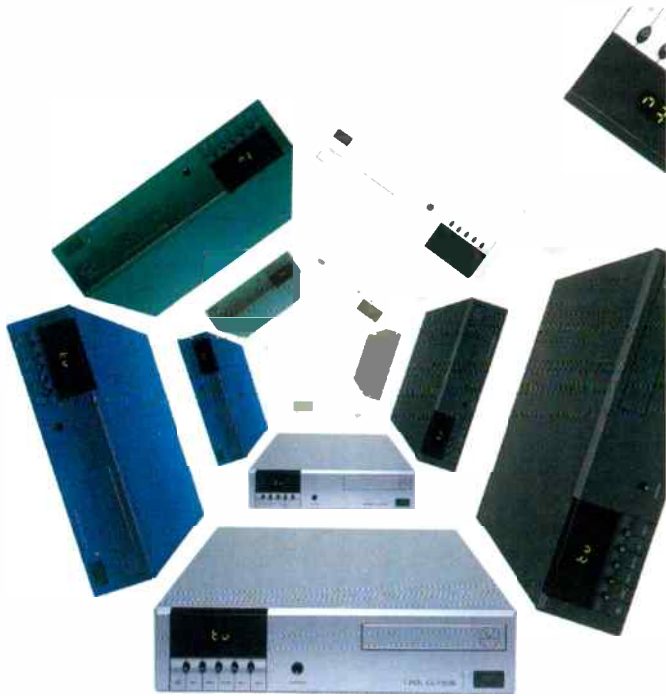
your hair out, but a little perseverance and changing the phase of that bass driver will bring a civilized and spacious sound to acoustic recordings. The sound is very different from that of a cabinet and leans towards the upper end of the frequency range, but is nonetheless a breath of fresh air in the otherwise rather stale loudspeaker world.

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

WORLD VERDICT

A civilised, open sound with oodles of space to the sound. Could integrate a little better.

Measured Performance see page 111



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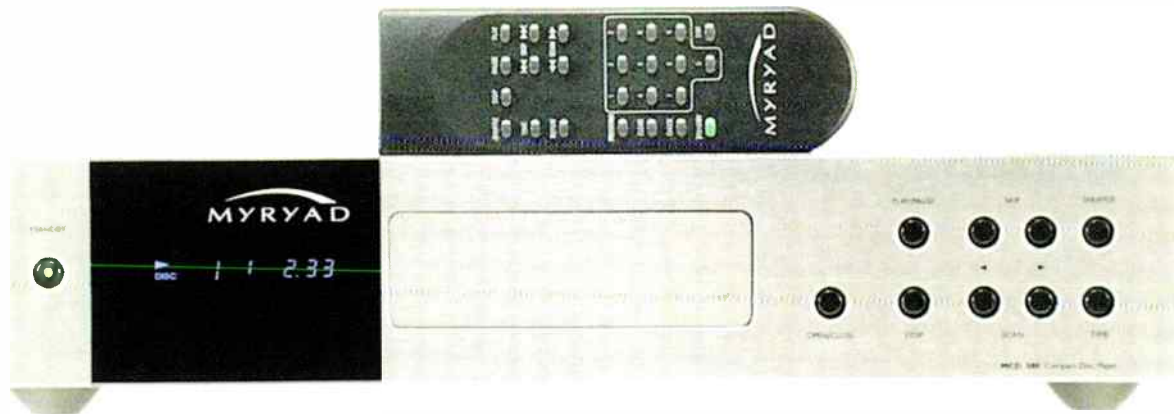
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In The Classical Style



Simon Pope encounters the dark horse that is Myryad's MCD500 top of the range CD spinner.

The Myryad M Series are flagship products. Integral to the design is their quality build and distinctly attractive black and silver styling. Inside the MCD500's casework we have a high quality 24-bit DAC made by Crystal that deals with the number-crunching. This is accompanied inside by no less than 13 separately regulated power supplies with dual transformers. The front panel consists of thick brushed aluminium with the M Series trademark display window to the left and nine simple operation buttons to the right. Although all this is crammed inside it weighs a sensible 6Kg, so a block and tackle followed by few days aromatherapy massage on the lower back isn't necessary. Also included is a comprehensive and slimline remote control - ideal for listening-chair potatoes out there.

The MCD500 took a while to run in. After a week or so of regular play the sound began to warm up and gain more depth until it was ripe for review. The main characteristics of this player are its smoothness and musicality. Other players will have more air and space with bog-standard recordings but may not have the art of carrying a phrase like the MCD500 does. This meant that the Myryad excelled with music played on 'proper' instruments, rather than a computer in some fella's spare room. So dance music was out and classical and jazz was in. And large scale classical too!

Playing Mahler's second symphony in a remastered 1977 DG version by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Claudio Abbado gave very musical

results. Starting with the beautifully lyrical mountain waltz second movement, rather than the aural assault of the opener saw the MCD500 picking up the subtleties of string playing, such as vibrato and pizzicato from the Chicago fiddlers. Also demonstrated was the deep soundstaging that the player has True, most aspects of soundstaging are present in the recording itself, but a good player is needed to highlight them. Through the MCD500 the massive orchestra had weight and presence, especially in the larger scale movements, and the ability to play music without worrying too much about the electronics in the box - always a good sign.

The MCD500 is especially good with voices, whether it be the massed choir of the Mahler or the soloists in Berlioz's massive opera *The Trojans*. Good singers carry phrases through to the death (listen to Fischer-Diskau) so every part of the phrase - and the notes that make it - are heard. The MCD500 plays music, especially opera, like this. It's a very musical player in this respect. Tonally there are no problems either. Treble is suitably sweet and bass has, rather than out and out kick, a smooth and tuneful presence.

The only slight problems come with rock music, which could sound compressed with compressed tracks, yet open with well recorded music such as Paul Weller's *Stanley Road*. The MCD has the art of exaggerating bad rock recordings in a way that strangely didn't occur with classical CDs of a similar nature. It creates much more space with acoustic music than it does with studio-based multi-track

recordings.

This is not a cheap player and there is strong competition from other similarly priced machines from people such as T&A whose players may give more demonstration fireworks and analytical performances. The MCD500 holds its own in the market by playing music - especially classical - very well indeed. You can compare it to performers. Some good orchestral conductors such as Carlo Maria Giulini rely more on richness of tone and phrasing rather than heart-stopping excitement to create a performance. The effects of this are long-term rather than merely immediate. It allows the music to seep into you. The MCD500 is the Giulini of £1000+ CD players!

Myryad MCD500 £1299

Myryad Systems Ltd
2 Pipers Wood,
Waterberry Drive,
Waterlooville,
Hants.
PO7 7XU
Tel: 01705 265508

WORLD VERDICT



Excellent with large scale classical or opera. Lacks a bit of clout with rock or dance music.

Measured Performance see page 111

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LETTER OF THE MONTH

THINKING ALOUD

Can you please help with a problem I have with my recently purchased system which consists of:

Arcam Alpha 7SE,
Sound Audio VP-3a tube line amplifier,
Arcam Alpha 8P,
Mission 750LEs hi-wired with VDH Cleartrack.
Interconnects VDH D102 Mk111.

The pre-amp was bought second-hand without manuals and although it has thirty-one steps on the volume control I can only use the first five before noise levels get too loud for the neighbours and harshness sets in. Attenuators supplied by Audio-T have not made any difference and Arcam have sug-

gested that the pre-amps input stage is being overloaded and I should get an engineer to fit one with less gain.

Do you have any information on this amplifier or any suppliers/engineers who are familiar with them as I do like the sound it produces up to volume notch four and would rather pay for it to be modified than ditch it if it is a viable exercise? Or have you had any customer reports back from people who have bought the variable attenuators advertised in the back of your magazine and could these help or is there a drop in sonic quality when using them?

Any advice you can give me will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely...

David Parfitt

This is a problem I know very well of old, particularly when trying to match any other pre-amp to a Leak power amplifier. Because of the excessive sensitivity of the old Leaks, most pre-amps thump out about eight times more volts than the amp needs with inevitable overloading.

I am curious that you say your attenuators have made no difference - they must have made some, surely. or again, why does a line amp find itself pushed into overload - outputs nowadays tend not to do this, at least not to the extreme levels you mention. Anyway; to business . . .

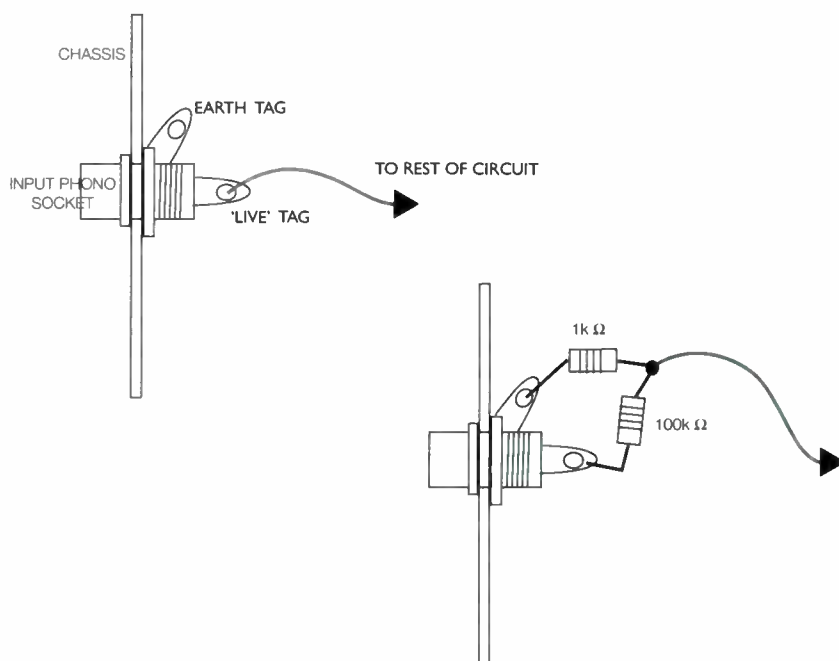
If it turns out to be question of attenuating the input level of the

pre-amp, here's what to do: you will need a selection of half-watt resistors. Values of 1k Ω , 4.7k Ω , 10k Ω and 100k Ω will probably do you for starters. If we manage to hit on the right combination, you'll need two of each - one for each channel. Separate your pre-amp entirely from the mains and open the box. Unsolder the internal lead from the input phono socket and fit the resistor network as shown:

This arrangement means that the pre-amp is being fed from a potential divider and thus receives an attenuated but proportionate signal from the CD. If the trial values of 1k Ω and 100k Ω make things too quiet (ie the fault is now in the opposite direction) substitute the 4.7k Ω for the 1k Ω . Still too quiet? Try 10k Ω and 100k Ω . By the time you've tried this, you will have a good idea of the sort of attenuation required and may feel that an intermediate value of the smaller resistor will give optimum results.

Although this is a fiddly process, the plain resistors will give a much more determinate result than trying to set a potentiometer, measuring the result etc. In any case, buying a few shillings' worth of resistors is a much cheaper option than variable attenuators or repairers' bills. If the 1:100 ratio I've suggested you begin with leaves things still too loud, then there's problem 1:100 gives about 40dB of attenuation, quite a bit. If you need more than this, there is a serious mismatch somewhere (it's supposed to be line amp after all) and it's time to wonder if something is seriously at fault. Then ring the engineer.

RMW



SECONDS FIRST

I'd appreciate some advice, please. A dealer in your mag has for sale a Michaelson Odyssey integrated valve amp. advertised for £700 compared with the original 1992 price of £1150. I understand that Anthony Michaelson now runs Musical Fidelity, and that this amp was highly rated in its day. But your guide to buying second hand valve kit advises novices to avoid amps above 15W - and the Odyssey is 45!

Does the fact that Mr Michaelson clearly knows his business outweigh your general advice? I have no previous experience of valves, and would be grateful for any additional advice either generally on buying a valve amp or specifically on the Odyssey.

In case it's of help, rest of the system is Marantz 63 KI-slg mk 2, Mission 780 SEs, Goertz M1 speaker cable, Cambridge Audio Silver Spirit interconnect. Current amp is an Alchemist Kraken class A integrated, which does everything well except low bass, so I'm looking for a replacement which will retain the clarity of the midrange and top, but add some bottom end.

Thanks a lot,

Bob Connell

First things first: the caveat against valve amplifiers with greater than 15W output was intended especially to warn people off vintage stuff in this category; excrescences like the Leak TL50+, for example. Since those days (late 1950s), improvements in components and refinements of circuit design have made powers up to, say, 45W from a push-pull pair quite practicable hi-fi, so as regards power there's nothing to worry about with the Odyssey. What might weigh more with you is that although Mr Michaelson is one and the same, Michaelson Audio and Musical Fidelity are not, and MF can not undertake to provide service for equipment which, in truth, they did not make. This is a problem that affects any gear from a now-defunct maker, so it is not just the Odyssey; if you're new to valves, you may want to tread more carefully. In any case, the price you quote for what is now a ten-year old amplifier seems a bit steep - halve that again at least and you might have a deal.

*Two more general points concern me here: low bass is not specifically an amplifier matter and valve amplifiers are not particularly bass beasts. As you suggest, you should benefit enormously from valve midrange, so it's worth making the change in any case. You might consider re-positioning your loudspeakers - an ounce of acoustic enhancement can be worth a ton of electrical assistance. **RMW***

PLANARS PLAIN CAN BE

I am in the market for a new system CD/AMP/Speakers. I listen to orchestral music mainly but would like the system to cope with other "types" too. The high frequencies of most speakers I have auditioned seem "detached" and little too "Hi Fi" for my taste. I heard a pair of second hand Magneplaner panel speakers and was quite enchanted with the thinks that they did well - size of "image", midrange smoothness etc. but was less impressed with the bass - not the lack it but it seemed "slow" on rock music, fine on classical. I have been unable to find a dealer who can demonstrate these products in the UK, can you recommend one? Or is it a case of auditioning in the US on the next visit and getting them sent home.

Thanks for your help.

Graham

Graham Simpson

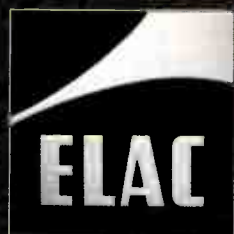
I have good news for you, Graham. As a fellow Magneplaner user I can agree your comments, but personally find the bass on rock music not particularly slow, but a bit shallow. To conquer this problem I sometimes put into use a good subwoofer. Magneplanars are a very 'fast' and open speaker and they need a fast sub to integrate with. My personal recommendation is a REL Strata III which can shake the floorboards with the frequencies unattainable by the Magneplanars and match a MacLaren F1 over 200 metres!

*As far as getting a pair within the UK, RT Services (tel no: 01235 810455) are the UK distributors for Magneplanar and should be able to help you out. **SP***



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Ethos L55/12B stand speakers	<i>dem</i>	1500	1095
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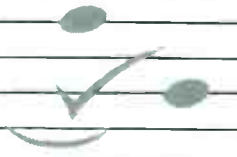
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BASS UP THE CREEK!

While searching for the meaning of life and everything, I found another reason why CD's don't always sound as pleasant to listen to you would expect or want.

Certainly, resolution is missing compared to good old fashioned vinyl, but one area where they are supposed to excel is in the region of low bass. There is no technical reason why they shouldn't be capable of reproducing extremely low bass (down to almost DC) if it is recorded and transferred onto the media.

It would appear that recording studios, be design or mistake have not always used capability. In fact, from disc to disc, track to track and recording label to recording studio, there is a conspiracy to remove or "scrub" all the bass off certain popular recordings. Please check this out on a site that has been set-up to "out" this error or deliberate corruption of the original recordings. We have confirmed this on our own test equipment and it appears to be absolutely true. see:

<http://WWWWebTown.Net/NoLowBass/>

I can go further than these Grateful Dead fanatics and say that after checking many and varied titles there is a worrying number that have been messed around with, to presumably make the recordings better suited to midi systems or in-car use.

Please let me know if you want more information. We should try and get this practice stopped.

Best regards,

Michael Robert Creek
Creek Audio Ltd.

Interesting points brought up here. Many recordings for CD are specifically mixed or mastered for use with tranny radlos, midi systems, in-car stereos and the like. I can say, though that I've often heard bone-shaking low bass both left and EQ'd out of various CDs in mastering studios. So it does exist, but rarely with rock music and more with dance tracks (also mastered on vinyl for club PA use).

When, on occasion, a CD has remarkably low and powerful bass - such as The Prodigy's Fat Of The Land or Massive Attack's Mezzanine - the only equipment that will handle the frequencies properly are dedicated hi-fi separates. For example, playing these recordings in my car results in it transforming into a mobile rattle-shack.

The situation reminds me a little of the hey days of Vinyl, such as

the 'Decca period' of the 60s and 70s. These early Decca recordings were simply far too good for the majority of equipment they were played on. The knitting needles that most vinyl reproduction systems used for picking up information simply ignored a lot of the detail found in the ambient nature of the discs. So the full sonic advantage of these magnificent records were reserved for the privileged few.

Nowadays most people have CD players that will capture most of the information on a disc but the problem lies with the quality of engineering inside mass produced systems and their matching loudspeakers. Unfortunately some of these, if fed with the Prodigy would probably shake to pieces at a certain volume level.

*Hence, the majority rule over the minority yet again and your bog standard rock CD can often be compressed beyond musical recognition. This means that they will sound OK in your car, over the engine level, but on a decent hi-fi are like bathing with your socks on! **SP***



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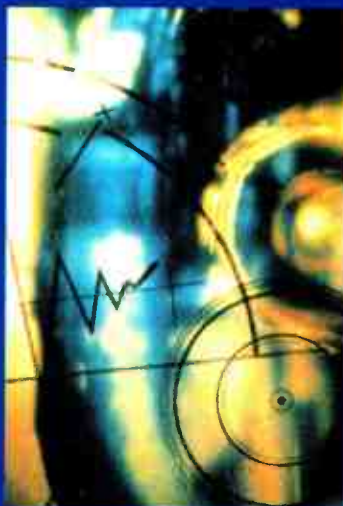
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Famous for their loudspeaker and interconnect cables, The Chord Company have naturally joined the list of companies offering cables to polish the performance of the National Grid. Except that they haven't. Instead, Stage 1 of the Clearway process turns out to be an unlikely black plastic box sprouting at one end a few inches of wire

opting for curiosity before scepticism, I plugged the Clearwater in ahead of my LAT International distribution block and fired up my system.

"Well I'll be b..." accurately describes the impact of The Chord Company's new component. The Cardigan's 'Erase/Rewind' single had so much more bottom-end welly, so much

more clarity and detail that I had to reach for more recordings to confirm I wasn't imaging things. Nope. Every CD inside the T+A CD 1210 R, every LP on the Trio L-07D benefitted to the same extent, and the gains were even more evident through Magneplanar MG 12/QRs rather than Jamo Concert 8s.

A change of address and an equip-

RUBBISH COLLECTOR

Is the quality of the electricity coming out of your wall socket holding your hi-fi back? Jon Marks searches for a remedy with the Clearway Stage 1 System Enhancer from The Chord Company.

terminated in a single trailing mains socket, at the other an IEC mains input. The second item in the pack that looked suspiciously as if it might have an audio purpose was a very standard IEC cable.

Hmm, I scratched my head – things weren't getting off to the start I'd expected. And I hadn't had many promising experiences in the past with 'lumps in leads' intended to purify the ubiquitous 240V product. However,



ment shuffle proved the Clearway remained consistent in its effect. Removing it from the supply equation left the sound quality suffering, as imaging lost focus, bass its punch and the overall presentation closed in and became congested. Good things do come in small packages, it seems.

Clearway Stage 1 Mains Enhancer £200
The Chord Company, tel: 01722 331674

HOOD VIBES

Richard White encounters Clearsound's Speaker Hoods for the ultimate sonic cover-up.

Gadgets come and gadgets go – here's an idea which may have a modicum of common-sense behind its design. It would be idle to pretend that all loudspeakers give such astounding results as to be unsusceptible of improvement. In the dim and distant past, items such as 'acoustic lenses' and 'slot filters' were marketed in the interests of improving things, without the necessity of incurring the greater expense of starting from scratch with new 'speakers.

Clearsound's Speaker Hoods are clearly distant relations of this established line. In essence, a Speaker Hood is an additional box which fits snugly but not tightly to an existing loudspeaker and claims to improve the tone. Actually, the Hood itself at no point contacts the 'speaker cabinet; it is lined with what the manu-

facturer designates a 'sound-absorbing composite comprising a lossy membrane . . . separated from the hood by layers of acoustic foam'. On the specimen we inspected, a tailor-made hole cut in the back made connecting the actual 'speaker easy enough, and the Clearsound Hood is not so heavy as to make the combined unit too cumbersome.

Even at first glance this idea may have something to recommend it, if it achieves a degree of damping with a too-lively cabinet – a by no means uncommon phenomenon, especially at the cheaper end of the market. With the sample submitted to us for listening, the hood when fitted made a worthwhile improvement to the host loudspeaker; so much so that our initial scepticism was noticeably less-



ened. Whether or not you like the change is a matter of taste; to our ears a somewhat forward budget 'speaker gained a rather more musical and neutral voice.

Clearsound are intending to make the Speaker Hoods in limited runs; in other words, if they can establish a demand for a particular model they will make a batch. One-off jobs are not invited at present, but it might be worth enquiring – who knows?, you may not be the only one.

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World



THIS MONTH BOOK REVIEW.

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Works of Alan
Dower Blumlein*
by Robert Charles
Alexander

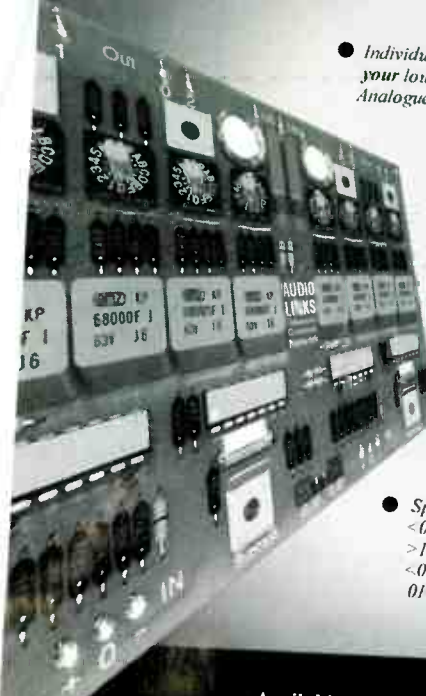


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History can be a fickle thing. Just as turntables and the LP were once supposed to be on the verge of extinction, so it was too with the valve, and yet new and improved versions of classic types are still appearing regularly. This month sees two such tubes released by Sovtek and Electro-Harmonix, a pair of firms under the New Sensor corporate umbrella.

Sovtek's latest is the 12AX7LPS, the 'LP' suffix standing for Large Plate. Taking a lead from respected predecessors like the Telefunken and Mullard 12AX7s, Sovtek say that increasing the size of the plate gives a smoother, more linear performance.

cathode, thereby lowering noise created by AC heaters. For more information, pay a visit to Sovtek's website at: www.sovtek.com.

Electro-Harmonix' contribution to the thermionic cannon is the 6V6EH 'Super Tube'. Aimed mainly at musicians plugging into vintage amps, the 6V6EH has been crafted to take a full 475volts of HT and provide a sweeter tone thanks to lower odd-order harmonics. E-H have achieved this by using a secret-recipe cathode coating, carefully aligning the grids and employing 6550-grade tri-alloy plate material. If that little lot hasn't sated your curiosity, the Electro-Harmonix website is at: www.ehx.com

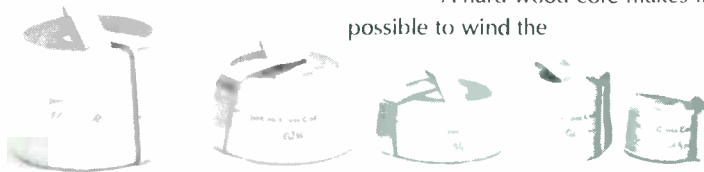


Sovtek 12AX7LPS

New Sensor Corporation
20 Cooper Square,
4th Floor,
New York
NY10003
Tel: (212) 529 0466

HIGH-END CROSS-OVER INDUCTION COILS

No chain is stronger than its weakest link. This is especially so with loudspeakers, where there is often a cost reduction



for the crossover inductors. High-End loudspeaker manufacturers overcome this problem by using foil coils where the copper is flat instead of round. And why is this an advantage?

We know that with a rising frequency the electrons will reach for the surface. This phenomenon is known as power distortion, and that is why a larger surface is preferred.

The small value Cross Coil are from 0.01 mH to 0.05 mH, ideal for digital

amplifiers. Larger Cross Coils range from 0.01mH to 12.0 mH.

The disadvantage of foil inductors have, until now, been the price. But with Jantzen Audio's new production methods and special constructed machinery the costs have been greatly reduced. Every single Jantzen Cross Coil goes through specially developed Jantzen Anti-oxidant treatment and measurement, which guarantee a life long top performance.

A hard-wood core makes it possible to wind the

coils extra close. This results in very low magneto shrinking factor and virtually zero FM distortion. This is very close to the "ideal inductor" in all respects. The tolerance is +/-3% where the normal industry standard is set at +/-5%. Copper purity is 99.99%.

This product is also an eminent opportunity to upgrade an existing loudspeaker system.

For more info look at:
www.jantzen-audio.com

MAP READING

As well as being April Fool's day, the 1st of said month also heralds the arrival of the latest issue of Maplin's chunky catalogue. Supplied in both traditional paper and new-age CD-ROM formats, the new product line-up comes with £50 of vouchers and better photography. For on-line info, the place to be is: www.maplin.co.uk, while dialling 01702 554000 will put you in touch telephonically.

Maplin Electronics
PO Box 777
Rayleigh
Essex SS6 8LU



Ansar Supersound Polypropylene Axial Capacitor



Audio specific. For transparent & detailed sound with EXTREMELY low distortion. High purity imported metallised polypropylene Tol 5%

Part no.	Description	L x D mm	Price
CPW100N	Ansar 100nF 630V	32 x 6.5	1.60
CPW150N	Ansar 150nF 630V	32 x 7.5	1.60
CPW220N	Ansar 220nF 630V	32 x 9.0	1.60
CPW330N	Ansar 330nF 400V	32 x 8.0	1.60
CPW470N	Ansar 470nF 400V	32 x 9.0	1.80
CPW680N	Ansar 680nF 400V	32 x 10.5	1.80
CPW110U	Ansar 110uF 400V	32 x 12.5	1.80
CPW115U	Ansar 15uF 400V	32 x 14.7	1.80
CPW2U2	Ansar 2.2uF 400V	43 x 14.8	1.80
CPW3U3	Ansar 3.3uF 400V	43 x 17.6	2.20
CPW4U7	Ansar 4.7uF 400V	43 x 20.7	2.50
CPW6U8	Ansar 6.8uF 400V	43 x 22.8	3.00
CPW8U0	Ansar 8uF 400V	43 x 26.5	4.00
CPW10U	Ansar 10uF 400V	43 x 29.5	4.00
CPW15U	Ansar 15uF 400V	55 x 34.1	5.50
CPW22U	Ansar 22uF 400V	55 x 39.3	7.00
CPW25U	Ansar 25uF 400V	55 x 42.0	7.50
CPW30U	Ansar 30uF 400V	55 x 44.7	8.50
CPW50U	Ansar 50uF 400V	83 x 46.0	11.50
CPW60U	Ansar 60uF 400V	83 x 51.7	13.50
CPW75U	Ansar 75uF 400V	83 x 55.1	19.00
CPW80U	Ansar 80uF 400V	83 x 56.8	19.50
CPW100U	Ansar 100uF 400V	115 x 55.2	20.00
CPW125U	Ansar 125uF 400V	115 x 60.9	26.00

Dual Polypropylene Smoothing Capacitors

To replace old electrolytics or for new designs. Wire tails.

Part no.	Description	L x D mm	Price
CPW1616	Propyl 16-16 400V	100 x 50	25.00
CPW3232	Propyl 32-32 400V	115 x 61	30.00

Philips Polypropylene Axial 1%

Blue coated Film & Foil. Epoxy coated, low inductance metal foil & film. Supremely stable. Tolerance 1%

Part no.	Description	Price
CPW47P	Propax 47pF 630V	0.40
CPW100P	Propax 100pF 630V	0.40
CPW150P	Propax 150pF 630V	0.35
CPW220P	Propax 220pF 630V	0.35
CPW330P	Propax 330pF 630V	0.35
CPW470P	Propax 470pF 630V	0.35
CPW680P	Propax 680pF 630V	0.35
CPW1N0	Propax 1nF 400V	0.45

CPP1N5	Propax 1.5nF 250V	0.45
CPP2N2	Propax 2.2nF 250V	0.45
CPP3N3	Propax 3.3nF 250V	0.45
CPP4N7	Propax 4.7nF 160V	0.50
CPP6N8	Propax 6.8nF 160V	0.50
CPP10N	Propax 10nF 63V	0.65
CPP22N	Propax 22nF 63V	0.75
CPP33N	Propax 33nF 63V	1.10
CPP47N	Propax 47nF 63V	1.30

Audio Electrolytics Radial 105 deg C +PLUS- low impedance.

These superior electrolytics offer a low impedance path to the signal, resulting in a very open & detailed sound. The use of high temperature materials ensures that these capacitors enjoy a long & stable life.

Part no.	Description	Price
1150	Lo Imp Hi Temp 1uF 50V	0.25
202Y50	Lo Imp Hi Temp 2.2uF 50V	0.25
407Y100	Lo Imp Hi Temp 4.7uF 100V	0.25
10Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 10uF 63V	0.25
22Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 22uF 63V	0.30
47Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 47uF 63V	0.35
100Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 100uF 63V	0.50
220Y50	Lo Imp Hi Temp 220uF 63V	0.75
470Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 470uF 63V	1.25
1000Y35	Lo Imp Hi Temp 1000uF 35V	1.50
2200Y50	Lo Imp Hi Temp 2200uF 50V	2.25
4700Y25	Lo Imp Hi Temp 4700uF 25V	2.50

Trobo High Ripple Reservoirs

Excellent for Audio. Long life. High reliability 100VDC caps with screw terminals

Part no.	uf/Voltage	Price
10000C100	10000uf 100V	20.00
22000C100	22000uf 100V	30.00

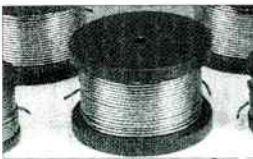
Alcap Bipolar Electrolytics

Axial leads 50V Tol. 10%

Primarily for use in speaker crossovers.

Part no.	Description	Price
CAB1	Alcap 1uF	0.25
CAB2U2	Alcap 2.2 uF	0.40
CAB3U3	Alcap 3.3uF	0.40
CAB4	Alcap 4uF	0.40
CAB5	Alcap 5uF	0.40
CAB6U8	Alcap 6.8uF	0.50
CAB8	Alcap 8uF	0.50
CAB10	Alcap 10uF	0.50
CAB16	Alcap 16uF	0.65
CAB20	Alcap 20uF	0.65
CAB25	Alcap 25uF	0.65
CAB35	Alcap 35uF	0.65
CAB50	Alcap 50uF	0.75
CAB60	Alcap 60uF	0.85
CAB80	Alcap 80uF	1.00
CAB100	Alcap 100uF	1.10

Monacor Air Cored Inductors.



A range of professional air cored inductors for 80 or 40 crossovers/filters for use up to 300W. 1.2mm enamelled copper wire wound on air spaced plastic bobbins

Part No.	Specification	Price
#15	150uH 0.15 Ohm 8x19mm	£2.00
#22	220uH 0.15 Ohm 48x19mm	£2.50
#33	330uH 0.20 Ohm 8x19mm	£3.00
#47	470uH 0.25 Ohm 50x19mm	£3.50
#68	680uH 0.35 Ohm 59x19mm	£4.50
#100	1mH 0.40 Ohm 59x19mm	£5.50
#150	1.5mH 0.50 Ohm 70x30mm	£6.50
#220	2.2mH 0.60 Ohm 70x30mm	£8.00
#330	3.3mH 0.75 Ohm 70x30	£10.00

Monacor Ferrite Inductors



A range of professional high efficiency ferrite cored inductors with very low ohmic losses for 80 or 40 crossovers or filters for use up to 400W. 1.4mm enamelled copper wire (1.3mm on F1000) wound on plastic bobbin.

Part No.	Specification	Price
F220	2.2mH 0.15 Ohm 400W	£6.50
F330	3.3mH 0.20 Ohm 330W	£9.50
F470	4.7mH 0.25 Ohm 140W	£11.00
F680	6.8mH 0.35 Ohm 120W	£12.00
F1000	10mH 0.45 Ohm 100W	£13.50

High Quality Valves

Part No.	Description	Price
6550C	OUTPUT VALVE	£26.00
6L6GT	OUTPUT VALVE	£4.50

6SN7GT	OUTPUT VALVE	£4.50
6V6GT	OUTPUT VALVE	£3.95
ECC81	TRIODE	£4.50
ECC82	TRIODE	£4.50
ECC83	TRIODE	£4.50
EF86	LOW NOISE PENTODE	£9.50
EL34	OUTPUT VALVE	£8.50
EL84	OUTPUT VALVE	£3.50
GZ34	RECTIFIER	£6.50
KT88	OUTPUT VALVE	£20.00

Valve Holders - High Quality Valve Bases. Chassis Mounting With Screw Fittings.

Part No.	Description	Price
B9AC	B9A VALVE HOLDER CERAMIC	£1.50
B9AG	B9 VALVE HOLDER PORCELAIN PLUS GOLD PLATED PINS	£3.00
OCTC	OCTAL VALVE HOLDER CERAMIC	£2.00
OCTG	OCTAL VALVE HOLDER PORCELAIN PLUS GOLD PLATED PINS	£4.00

Fully Gold Plated Phono (RCA) Plugs with spring coil cable grip.



Part No.	Description	Price
PPG5A2	PAIR GOLD PLUGS for up to 5mm CABLE	£1.50 pair
PPG8A2	PAIR GOLD PLUGS for up to 8mm CABLE	£1.50 pair

Very High Quality Phono (RCA) Plugs



Part No.	Description	Price
6550C	OUTPUT VALVE	£26.00
6L6GT	OUTPUT VALVE	£4.50

Very high quality satin grey metal with heavy gold plated connections. Top collet cable grip & PTFE insulators. Very low noise.

Part No.	Description	Price
PPG6H2	GOLD PTFE PLUGS for up to 6mm CABLE	£3.50 pair
PPG8H2	GOLD PTFE PLUGS for up to 8mm CABLE	£3.50 pair

Extra High Quality Gold Plated Phono Oxygen Free (RCA) Leads (pairs)



Highly flexible oxygen free cable with extra moulded in control / grounding wire

Part No.	Length/Colour	Price
LPP1GG	0.8 Metres/Green	£5.50
LPP2GG	1.5 Metres/Green	£6.50
LPP5GG	5 Metres/Green	£11.00

Bass Reflex Tuning Ports



A range of adjustable plastic ports for use in various sizes of loudspeaker cabinets. d=diameter L=adjustable length (mm)

Part No.	Dimensions	Price
R35	d=35L=110-210	£2.50
R50	d=50L=150-280	£3.50
R70	d=70L=120-245	£3.50
H100	d=110L=160-122	£9.50
R85	d=85 angled 45° for narrow cabinetsL=210-310	£6.50

High Quality Components at the right price. Please add £3.00 carriage + VAT to all orders. Credit Card phone orders accepted.

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TRIPLE WHAMMY

Nick Lucas and Gary Devon introduce the latest addition to HFW's kit family, a high-performance, three-box valve pre-amplifier.

Anachronistic we may be, but then we're not the only ones. Judging from letters and conversations at hi-fi shows, plenty of our readers fly the valve flag rather than the transistor one. This isn't a problem-free allegiance, though, as getting the most from the beloved bottle can be a real design challenge, especially when you're concerned with phono stages.

One problem we had to overcome during the development of our KLPP1 line/phono pre-amp was how to keep the noise and hum levels down. This was a difficult proposition considering the phono stage has a gain of 1300 and the power supply unit and signal circuitry are housed in the same case. The solution we opted for was to use a highly-regulated supply for both the HT line and heaters. This time, we've decided to go all the way and house the PSU, pre-amp and phono stages in their own dedicated cases.

The beauty of this system is that noise and hum are kept to extremely low levels. There is more than enough room inside for the space-hungry valve circuitry too, and if you don't use a turntable, you only need shell out for the PSU and the line stage. (On the other hand, if you only want to upgrade your existing cartridge amp, you'll need just the PSU and phono stage).

STYLUS MAXIMUS

Kits have to look as good as they sound now – it's no longer acceptable for an amp to sound superb but resemble a ploughing implement or a metal breeze-block. After the success of our stylish KiT88 and KaT88 integrated/power amps, we chose similarly svelte casework for our

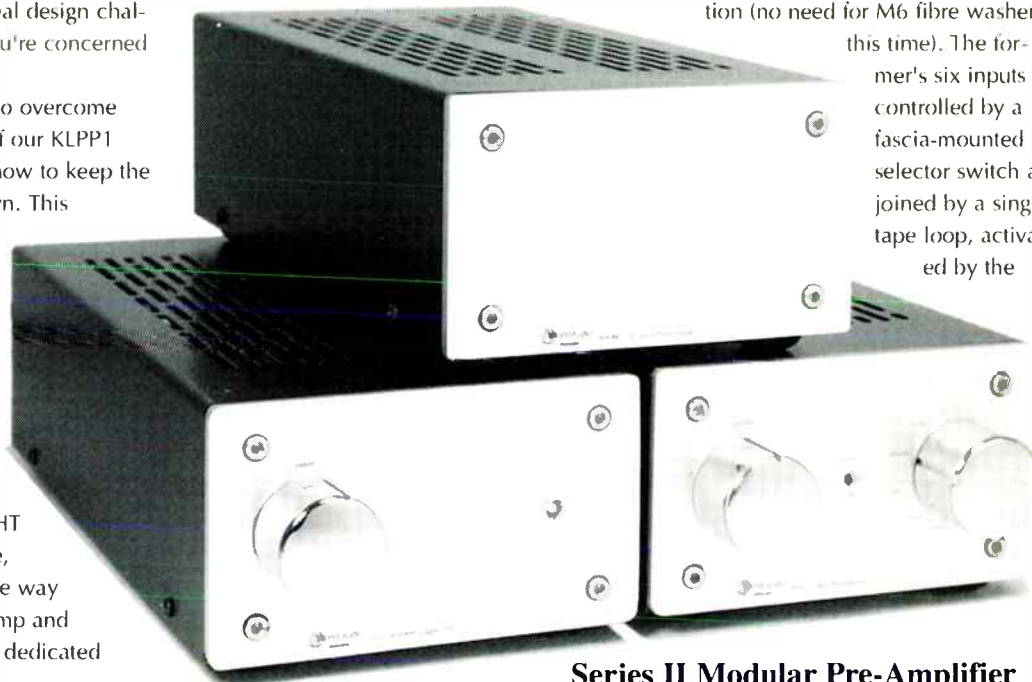
new pre, adopting the 6mm silver-anodised fascia and chrome knobs of the 88 series. The chassis top features staggered cooling vents which are not only highly effective but very eye-catching as well. The final touch is a blue LED power indi-

they're unlikely to come loose thanks to their twist-and-lock action.

THE INS AND OUTS

Common to all modules is an earth post at the rear of the chassis. Both the line and phono sections utilise gold-plated RCA sockets ready-equipped with insulation (no need for M6 fibre washers

this time). The former's six inputs are controlled by a fascia-mounted selector switch and joined by a single tape loop, activated by the



Series II Modular Pre-Amplifier

cator on the PSU module.

THE CABLE BUY

The National Grid's product enters the PSU module via the customary IEC lead. The next question was how to feed the power on into the line and phono stages given that both require different HT voltages. Step forward detachable umbilical cabling, which will allow you to pick up one module without the rest following off the shelf.

After an extensive search for a suitable plug and socket, we arrived at a new pairing. The Clifcon connectors from Cliff Electronics offer a high voltage and current rating on their four gold-plated pins to suit both the HT and heater lines. And

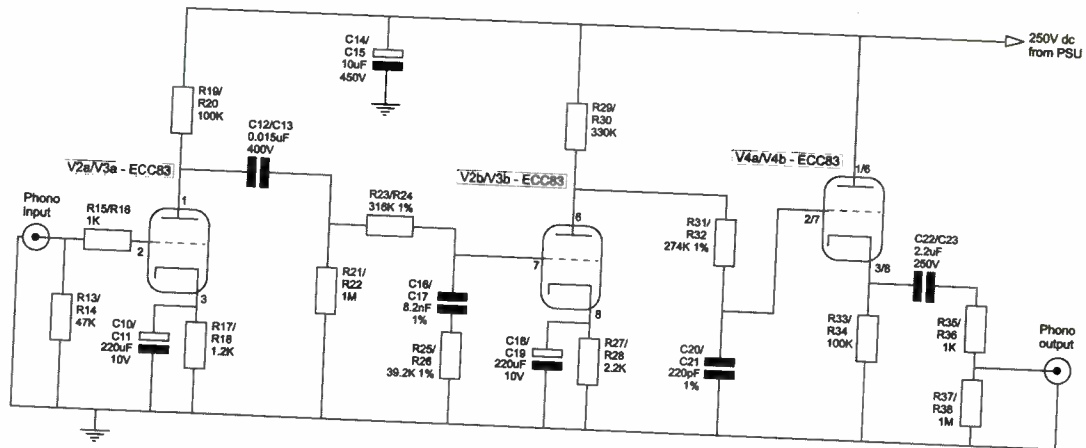
Tape/Source switch. There are two pairs of outputs to enable bi-amping.

The Phono module offers phono in and phono out. All MC users will need a pair of step-up transformers (available from us at £49 per pair) if they want to interface their favourite pick-up with this pre. Otherwise, the phono module is suitable for any MM cartridge.

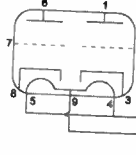
BOARD GAMES

Owing to the importance of the layout of valve circuitry (particularly where the gain is very high) and the large numbers of components, we have employed PCBs throughout the pre-amp, which makes the Series II fairly easy to construct. The build procedure for the kit will be discussed fur-

**SERIES II
PHONO-STAGE
MODULE
CIRCUIT DIAGRAM**
SIGNAL CIRCUIT
(ONE CHANNEL)



V2V3V4 - ECC83



Views are from underneath valve or valve holder
h = heater hct = heater centre tap c = cathode a = anode nc = no connection

ther in the second part of this article (see August 2000's Supplement No.52), as will be the delicious sound of these magic boxes. Now, it's over to Gary Devon, our designer, for a word on the circuit itself.

SERIES II PHONO MODULE

The phono stage uses three ECC83 sections per channel for amplification and output buffering. The first two valve sections of each channel (V2a/V3a) and (V2b/V3b) provide the necessary gain. The final stage of each channel (V4a/V4b) is used as a cathode-follower buffer, which reduces high-frequency signal loss due to the capacitance of the interconnect cable between phono and line amp sections. The RIAA equalisation is performed in two separate stages - first low then high-frequency compensation is applied. V2a/V3a, the input section, is connected as a conventional amplifying stage with its associated anode and bias resistors. This is then AC coupled to the first equalisation stage (formed by R23/R24, R25/R26

and C16/C17), which includes the output impedance of the first amplifying stage. This EQ circuitry provides the low-frequency time constants of 318 and 3180 microseconds.

Coupling capacitor C12/C13 can be chosen to introduce an extra degree of bass roll-off to reduce the amplitude of sub-sonic signals. As it stands, the roll-off is set to -3dB at approximately 10Hz. A value for C12/C13 of 8.2nF or 3.9nF would set this to 20Hz or 40Hz respectively. Personally I prefer to set the limit to around 10Hz, otherwise the bass begins to sound thin and light.

The next amplification stage, formed by V2b/V3b, is again conventional, but here the output is DC coupled to the EQ network and to the output cathode follower. The EQ network R31/R32 and C20/C21 (plus the output impedance of the preceding stage) produces the necessary 75 microsecond HF compensation. The cathode-follower buffer has been added to interface the high-impedance

circuitry with the outside world. An ECC83 used in this way couldn't drive a long cable due to its low operating current, and it wouldn't make a very good line stage, but it performs superbly as a buffer where the load is easy to drive.

SERIES II LINE MODULE

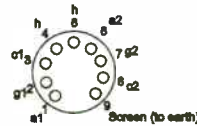
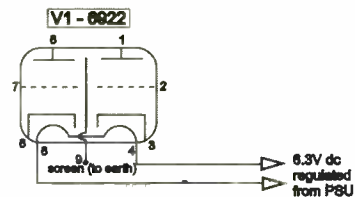
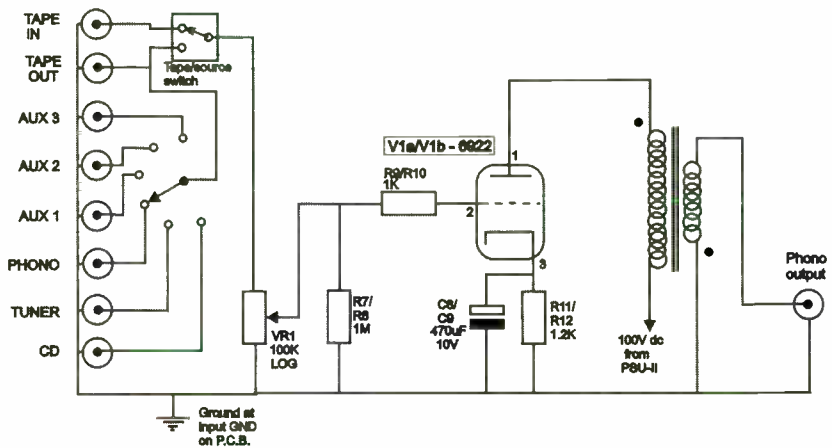
The line stage is a little different from the norm as it's transformer coupled. A big problem with valve pre-amps is the inability of the line stage to drive a low-impedance load, whether this is formed by the input resistance of the following power amplifier or the parasitic capacitance of a long length of cable. All single-stage line pre-amps are phase inverting as well, an inherent characteristic of the anode follower. If a cathode follower is used, phase accuracy is maintained but there is no gain. Some manufacturers have resorted to using far more complex circuitry in order to achieve a decent drive capability. One pre-amp even has a plethora of ECC88 sections in parallel to reduce the

output impedance, which quite frankly is a very inelegant solution. The circuitry of the Series II is very simple - basically one half of an ECC88 or 6922 is used per channel. This is a superb valve as long as it is used properly; it doesn't like very high voltages on its anode, so here 100V is used. The mu of the 6922 is approximately 32, and as the transformer offers the valve a very high impedance load, most of this gain is available for use. The step-down ratio of the transformer is 6:1, thereby giving an overall gain of approximately 5. The grid of the 6922 is connected to the volume control, and there's selector switching of sources in the usual manner.

SERIES II PSU MODULE

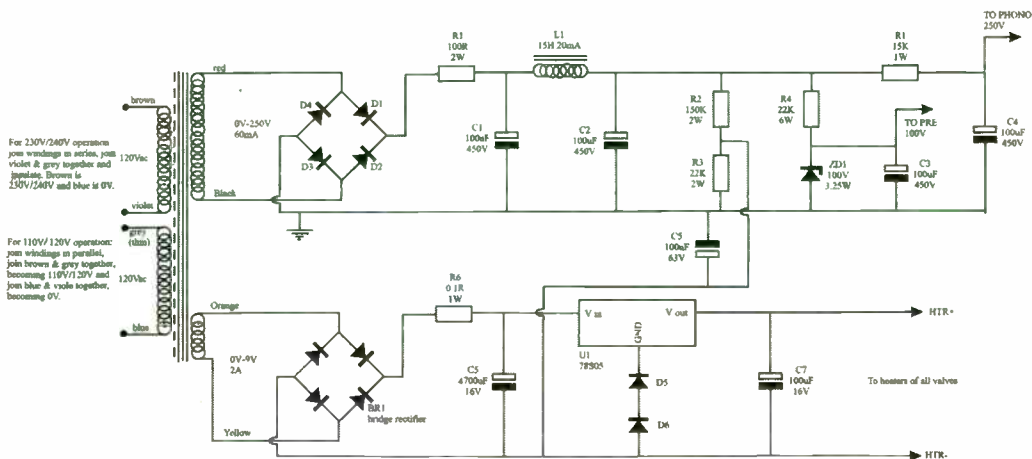
There's nothing unusual about the Series II's Power Supply Unit. Four low-noise diodes take care of rectification before handing over to reservoir capacitors. The first stage of smoothing is performed by L1 and C2, which remove most of the ripple. The line stage draws its power from a zener-stabilised 100V rail. The phono stage's HT line is further smoothed by R5 and C4 to bring the ripple down to the very low levels necessary for a phono stage. The heater supply is elevated on a DC potential to protect the cathode-follower section of the phono stage. This is accomplished through a potential divider network, R2 and R3, on the HT power supply.

**SERIES II
PRE-AMPLIFIER
MODULE
CIRCUIT DIAGRAM
SIGNAL CIRCUIT
(ONE CHANNEL)**



Views are from underneath valve or valve holder
h = heater c = cathode a = anode g = grid nc = no connection

**SERIES II
POWER SUPPLY UNIT
MODULE
CIRCUIT DIAGRAM
(SUPPLY COMMON TO
BOTH CHANNELS)**



PARTS LIST FOR SERIES II PSU MODULE

RESISTORS

R1 100R, 2W	1
R2 150K, 2W	1
R3 22K, 2W	1
R4 22K, 6W	1
R5 15K, 1W	1
R6 0.1R, 1W	1

CAPACITORS

C1 100uF, 450V	1
C2 100uF, 450V	1
C3 100uF, 450V	1
C4 100uF, 450V	1
C5 100uF, 63V	1
C6 4700uF, 16V	1
C7 100uF, 16V	1

DIODES / BRIDGE RECTIFIERS/ VOLTAGE REGULATOR

D1, BYV96E	1
D2, BYV96E	1
D3, BYV96E	1
D4, BYV96E	1
D5, 1N4001	1
D6, 1N4001	1
BR1, KBU4K	1
U1, 78SO5	1
heatsink	1

TRANSFORMERS

mains transformer	1
L1 15H, 20mA	1

HARDWARE

power switch	1
Cliffcon socket	2
Cliffcon plug	4
IEC mains socket	1

IEC leads	1
fuse 500mA	1
FEET	4
wire	assorted
M4 x 10 screw	2
M4 nut	2
transformer fittings	1
M3 x 6 screws	12
M3 x 10 standoff	4
M3 fibre washers	8
M4 x 12 hex screw	4
terminal pins	10
LED	1
KNOBS (chrome)	1
PHONO CHASSIS	1
PHONO FRONTPLATE	1
PCB	1

PARTS LIST FOR SERIES II PHONO MODULE

RESISTORS

R13/14	47K, 0.5W	2
R15/16	1K, 0.5W	2
R17/18	1.2K, 0.5W	2
R19/20	100K, 0.5W	2
R21/22	1M, 0.5W	2
R23/24	316K, 1% 0.25W	2
R25/26	316K, 1% 0.25W	2
R27/28	2.2K, 0.5W	2
R29/30	330K, 0.5W	2
R31/32	274K, 0.5W	2
R33/34	100K, 0.5W	2
R35/36	1K, 0.5W	2
R37/R38	1M, 0.5W	2

CAPACITORS

C10/11	220uF 10V	2
C12/13	0.015uF 400V	2
C14/15	10uF 450V	2
C16/17	8.2nF 1%	2
C18/19	220uF 10V	2
C20/21	220pF 1%	2
C22/23	2.2uF 250V	2

HARDWARE

SELECTOR	1
BLK PHONOS	2
RED PHONOS	2
Cliffcon socket	1
earth post	1

FEET	4
wire	assorted
M3 x 6 screws	12
M3 x 10 standoff	4
M3 fibre washers	8
M4 x 12 hex screw	4
B9A PCB mount valve base	3
terminal pins	10
PHONO CHASSIS	1
PHONO FRONTPLATE	1
PCB	1
ECC83	3
*step up transformers	2
*Please add £49 to cost for one pair	

PARTS LIST FOR SERIES II PRE AMP MODULE

RESISTORS

R7/8	1M, 0.5W	2
R9/10	1K, 0.5W	2
R11/12	1.2K, 0.5W	2
VR1	100K LOG POT	2

CAPACITORS

C8/9	470uF 10V	2
------	-----------	---

HARDWARE

driver transformer	2
selector	1
tape/source switch	1
black phono insulated sockets	10
red phono insulated sockets	10
Cliffcon socket	1
earth post	1
feet	4
wire	assorted
grub screw	1

M3 x 6 screws	12
M3 x 10 standoff	4
M3 fibre washers	8
M4 x 12 hex screw	4
B9A PCB mount valve base	1
terminal pins	10
KNOBS (Chrome)	2
PHONO CHASSIS	1
PHONO FRONTPLATE	1
PCB	1
6922 valve	1

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IT'S HIP TO BE SQUARE

Iron-wielder Jon Marks continues his search for superior CD sound with Acoustic Precision's master-clock upgrade, and tries out a DIY solution from Daniel Espley

SEE SAW

If the main bug-bear of analogue for most users (especially those on the professional side of the fence in studios) is noise, then the corresponding weak point in digital's performance is timing. We're not talking here about the kind of timing that keeps feet tapping (even if the silver disc is often acknowledged to be less than perfect in this respect). Instead, the subject under examination is the very heart of digital audio electronics, the master clock. This high-frequency quartz oscillator synchronises the operations of all the various digital circuits and ensures that all the '0s and 1s' arrive at their destinations exactly when they're supposed to.

Well, the theory looks fine and dandy, but in the real world things don't run quite so smoothly. The ideal master clock would produce a pure square wave, the spacing between each of the peaks or troughs identical every time. Take a squint at your average clock output through an oscilloscope, however, and you'll most likely find a range of traces from the vaguely square-like to simply saw-tooth. On top of that, noise will roughen the trace and further degrade the signal. And these problems effect expensive machines just as much as cheaper components.

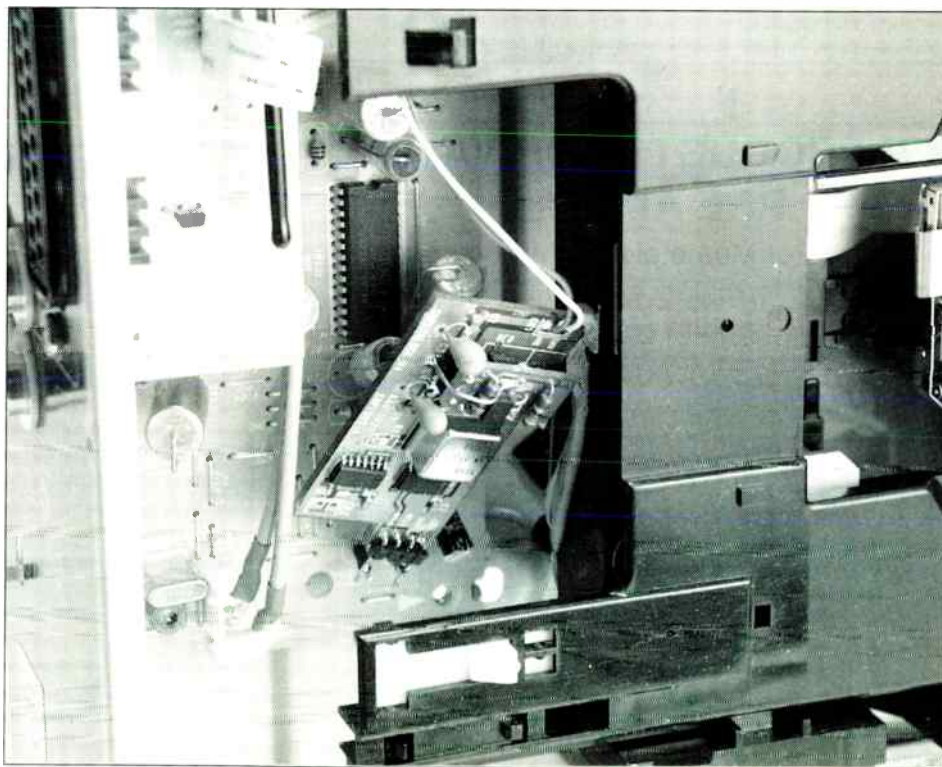
THE JITTER BUG

The timing errors caused by mediocre master clocks are called 'jitter'. This term has been around for a good few years now, and yet the quality of the clocks in most commercial players remains unim-

pressive (in spite of the fact that a useful tidy-up of the timing signal would add very little to a product's budget).

This is where replacement clocks such as Acoustic Precision and AudioCom's come in. They have been designed to output a square wave as free from noise and

The main PCB bears a large, low-profile crystal and a pair of surface-mount chips. Mounted on a tiny daughter board is a high-speed regulator said to minimise phase noise, thereby reducing jitter. Apparently, a lot of time and effort went into optimising the PCB's layout in order



Acoustic Precision's Super Clock 4 fits easily behind the DV-505's transport

jitter as possible. In addition to these two, one of our readers, Daniel Espley, has sent in his own DIY clock, which is both cheap and easy to put together.

ACOUSTIC PRECISION SUPERCLOCK 4

Although it shares its nomenclature with AudioCom's clock (reviewed in the last Supplement), Acoustic Precision's device is a more petite but less crowded affair.

to reduce RF emission, and this seems to have paid dividends.

AERIAL VIEW

One problem encountered when you're working with the sort of very high frequencies found in digital equipment is that even very short pieces of wire or track will act as aerials, spraying RF frequency interference all over th

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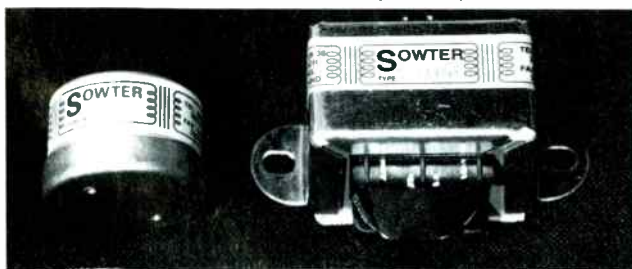
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For this reason, the leads from the signal terminals of any master clock should be kept as short as possible. Still, you might find it necessary to use coax cable to wire the clock into the circuit: as I discovered when AudioCom's Superclock went into the PD-91, RF radiated by the clock can interfere with other areas of digital circuitry. This is, in fact, what happened when I first fired up Daniel Espley's clock inside the Pioneer DV-505 DVD player. And, as had been the case with the AudioCom and PD-91, both

machines worked perfectly with their lids off, but as soon as the lids were screwed in place, spanners started appearing in the works. Speaking to Tom Evans, the man behind Acoustic Precision, I was told that putting the lid on the chassis completes what is effectively a transformer winding around the clock – not a good idea! That said, I never experienced any difficulties with the AP, whether it was resident in the 505 or the 91, so I stuck to using extremely short (10mm) twin runs of solid-core when connecting it up.

WE'RE GOING IN!

Seeing as the procedure for grafting the Acoustic Precision into the Pioneer is the virtually the same as it was for the AudioCom, this section of the article is simply a repeat for those who missed the last Supplement. If you just want to know how the Superclock 4 sounded, skip to sound quality.

Gaining access to the relevant board in the DV-505 is a rather fiddly affair. Having removed the lid, undo the two screws which hold the SCART socket onto the rear panel and lift the metal clip above it which will still be holding it in place. Next, take out all the screws remaining on the rear panel and lift it up and off.

To fit the new clock, you'll have to take out the beige PCB with the output socketry on it. This entails disconnecting CN301, which is located beside crystal 301 (not the one you should replace, by the way, as it operates at 18MHz, not

16MHz!) This leaves two ribbon cables hooking the output board to the main PCB, but these are fairly flexible and won't hamper the clock-fitting process. Once the four screws holding the board down have been removed, you can lift it gently away from the chassis.

SOLDER SURGERY

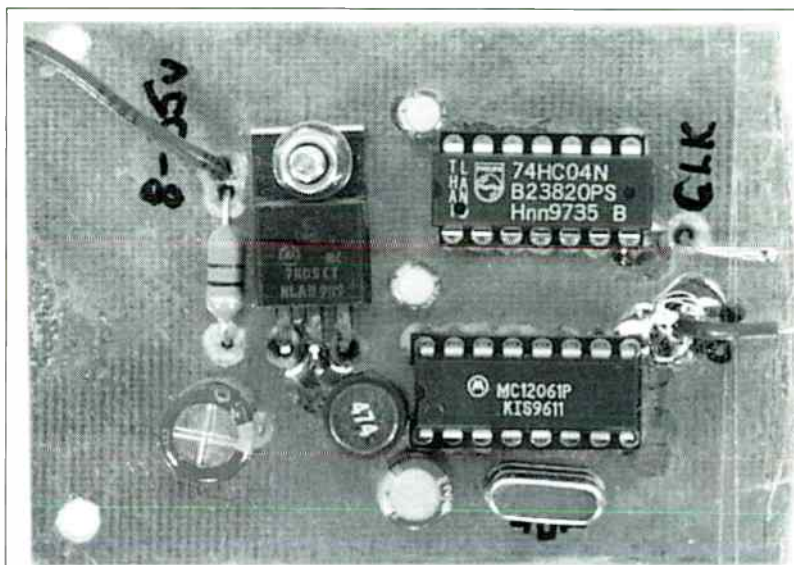
Now it's time to get down to the real modifications. Once you've warmed up your soldering iron, use it to remove R320

although a standard iron – and some solder braid will also work). Crystal X302 has to go as well.

One point which clock manufacturers all agree on is that the signal leads from their devices to the relevant ICs inside the players need to be kept as short as possible. By putting a link across C322, you can simply connect the Acoustic Precision's signal + and – PCB pins to the pads which used to be occupied by the original crystal via 10mm runs of solid-core cable. The AP's clock ground should go to the pad between C322 and R322, whereas the signal should go to the other pad between C320 and R320.

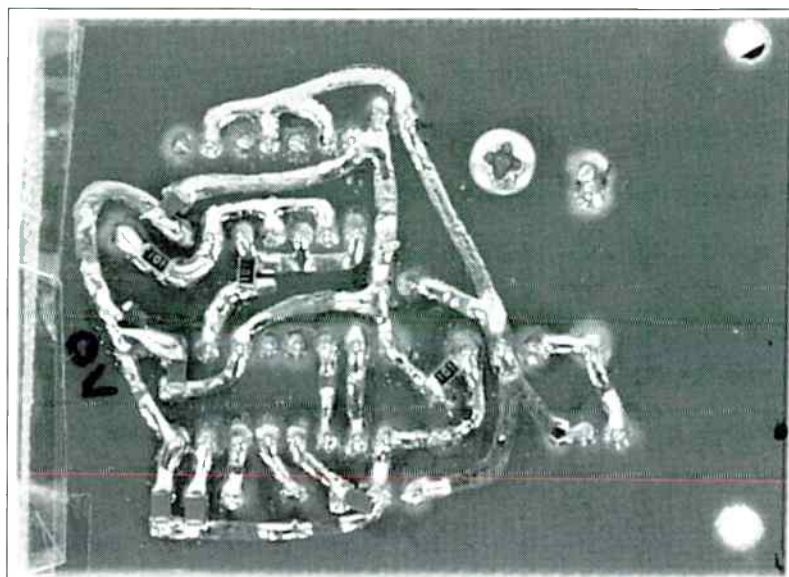
The only other connections to make are the power supply + and -. The best place to hook up in this case is the main power supply board, where the negative terminal of C711 is connected to ground. P211 (one of the two small, yellow fuses near the PSU board's front edge) has +12V flowing

through it, so connecting to either side of it will provide the AP with a suitable voltage. (By the way, +20VDC is the maximum the regulator can handle). I also assessed sound quality with the Superclock 4 wired to the same power points as the AudioCom clock in the pre-



Daniel Espley's DIY master clock can be built onto either veroboard or a homemade PCB

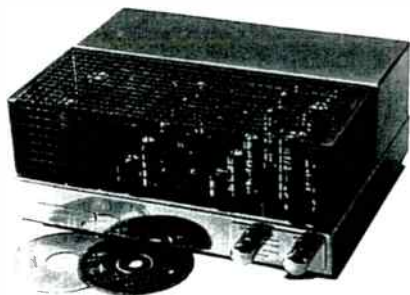
(1Mohm), R322 (910ohm), C320 (27pF) and C322 (12pF), all of which are located on the underside of the output board. (Beware, as these are very small surface-mount parts which are most easily removed with the appropriate bit,



Underside of Daniel Espley's PCB's

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vious Supplement.

With all the mods inside the DV-505 completed, all that remains is to double-check your work before firing up. I can't emphasise how important this is, as the urge to just whack the lid back on and get a CD in the drawer as swiftly as possibly can be very strong. Unfortunately, it's this classic situation which tends to lead to more barbecued equipment than any other. Check the polarity and position of all the connections from the clock, and only when you're 100% satisfied that you've made no errors, reassemble the player and power it up.

SOUND QUALITY

No doubt about it, this clock pays its way very handsomely indeed when you consider that it can be had unfitted for only £89 including postage (£152 including postage if factory fitted). The 505 was obviously happy with its latest addition judging from how much clearer, firmer and more revealing its presentation was on the sound track from the film 'Run, Lola, Run'.

Take track 6, 'Running Three', as a prime example of the AP's virtues. What had once been a flabby bottom-end was toned-up Schwarzenegger-style to yield far more rhythmic, weighty basslines. While the low frequencies were thundering away, the midrange and treble showed what they had gained. Aside from large steps forward in terms of resolution, sound staging and image clarity, there was a major boost to the solidity and realism of vocals, cymbals – everything, really. These made for much more convincing replay on every disc the Pioneer handled.

Through a DPA 50S and Trio L-08D monoblocs (on top of an MVL A2+ integrated) the DV-505 fed my old Ferrograph S1 monitors and Magneplanar MG12/QR loudspeakers with music of surprising scale and dynamics. Because of that extra solidity and smack, even relaxed, simple numbers like some of those on Beth Orton's Trailer Park album had more life and emotion to them.

Whether its quality or quantity you look for in your record collection, the Superclock 4 is able to strike a satisfying balance between the two. The extra sound stage width and depth along with increased clarity meant that the Reggae compilation, The Best Of Bob Marley And The Wailers – The Early Years – actually sounded much closer to what must have

been heard in the studio than the bottom-of-a-wet-cardboard-bucket scenario which emerges from a lot of budget CD players, DVD-capable or not.

91 NOT OUT

It was a similar story when it came to the PD-91. The older machine was beginning to look distinctly lacklustre in original guise when compared to how it sounded with the AP in place. It managed the same trick as the AudioCom – beefed up basslines, much greater control and clarity, and a more enjoyable way with whatever CD lay in the drawer.

Classical pieces, whether major or minor in scale, demonstrated the broader spread of tonal colour that came as standard with this little green PCB. Violins had presence and power without the glassy sheen and harmonic homogenising that still goes on inside too many players these days.

in a velvet glove, which is just as happy to provide filigree detail as it is floor-board-shaking pyrotechnics. The AP is a cheaper tweak too, and it's diminutive size makes fitting it a piece of cake.

I DID IT MY WAY

Of course, if you happen to be a hard-core DIYer who has to construct everything from scratch, then Daniel Espley's circuit could be the answer. Inexpensive and simple to build (either on veroboard or a home-made PCB), Daniel's clock is another design that leaves standard circuits lagging.

Although it's relatively large and proved tough to squeeze into the DV-505 with a coax connection (without which RF pollution occurs), this home-brew confection sharpened up imaging and sound staging, and gave a firmer, crisper overall portrayal. The sample supplied to HFV boasted a couple of Os-Con caps and a standard 7805 regulator on its board. The

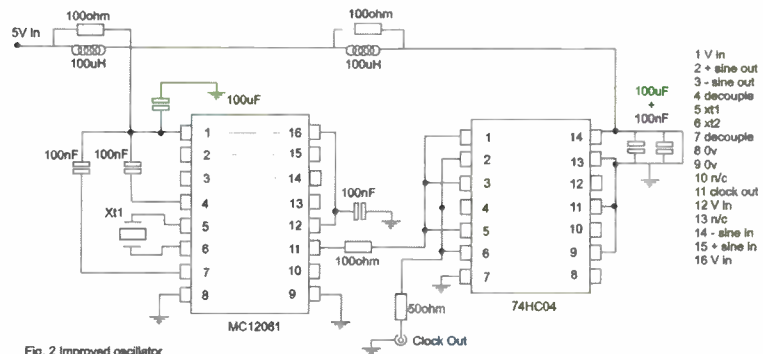


Fig. 2 Improved oscillator

Daniel Espley's improved clock

SHOWDOWN TIME

It's always unfair to put two hi-fi components side by side and say that one's better than the other as so much depends on system synergy, positioning, cabling, etc. And it became evident after fitting the commercial clocks (and Daniel Espley's DIY version) that location, choice of wiring (coax or solid-core) and its length, as well as the power supply link-up points all play a part in deciding the final sonic results.

While the ready-made clocks both improve what comes out of the back of a CD player, they do so in subtly different ways. The AudioCom seems to tilt its balance marginally in favour of the 'wham, bam' approach over delicacy. In its own right it's an eminently successful upgrade, but the AP possesses an iron fist

crystal's position was left unfilled, as the machine's own should be soldered in here (whereas the AC and AP types are optimised for individual frequencies). While the enhancements might not have been as 'night and day' as the other clocks, the unmodded DV-505 was more sluggish and less involving to listen to.

Acoustic Precision Superclock 4 £89 (unfitted)

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INVENTOR OF STEREO -

The Life and Works of Alan Dower Blumlein

by Robert Charles Alexander

Alan Dower Blumlein was a legend in his own short lifetime. Few who swam into his orbit were untouched by what all and sundry unanimously call his genius. In the fields of microphone design, cable technology, television, radar and, most famously, binaural recording, his contributions were at the very least significant; more often they were immense. Which raises a question: if the man made such a mark, why is so little known about him? Four photographs are known to exist - four! For a man born in the 20th Century, that is perilously close to being undocumented.

The reasons for this state of affairs are various. When Blumlein died in an air-crash in 1942, he was part of a team testing what was to become radar. In time of war, such work was top secret so, not unnaturally, a veil was quickly drawn over both the accident and the type of work being attempted.

This can of course be redressed in peacetime. Unfortunately, Blumlein's self-appointed official biographer proved himself monumentally incapable of the task: much of the archive of documents this person hoarded so greedily from the 1970s until his death in 1998 has yet to be recovered. He died without publishing a line, but his dog-in-the-manger approach meant that by the time other hands had taken up the task, many of those who could have made significant contributions had died, including Blumlein's widow and his close colleagues.

From the foregoing it will be seen that RC Alexander has faced an uphill task in producing this work. Having of necessity to side-step the meandering path of his predecessor, Mr Alexander has been obliged to undertake much original research and it is probable that the result is the richer for it.

Alan Dower Blumlein's parents met in South Africa. His father was from the then-German province of Alsace and his mother was a Scot. The couple moved to England and in 1904, a year after Alan's birth in Hampstead, his father became a



naturalised British subject. This did not prevent the young Blumlein being subjected to the usual bullying at school on account of his German surname - especially during the Great War. This may have contributed to the fact that nearly into his teens he was unable to read. Whatever the shortcomings of his reading abilities, Alan was seemingly always fluent in the language of mathematics. It is possible that his slow start in written English aided rather than hampered his manipulation of the abstracts of numbers.

Sent to a crammer, Blumlein caught up quickly and he was awarded a Governors Scholarship to the City and Guilds, where he gained First Class Honours as a BSc. All this speaks of rare ability but does not of itself portend genius - it is notoriously difficult to sustain a sprint.

By the end of the 1920s, Blumlein was working for Columbia, soon to become part of the giant EMI conglomerate. Early on, he was placed with the team who were attempting to develop a new recording and record-cutting system in order to break the commercial strangle-hold which the Bell company's patents had on the industry. Blumlein's ideas on the use of electromagnetic damping to control resonances and his intuitive grasp of electro-mechanical equivalence in cutter-heads proved invaluable. Within a remarkably short time, the Columbia system was

patented and the company was itself granting licenses to other manufacturers wanting to use it.

According to his wife, Blumlein conceived what he termed binaural sound while they were at the pictures one night. Why shouldn't the sound follow the picture? As with most of his work, there is a breath-taking simplicity about his attempts to apply the idea. Indeed, with many of his 128 issued patents, Blumlein expressed surprise that no-one had done before. In 1931, a series of patents covering practically every salient point of what was to be known later as stereo reproduction was granted to ADB and other members of the EMI team. It was so ahead of its time that when Decca later tried to patent various bits of their new stereo system they discovered ruefully that Blumlein had beaten them to it by about 20 years.

There is much more of absorbing interest in this book. For a semi-technical work, it is well-written by one who clearly understands what he is writing about. The account of the early television service from Alexandra Palace, with both the Baird company and EMI broadcasting the same programmes alternately via their respective systems gives a fascinating insight into quite how incidental pure science can be to a development which has changed the world.

Centimetric radar, on which Blumlein was working when he met his death, helped in no small degree to win the war, whatever we may now think of the bombing of cities and their populations.

For a full and detailed account of a genuine genius, I cannot recommend this book too highly. One anecdote I personally find irresistible: Finding a metal No Smoking sign in a colleague's office, Blumlein bent it up into an ashtray for his pipe! Of this stuff are heroes made. **RMW**

This book and other titles are available from the World Library, page 68-69.

Alternatively you can order on-line:
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World Audio Design goes Dot.Com

Yes, hold on to your mouse -

www.worldaudiodesign.co.uk has arrived. After sharing the well-established magazine website, www.hi-fiworld.co.uk, for some years, we felt it was high time for our kit company to go it alone with a fresh new presence.

The site is a cinch to navigate as it follows the three-click rule. The home page provides links to five sections: Company Profile (a brief history of our outfit plus a description of the site and how it works); Tube Pre-amplifier and Amplifier Kits; Speaker Kits; Books and Ordering.

As this is quite a technical site, there is plenty of data available. For example, if you click on the Tube Pre-amplifier and Amplifier icon on the home page, it provides a view of all our valve kits. Click on an individual item and you'll find a small picture with a brief description and a table

of five further links to pages about the kit in question. Click on these and you'll get larger internal and external pictures, or you can read a more detailed description of the kit and even an explanation of the circuit design. A look at the circuit diagram or the full instruction booklet are also only a click away.

As is so often the case with technical websites, we have utilised PDF (Portable Document Files) for the circuit diagrams and instructions. To view such files you need to have a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader installed on your computer. This is available free from www.adobe.com and only takes a few minutes to download. Once it has been installed, your browser (be it Netscape Navigator or Internet Explorer) will open it automatically so you can view the files. It's often a good idea to print off such schematics as there is a lot of information to digest whilst you're sitting online.

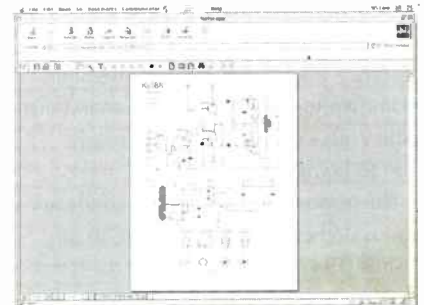
Our Speaker Kit section is presented in a similar way, and the Book section shows over 40 titles, each with a picture of the front cover and a brief description of the contents.

With the explosion of e-commerce, we could hardly launch our site without the provision of ordering facilities. All our products are now available for purchase directly from the site.

We cater for orders placed anywhere in the world, so it is essential you select your postal region correctly from the 14 zones so you incur the right postal charges. Then, just choose one of the four purchasing categories and order away. All your details arrive encrypted via e-mail to be unencrypted and then processed. Rest assured your card information is safe. You will receive an order confirmation and an estimated time of despatch of your purchase via return e-mail.

One thing we want to make clear is that worldaudiodesign.co.uk is an active site - our web designer, Andrew Mains, will be working continuously on it. We are thinking of adding to the home page an archive section, which will detail some of the original DIY Supplement articles of yes-

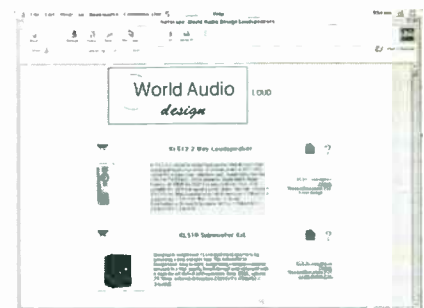
teryear, not to mention some of the more recent ones. Additionally, we will be setting up a chat room where all you DIYers can bat e-mails back and forth within the site on topics such as valve amps, speakers and the like.



Example of PDF document



Postal zone page



Speaker page

As no self-respecting site would be complete without links, a link page will be available so you can travel direct to other sites of interest. Come what may, worldaudiodesign.co.uk will be a true hi-fi DIYer enthusiast's site that will surely grow and grow.



Home page



Tube Amplifiers & Pre Amplifiers page



The books page

SHOT IN THE ARM

Richard White explodes the 'black art' of tonearm geometry.

It sometimes happens that one wishes to fit a tonearm to a turntable without having any of the manufacturer's instructions to hand. Rather than work by guess-work or those wretched bits of cardboard laughingly called 'alignment protractors', it is a better exercise altogether to set up from scratch. The following formulae enable the optimum tracking parameters to be set for any tonearm. There is no absolute answer to this problem but the method below gives a very good compromise: no well-designed arm should give results radically different to those you can calculate from the formulae. For simplicity, I have assumed for the purposes of this article that the reader is actually designing an arm, but obviously by algebraic substitution, it is easy to use the instructions for checking and setting up a 'shop-bought' arm.

Using the formulae below ANY ARM designed using the same values of I and O will have the same points of zero tracking error, regardless of arm length or offset angle, so a protractor made to suit one will suit all.

Note: In the following description, all measurements and values are given in inches, for no better reason than that inches are a convenient-sized unit for this exercise. You may work in mm, or for that matter cubits or ells if you choose, the 'real' dimensions remain the same. Given that pocket calculators will give at least six places of decimals, I recommend that answers are rounded to the nearest hundredth of an inch. Similarly, if working in millimetres, it is simply labour lost to calculate finer than about .25mm. Whichever base unit is adopted, it must be used throughout the calculations - beware cm/mm muddles!

To begin with, you need to decide upon the position for the 'worst case' places on the arm's sweep, in other words, the points at which tracking error matters least. Although there are other possibilities, I have found, after exhaustive calculation of alternatives, that radii of 2" and 6" approach the ideal compromise. 6" radius has only the run-on grooves to worry about and 2" is practically on the label. With other parameters, improvements in one area tend to be wiped out by excessive errors in another, but once you master the following method, it is easy enough to try them and see for yourself.

In the formulae which follow, any pair of factors of the product of our initial choices will have the same degree of tracking error although of different sign (+ or -). If we adopt 2" and 6", pairs of factors of the product 12 will have the same degree of error. As an hypothetical example, if a radius of 3" gives an error of +2°, 4" (the complementary factor of 12) will give -2°.

For purposes of algebraic convenience, we shall call these chosen points I (for Inner) and O (for Outer).

We derive a trigonometric constant from these two in the formula shown below:

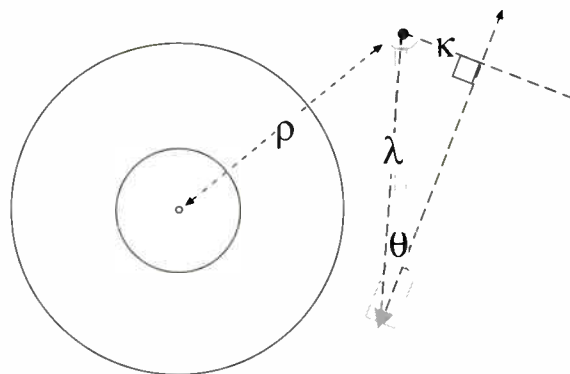
$$\frac{(\sqrt{I} + \sqrt{O})^2}{4} = \kappa$$

Substituting our values for I and O gives:

$$\frac{(\sqrt{2} + \sqrt{6})^2}{4} = \kappa$$

which gives us the answer, constant $\kappa = 3.732$

In many respects, this constant is the answer; it is the distance measured at right angles from the cartridge axis to the arm pivot, and from it we calculate all the other dimensions we require to set up a tonearm for optimum tracking. The diagram below shows the various points and construction lines to which the next processes will refer:



Having derived a sort of geometric mean of the two values I and O, we use the result κ to calculate arm length and/or offset angle. Of these two, it is usually easier to vary the arm length λ (by virtue of the cartridge fixing slots) than the offset. I do not recommend setting the cartridge askew in the headshell to vary the offset θ ; except in the case of uni-pivot arms, this procedure prevents the proper alignment of the cartridge axes with the arm pivot for optimum vertical tracking.

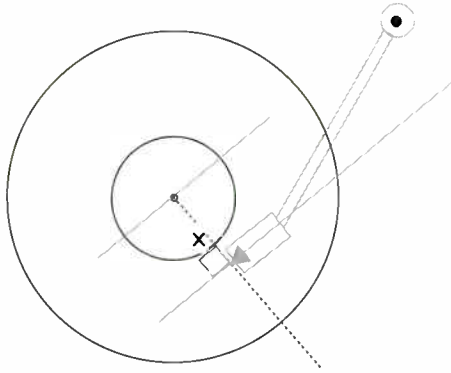
$$\frac{\kappa}{\sin \theta} = \lambda \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{\kappa}{\lambda} = \sin \theta$$

Having now related both our arm length λ and the headshell offset θ to the limits of our required geometry, we can now derive the distance from the record centre to the arm's horizontal pivot. This distance we shall call ρ . The square of ρ should be equal to the square of the arm length λ minus the product of I and O:

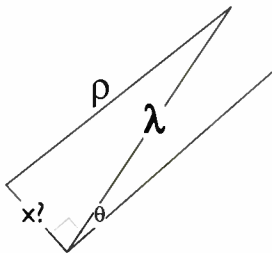
$$\lambda^2 - IO = \rho^2$$

We have now found values of arm length, pivot-to-record-centre and headshell offset which will give minimal tracking error between our chosen radii I and O. What we have not yet covered is the calculation of exactly where the points of zero tracking error will occur.

If we treat things as essentially a 'solution of triangles' problem, we can get at the answers by a practical application of the sine rule. The case of tonearm geometry is what is called an ambiguous case; there are always two possible solutions to the problem which give us our two zero error points. The points of zero tracking error will be found where the length of the radius makes an angle with the arm equal to 90° less the offset angle.



So we are looking for the missing side of a triangle having two sides of λ and ρ and another angle (not included) of 90° less θ .



The above diagram extracts the basic problem. Note that the angle opposite λ at the record centre is *not* a right angle - this can be deceptive.

Since by the sine rule

$$\frac{a}{\sin a} = \frac{b}{\sin b} = \frac{c}{\sin c}$$

We know that ρ divided by $\sin \rho$ (which equals $90^\circ - \theta$) is equal to both λ divided by $\sin \lambda$, and 'x' divided by $\sin x$, we can readily fill in a few of the blanks:

$$\frac{\rho}{\sin \rho} = z \quad \text{therefore} \quad \frac{z}{\lambda} = \sin \lambda$$

'z' is a flag of convenience for the sine rule constant.

Turning $\sin \lambda$ to degrees and adding our angle ρ figure, we know that angle x is equal to 180° minus the sum of the other two angles.

$$\text{angle } x = 180^\circ - (\lambda + \rho)$$

and so $\sin x$ multiplied by $z = x$

which gives us one of the values of x which will have zero tracking error.

To find the other, we simply divide the product of I and O by x_1 which gives our inner zero radius, x_2 . One other value is handy to know: the point of maximum tracking error in the arm's journey across the record. This is very simple to calculate; it is the square root of the product of I and O , which a moment's

thought will show will be the same as the square root of x_1 times x_2 as well - and indeed of any complementary pair of factors of I multiplied by O .

It's easy, isn't it ?

Actually it looks frightfully complex like this. To show how readily applied all of the geometry really is, let's look at a worked example.

We wish to find the optimum set-up for an arm having an offset angle which we have measured at 24° .

κ divided by $\sin 24^\circ$ equals 9.175, so the length of the arm measured from pivot centre to stylus tip should be this (remember we're working in God's own inches). If this is impossible within the available range of adjustments on the arm, let's say things could be better, at any rate as far as this method is concerned!

Having derived the arm length, we square it and subtract the product of our two chosen values I and O , which is $2 \times 6 = 12$. Arm length 9.175 squared = 84.189; subtract 12 = 72.189. Find the square root and there's the pivot to record centre distance, 8.496".

Without going any further, we can set up the arm by these figures in the certain knowledge that tracking error will on average be as low as possible. We now may want to know the zero error points which will enable us to make a protractor for checking things afterwards.

90° minus 24° gives us value of angle opposite the pivot-centre line ρ when error is zero, in other words 66° . Applying the sine rule to find the length of side opposite the arm pivot (effectively the zero error radius) goes like this: ρ divided by $\sin 66^\circ$ gives constant $z = 9.300$. Dividing arm length λ by z gives the sine of the angle opposite the side we want to find, so λ divided by $z = 0.987 = \sin 80.595^\circ$. Adding this angle to the 66° and subtracting them from 180° gives the angle 33.405° .

$\sin 33.405^\circ$ multiplied by z equals zero error point: $\sin 33.405^\circ \times 9.300 = 5.120$ ". This is the outer zero. To find the other one nearer to the label, divide $I \times O = 12$ by 5.120 which gives inner zero at 2.344".

To reiterate: ANY tonearm set up by the same values of I , O and κ will have the zero points at the same radii, no matter what its length or offset angle; this must be so, because all values are in fact derived from our first choice of two parameters I and O , so even such nonsense as a twenty foot arm, if set up by this plan, will have null points at 5.120" and 2.344".

I see I've gone back on my earlier advice and worked to the nearest thou rather than hundredth of an inch, but that's just my youthful zeal. Have a look at a vernier or micrometer to gauge your chances of setting up to the nearest thou or .0254mm!

I hope this article will be of interest. There are so many nebulous quantities in hi-fi, it is refreshing to find a subject which yields concrete results with just pencil and paper. **RMW**



QUAD A DIFFERENCE A CLEAN MAKES

Mike Gerrard, a die-hard fan of Quad electrostatics, passes on some cleaning hints (undertaken at your own risk!)

My wife and I bought our ESL57s second-hand some 25 years ago, so when one died of constant abuse (my Naim power amp is capable of stunning our neighbouring farmer's prize bull), I was down but not out, although we did have a mono Millennium.

Enquiries suggested that repairs could be long-winded and the costs prohibitive. However, research in the pages of this most august of organs and elsewhere led me to another 25-year-old pair. 450 miles and £300 later I had quad Quads. The new ones were dusty but tidy, untouched since Huntingdon waved them good-bye.

The audition was promising - no noise, crackles, spitting or other nasties. So, having been temporarily estatic, I was ecstatic and if they could turn in a performance as well as they did after our trek, what would they do after a clean?

Reflect on this for a moment. If you don't clean your TV screen, you won't realise its full potential. Colour and picture nuances will be lost (not that there is much nuance to lose these days). Wipe it over and the crow you've been watching turns into a peacock. Your TV screen is subject to high voltages, and when you put your hand close to the screen, you sometimes hear a fizzing sound. That is static build-up on the glass, and you're dispersing it with your hand.

So in effect we are going to wipe over the Music Screen and reveal the peacocks in our music collection. As the sonic improvement was such a revaluation, I began to wonder just how many Stat owners are listening through a thick layer of dirt. All that filth virtually negates the point of having an ultra light membrane as the transducer/air interface. If you can't change a light bulb or fit a 13A plug, don't bother reading on. If you can, learn and inwardly digest this lot. Look at your speakers to see what is being discussed and above all, be honest with yourself. I can assure you that we are not in the realms of rocket science here. Do use the correct tools, do carry things out in the prescribed order, take your time, be patient and use delicacy as your watchword.

If you have a partner and kids, despatch them for the day, assemble your tools, fully engage your brain and in good heart start.

TOOLING UP

You will need: a 4mm-blade engineers screwdriver (for the small screws); a larger 6mm woodworking driver (for the side cheeks); a smallish pair of wire cutters and pliers (for removing the staples); a soldering iron or 6BA/small adjustable spanner (for the earth tag, see text), and 0.5in./3in. clean paintbrush. It is worth buying new ones - the cheap, thin, soft bristle types are ideal. Also necessary are a staple gun; maybe a small hammer; a vacuum cleaner with a nozzle attachment; an old hand towel, dampened but not wet; a few cotton buds; some contact cleaner, and some Elastoplast. Find a few empty yogurt pots for screws, etc.

STEPS TO HEAVEN

1) Unplug your speakers a good two hours before you start - as I've said, there is a few thousand volts floating around in there. Don't forget you're doing this for yourself, your wife and your children, not your widow and orphans!

2) Prepare yourself a work surface at least 3ft. by 2ft. You will have to turn the speakers easily and lay them on their backs. Tape some felt over the foot ends - this will help them slide easily and work at a comfortable height.

3) With the speaker facing you, remove the six screws holding the side cheeks and mark appropriately, left and right. Place away from the work area, and remove the screws and cups from the cheeks (yogurt pot No1). Be careful now, you have exposed the raw edge of the expanded aluminium fret and it's sharp!

4) Look down the exposed edge and you will see several staples. Remove them. Carefully lay the unit on its back, feet towards you and the rear foot over the edge of your work surface. Remove the fret-securing screws along the bottom edge (yogurt pot No2). You will find that there is an earthing wire attached to the fret via a solder tag (it is towards the left-hand side).

This has to be disconnected. Desolder the wire and leave the tag in place. If you don't have a soldering iron, use a spanner to undo the 6BA nut. (Ensure that you remake the joint on reassembly).

5) Whilst you have the speaker on its back, remove the bottom securing screws for the back cover. These are chrome and round-headed as opposed to the countersunk steel ones you have just removed from the fronts. They should also have washers under them (yogurt pot No3). You will meet your earth wire again, this time for the back panel.

Observe the same procedure and precautions as previously recorded.

6) Stand the unit up again, facing you. You now have the first tricky bit. The fret is made of expanded aluminium and is easily dented, so take your time and be careful.

Ease the bottom edge away from the frame. As it comes free, progressively work up each side, gently parting the fret from the frame, until it is free all the way up. You now have to free the top edge. This, as you will observe, rolls around the frame top and slots into a groove. Hold the fret at about 45 degrees with one hand and ease the fret out of the groove, starting at one side. Take care here, for over-exuberance could fold your fret in half. A gentle poke with a screwdriver on the side may help to get it started. When one side is free, do the same for the other. Once it is dislocated on each side, gently move the fret up and down, rocking it slightly as you work the still-captive section free. For this manoeuvre, hold the fret about half way up. When free, lift it off, place it away from the work area, and put the kettle on.

PANEL BEATING

You will now be faced with the three panels. The two outer ones are the bass radiators; the middle, slightly recessed one, is the treble unit. If you are faced with three rectangular, grey rugs, then you're in for a treat when you have finished. The bass panels will be worse than the tweeter as their polarising voltage is greater. Don't worry if the panels don't look like carpet underlay, there is bound to be some muck around, and every bit you shift will liberate more music.

If, on inspection, any of the membranes are damaged in any way ie, ripped - I'm sorry, but you're out of this game. In fact, you're just where I was before Christmas. However, if they aren't, read on.

6) Turn the speaker so the back is facing you. Before we start the clean up, let's have a look at the rear membrane - there is no point creating a lot of dust if the problem is around the back. Remove the remainder of the back screws and pop them in pot No3. The back fret is again

expanded material, only more open this time and of steel. If you've already cut yourself on the raw aluminium edges of the front fret, I should wear protective gloves if I were you don't bleed all over the membrane (this is where the Elastoplast in the tool list comes in).

To make matters even more awkward, the backs are sprung into the frames. Start in a top corner, with your 4mm screwdriver blade through one of the perforations (make sure it doesn't go right through). Bias the fret down and out towards you. Work your way along until you reach what passes for the handle.

Repeat from the other corner. Pop your driver blade into a central hole, bias it down and out again; the top should now spring out. Juggle the folded-under-and-box section away from the frame. Now you can see the business bit.

Most of the gubbins are easily seen, apart from the bits behind the treble unit wadding and transformers. I wouldn't disturb the wadding - that should be fine - but squint around everywhere else. A torch is helpful here. Having satisfied yourself that you're clear, make that brew and ponder why it's cleaner in there.

One reason is the felt wadding over the inner face. This reduces dust ingress, and as the speaker is angled towards the back, heavier dust particles fall away rather than being attracted onto the membrane. Fine particles still get pulled through, though. The wadding is in there to attenuate some of the sound radiation from the rear. This should make the Quads more room tolerant. After I had pair No1 for a while, a magazine article implied that overall performance could be miraculously improve, by removing the wadding, which I did. I can't remember if I thought there was any improvement; I probably did, as this was a period of wonderment and hyperbole. Some audio journalists, cranks and an odd manufacturer or two were trying to tell us that our systems would sound dire if you had a phone in the same room, or you didn't use copper pipe and plumbing fittings for speaker leads. Degradation would be noticed if your auntie had a poodle or you wore a wrist-watch whilst listening to your records (unless, of course, it was a gold Rolex!)

My surviving aunt doesn't have a poodle, so I've left the felt in the No2s.

Mike Gerrard

Gerrards@pict Thorn.freereserve.co.uk

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Quad ESL57 Electrostatics

All contributors to the letter pages of the DIY supplement will receive a book of their choice (under £25.00) from our World Library. Please send your letters to: Hi-Fi World DIY Supplement, Suite G4, Imex House, Kilburn Park Road, London, NW6 5LF. Alternatively you can e-mail your letter to letters@worldaudiopublishing.co.uk. We look forward to receiving them. Thank you.

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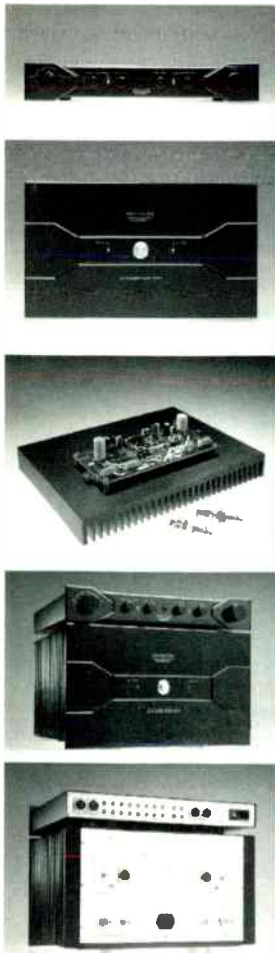
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Magic Moments?

David Price spent a long weekend with Emagic's Audiowerk2 soundcard. Pure enchantment or just another brief encounter? Read on...

Emagic is a new name to me, although my computer musician friends say the company has a fine pedigree. Founded in Hamburg in 1992, its founders reputedly played a major part in developing Notator, the first sequencing program with interactive real-time notation. Without them, it seems, a million Atari-based bedroom house records would never have been made! Based on this product's world-wide success, Emagic was formed.

In 1997 they launched the Audiowerk 8, an 8 channel digital audio recording PCI card designed for pro and semi pro use.

Then, last year came the Audiowerk2 Production Kit, which is a more home-oriented computer based digital recording system, working in conventional 2 channel stereo. It comprises the Audiowerk2 digital audio recording card (PCI, for both Windows and Mac platforms), plus Logic Audio Composer and MicroLogic AW2 (custom sequencing software derived from the industry renowned Logic Audio package).

The Audiowerk2 card itself is an unassuming little number, with two RCA phono analogue inputs at the back, adjacent to similarly configured analogue outs. Two S/PDIF digital connectors (one in, one out) complete the package. The card itself is tidy looking affair with a Philips SAA7146A 18 bit, 128x continuous calibration DAC and Bitstream ADC. Installation was pretty straightforward, being the usual case of snapping the main card into a PCI slot on the motherboard, and screwing it to the chassis. You then switch on and plough through Windows' autoinstall routine with the supplied Audiowerk disk in your CD-ROM drive. When the driver has loaded, you're greet-

ed by an icon in your system tray, which you can click on to control the action of the card.



The Audiowerk MME Driver Properties application gives full software control of Volume, Recording, Digital I/O and Performance settings. You can select the sampling rate you want the card to use (it supports 32kHz [recording only], 44.1kHz [default playback rate] and 8kHz recording which it defaults to), or press the Auto button if you don't want to worry yourself.

The Audiowerk performed faultlessly in use, both as a soundcard (for Windows sound effects) and as an audiocard for number crunching digital audio in and out. The only blemish on its copybook was the quality of the onboard digital convertors, which although just about up to the job of monitoring, were hardly the last word in sound quality. Compared to my budget reference Cambridge DACMagic 2, the DAC sounded rather hard and steely. The upper midband definitely suffered from a touch of digititis, treble was splashy and harsh and the bass lightweight and unengaging. Overall, not a great sonic performance, and actually inferior to Yamaha's WX-192 at one third

of the price. Ho hum!

Used purely as a digital card and without recourse to its onboard convertors - in conjunction with RME Audio's superb AD-1 for example - things were much better. Given a 44.1kHz the card does bit-for-bit recording with no automatic resampling - this keeps the data integrity of CDs you may be recording, for example. The Driver software proved simple and effective to use and there were no other major problems to report.

Emagic's new Audiowerk2 Production Kit is a fine package with much to recommend it, providing you've already got an off-board DAC plumbed into your sound system.

Emagic Audiowerk2 £199.95
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www.soundtech.co.uk

THE FACTS

PCI Card, 7" depth 32 Bit Busmaster audio co-processor Windows 95/98 & Mac compatible 2 record channels, 4 playback channels RCA unbalanced phono connectors quoted max output level (@ 0dBFS): 1.5 VRMS Bitstream A-D convertor with 18 bit resolution 18 bit, 128x oversampling DACS/P DIF digital I/O via RCA phonos Max sample rate 16bit, 48kHz

WORLD VERDICT



Strong in all respects except its mediocre onboard digital convertors.

NEW MUSIC

Philips' DSS370 USB multimedia monitors could be a blueprint for twenty first century hi-fi, says Nick Tate.

Universal Serial Bus is an interesting format for audiophiles.

Although not directly designed with audio in mind, it just happens to run a direct datastream out of the back of your computer and into the peripherals it controls. In the case of multimedia loudspeakers, that means digital conversion is done in the speaker enclosures themselves, right next to the drive units. As all hi-fi nuts know, this is a good thing.

The £140 package comprises two digital speakers and a single 30-watt ported active subwoofer with a claimed power handling 15W RMS per channel. While this may not seem a lot, it's plenty loud enough for any multimedia application. The two way bass reflex satellites are quite sizeable at 270mm high, and feature 100mm bass drivers and 50mm tweeters with a single 140mm woofer in the sub. At over 7kg for the whole package, the system is fairly sturdily built and certainly looks very swish. The ergonomics are excellent, and certainly raised the tone of my run-of-the-mill PC.

If your PC is USB equipped, which all recent models are, you can install the DSS370s using hot plug'n'play which eliminates the need to install drivers, sound cards, adjust switches, or reboot your PC. "Sound cards and complicated installation are now a thing of the past", says the Philips press release, and amazingly they're right! Unlike Roland's MA 150U USB monitors the DSS370s literally did plug in and play. If you're not USB equipped you can still use these speakers by taking a Line Out from your PC's soundcard into the DSS370's aux input, but you'll lose both the flashy software controls and the theoretical sound quality benefits of doing everything

in the digital domain.

On audition the DSS370 displayed the happy combination of refinement and brio. While ultimately lacking in power compared to hi-fi separates, they still went very loud for their size. Indeed they proved remarkably unconstrained even at near full volume, positively refusing to sit

on musical peaks. Always detailed and clean, the whole package worked well



together and never gave the impression of being out of its depth with demanding full-range recordings. Instead the DSS370s seemed to capture the spirit of every recording they played, even if they couldn't quite convey the scale. Highs were admirably clean, if a little dry, the mid-band well proportioned with secure stereo imaging and a decent amount of stage depth.

The subwoofer generally worked well too, providing you didn't turn it up past about half volume. Set any higher than this, it would begin to intrude on, rather than complement, proceedings by descending in to one note boom. The switchable Dynamic Bass boost proved okay for recordings lacking in bass, but decent full range hi-fi programme simply didn't need it. The other optional effect, Incredible Sound (who writes this stuff?), was literally correct. By boosting the mid-band and playing havoc with the phase,

you got sound from all around, even if it was akin to listening from your bathtub, under water.

It was interesting to hear these Philips USB speakers so soon after the Rolands, which share their fast musical sound - those theoretical benefits of USB really do work in practice. But there are differences too, the Philips being more refined and even handed, the Rolands more muscular and energetic. It's like the difference between German and Italian cars - you pay your money and take your choice.

Overall I was surprised by Philips' DSS370. They really are up to serious monitoring use, providing you stay in the digital domain, keep the sub at bay and avoid the silly DSP effects. Their polished musical sound, plus excellent ergonomics, good looks and decent build add up to a lot for your money.

PHILIPS DSS370 USB £140

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WHY USB?

- Universal Serial Bus is a new standard for controlling PC peripherals like loudspeakers, monitors, key boards and joysticks.
- USB is a medium speed data bus with a 6Mbps (Megabits per second) bitrate, which is easily capable of handling high quality digital audio in all its forms.
- USB speakers take the direct digital audio bitstream from the mother board, and do all digital to analogue conversion onboard the speakers themselves.

WORLD VERDICT



Impressive at the price, with a clean and powerful sound that's addictively musical. Useful facilities and ease of installation a bonus. Recommended.

First came Diamond Multimedia's Rio PMP300 MP3 portable, the player the US music biz tried to ban. Then came a host of pretty undistinguished rivals, offering an extra feature here and there but nothing to write home about. Then the Rio PMP500 arrived, which arguably did for MP3 what Akio Morita's original Sony Walkman did for cassette - turned it into a practical, viable, day-to-day music machine with great son-

heart's delight without so much as a reboot or reinstall. This, plus its fast 1.3Mbps file transfer speeds, makes downloading music from your computer to the player so much easier it's hard to imagine life with parallel ports ever again!

The Samsung software installed effortlessly onto my P166 notebook, and was as easy to understand as any MP3 managers I've tried - it's the usual drag and drop affair, perfectly intuitive and

powerful sounding with little sign of compression. Treble was sweet and clean, bass surprisingly forceful and midband smooth with convincing depth perspective. In absolute terms (compared to my reference Sony CDP-X77ES CD player) the Yepp sat on dynamics a touch, rolled off the frequency extremes and chrome-plated the upper midband slightly, but I must say how surprised I was with how subtle its colourations were.

YEPP, CAN DO!

With its slick sound and swish ergonomics, Samsung's YP-E64 'Yepp' portable makes a great case for MP3 as the format that can do anything.

ics to boot. Now we have Samsung's answer in the shape of the second generation Yepp, threatening to do the same at a lower price. At £199 the YP-E64 is around £30 cheaper.

What's so great about the Yepp? It's only the second player after the Rio 500 boasting the heady combination of 64MB of flash card memory as standard (giving just under an hour's playing time at MP3's standard 128kbps resolution) and proper, MiniDisc portable-style ergonomics and functionality. Other MP3 walkies might offer one or the other for a few pounds less, but you'll need both if you're going to do serious MP3 playing out on the town.

The Yepp's build is light years ahead of any MP3 portable I've tried to date - its aluminium fronted, plastic backed case weighs just 75g without batteries and is impressively small at just 65x87x17.2mm. In addition to its MP3 playing duties, it can also record up to 128 minutes of voice messages via its built-in microphone (perfect for lectures or interviews) which it can upload to a PC at a later date for storage or editing. Oh, and it also remembers 350 names and numbers too!

The Yepp comes with a parallel port data transfer cable, installation CD containing Yepp Explorer software, two AAA batteries, belt clip, earphones, user guide and optional USB adaptor. This last option is the mark of true second generation MP3 portables - USB offers 'intelligent plug and play', meaning you can plug in and unplug the Yepp to your

unfussy to use. Listening to the music you've just downloaded to the player is simply a matter of pressing the play button, whereupon the YP-E64 displays the track number, name, time and EQ setting. This latter feature is disappointing - separate treble and bass as the Rio 500 are forsaken for four pretty hapless NORMAL, JAZZ, ROCK and CLASSIC presets, with the option of '3D enhancement' which just puts a gaping hole in the stereo image and boosts the presence region. My only other criticisms with the Yepp's otherwise excellent modus operandi is the lack of a backlit display - a big disappointment at this price.

Through a decent hi-fi the Samsung sounded great. Feeding a pair of Musical Fidelity XA200 monoblocks driving Yamaha NS1000Ms the YP-E64 was extremely smooth and refined, running good CD portables very close at 256kbps. Even at hog standard 128kbps MP3 (coded using the Fraunhofer CODEC-equipped MusicMatch Jukebox 4) the Yepp was mightily impressive - Be Bop Deluxe's Modern Music was fast, full and

Overall then, the Yepp has a DAC and analogue output stage as good as any MP3 portable around today and far better than most - given properly encoded MP3s I really believe it's got the measure of MiniDisc. The problem is that the bundled RealJukebox MP3 ripping software isn't adequate, offering as it does a maximum of 96kbps encoding. This is fine for speech, but hi-fi music needs a bare minimum of 128kbps. The answer is to buy some decent MP3 software liked MMJ4.0, with a superb coding engine that runs up to 320kbps! Splash out on a decent ripper and a worthy set of in-ear headphones (the supplied ones look better than they sound), and Samsung's new Yepp is a top way of taking your music on the road.

SAMSUNG YP-E64

MEMORY: 64MB SmartMedia, optional 32MB £79

WEIGHT: 75g

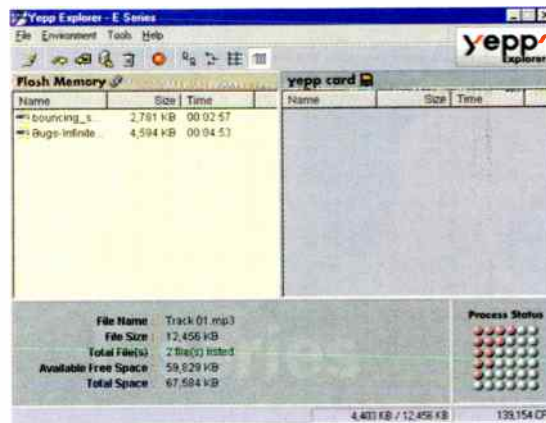
POWER: 2xAAA batteries

SIZE: 65x87x17.2mm

PRICE: £199

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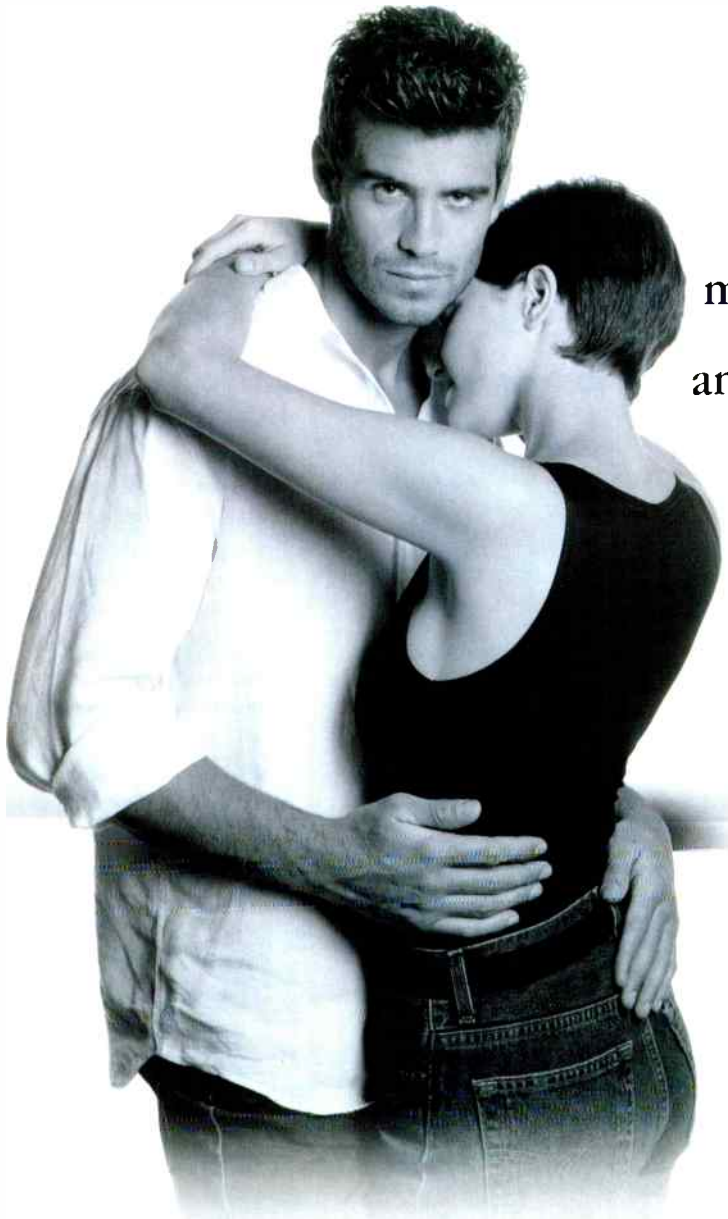
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WORLD VERDICT

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"Search for H.J. Leak" and you should find it, Richard said. Sure enough, typing the name into Alta Vista brought up the site straight away (<http://home.mira.net/~kiewavly/Leak.html>). Of the hi-fi sites this is one of the most interesting I have seen. It's a fascinating history of one of the earliest and most innovative hi-fi manufacturers. Such histories still being made today but, the way things are going, not for much longer. High fidelity as we know it is becoming progressively more commoditised and as this happens small, specialist companies are less able to make a useful contribution.

The process started with Compact Disc. Until it appeared in 1983, the turntable reigned. The LP - in fact the whole idea of mechanical recording - was born out of experiment rather than science.

Grooves were cut and played first; theories about their behaviour developed afterward.

Science never caught up with the turntable. Vinyl and polished diamonds were honed to produce a performance somewhat better than CD in many areas, such as frequency response and distortion, but improvements couldn't easily be wrought by hard science because the whole system was too approximate. This made the LP fertile territory for small, specialised companies, Linn being just one of course.

For the hi-fi business Compact Disc was a bombshell. It was born from advanced research carried out by Philips and Sony. The outcome of hard science and awesome production engineering across many differing technologies, such as lasers and optics, reflective coatings, servo systems and digital signal processing within dedicated silicon chips, CD players are technologically just about out of reach to small companies. The first ones seemed absurdly complex to me. Little did I realise at the time that the Japanese would find a way to mass produce CD transports to bring their price right down. Back in the early eighties no such thing was ever envisaged or talked about. The sheer complexity of CD seemed enough to be

thinking about, not the impact it would have on the future of high fidelity.

Nowadays, when you buy a CD player from a specialist audio manufacturer it is, at best, built from a medley of bought-in parts. Knowledgeable designers will choose a transport mechanism, use the associated servo-electronics but design the digital and analogue audio processing stages, using a proprietary chip set from Burr Brown, Philips, Crystal or similar. Whilst I can't say there's no skill or experience needed for this, equally there's only a limited amount that can be done to advance sound quality.

A product as complex as a CD player effectively limits the influence of specialists. It is the province of advanced high volume manufacturing techniques in which the Far East specialises. Japan

” A product as complex as a CD player effectively limits the influence of specialists.

moved its manufacturing plants into neighbouring territories with lower labour costs during the late 1980s and everyone else followed them. Intel built a chip fab plant in Malaysia and Sony has its largest overseas manufacturing plant there. Similarly, Philips has factories in Malaysia and its audio headquarters is in Singapore. This is where CD is manufactured, not in specialist Western hi-fi companies.

Deltec almost managed to turn CD back into an area of specialised audio manufacturing by designing their own digital-to-analogue converters. They got as close as you can nowadays to emulating the innovation and quality demonstrated by Leak, if not the breadth of product range. But Deltec, which later became DPA, never managed to get out of their small niche to appeal to a wider audience. In some ways it isn't surprising because commoditised products are sold on features and low price. Deltec could not compete with mass produced CD on price and, in any case, sound quality from Compact Disc has always been strictly limited by its

old late 1970s coding scheme. Unlike analogue systems, digital systems have brick wall quality limits that are difficult to overcome.

As DVD, a highly complex technology, takes over from CD, specialist audio manufacturers will become even more marginalised. Already, tuners and CD players are mass produced from building blocks that exclude the specialist skills that once so distinguished Leak, Quad and others. Solid-state amplifiers are cursedly difficult to improve significantly (although again Deltec managed to be the exception). There's too little latitude here, I feel.

That leaves us loudspeakers. This used to be a fertile area for specialists and Britain especially had a large number of companies. Again, the creeping commoditisation of audio has seen price become ever more important here, putting quality under pressure. Slowly loudspeaker companies are finding it ever more difficult to stay afloat, Mordaunt Short, Epos and TDL all calling it a day. Looking at the history of innovation of Leak and knowing how good their products were (I still use a Troughline tuner) I feel saddened that the days of talented individualist engineers are largely over and histories like this won't happen again. Thankfully we now have a well researched and illustrated appreciation of Leak and Co. on the internet to remind us how the hi-fi business came about. ●

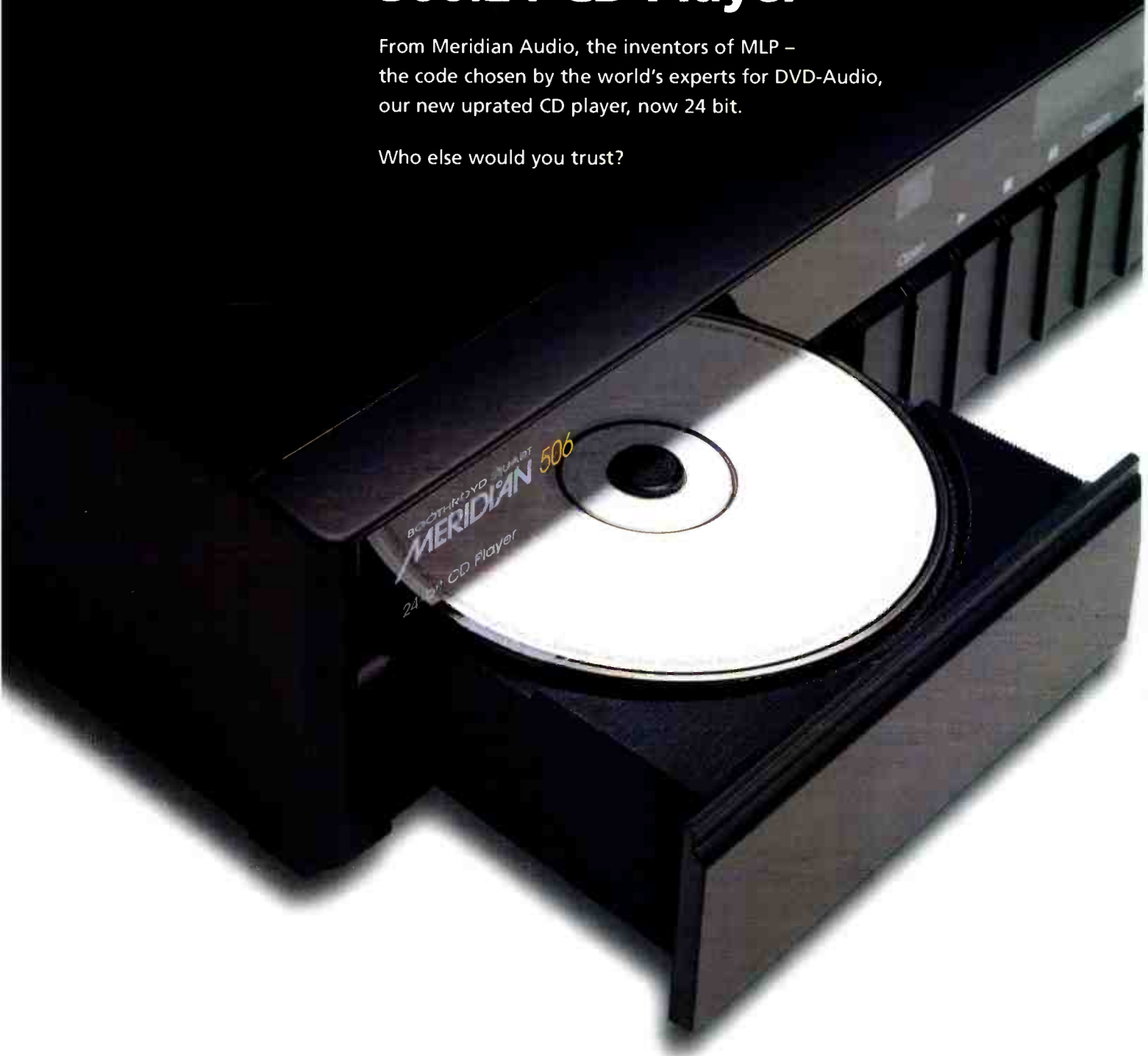


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Recently I had an exchange with a manufacturer who was looking for a review of his product - an audio accessory. On several occasions during the past eighteen months or so, one or other of the 'World editorial team have held long telephone conversations with said person. Our views were thoroughly sounded out on the likely validity of the product and, by means of rather leading questions, we were able to agree that things had every chance of prospering. Our usual parting remark - you must picture each of us having several of these conversations over the months - was that we should be happy to consider the items for review when we received them.

Upshot - nothing received. So it went on, with each of us in turn giving patient attention to the rather long-winded birth-pangs of the product-to-be. Since negotiations had started, much had changed in the editorial office, with different working procedures in place.

Once the product had arrived, a whole eighteen months later, the calls started again: when would it be reviewed? who was doing it? when were they doing it? Not content with one answer, the manufacturer started the old blanket bombing routine again. Getting an honest 'I can't say as yet' from one of us, the ball bounced straight over to someone else on the team. I'll be perfectly frank: having waited a year-and-a-half for the sample to arrive, we were not minded to drop everything else at once.

Once we'd got past this stage, the tone of the calls took a turn for the worse. The old leading-question routine began again, this time the burden being on the lines of "is it usual for . . ." I'm sure you can imagine the rest. It wasn't long before the recriminations began. Putting the railings into a nutshell (sounds like a conjuring trick), it turns out that the Editorial staff are too young to know anything about anything. And in any case the item was already on sale so our review wouldn't necessarily be

needed anyway and (a more pointed barb, this one) everything would be different if only we (the Hi-Fi World staff) had been wined and dined like we are by all the big manufacturers.

Once you've made this sort of accusation there's really not much point continuing; the light touch has been lost. I won't pretend I didn't give the matter some thought, though. In order to profit by what would otherwise have been wasted time and breath, I thought I'd touch on the matter in a future column, and offer my thoughts on the matter, both for and against. To be even-handed about this, I admit I can readily imagine getting no response from a magazine for a while would be irritating. Never mind that we can hardly move in the main

“ I should say that accumulated years do not necessarily aid effective reviewing

office for stuff either awaiting review or awaiting collection, it's not pleasant to feel shunted into a siding. Similarly, if I felt (whatever I might say to the contrary in the heat of the moment) that a review would be of use to me in getting a product off the ground, I'd be anxious - possibly even a little pushy - too.

There are ways and means. A few years ago I was involved in a production at the Edinburgh Fringe. The 'occasion' was a new musical which had been performed a few times in the community theatres of north Surrey but would here be subjected to its first really critical review in the make-or-break atmosphere of the Fringe. The cast, of which I was one, were all excited; naïf talk of agents with pockets bulging with contracts for West End premieres abounded. If we

were excited, the author/composer was in orbit: a good review in *The Scotsman* and move over Harold Lloyd-Webber, the future has arrived.

To help with this apparently imminent contingency, the author/composer made a tactical blunder: not only did he badger the Scotsman's review staff into attending the show, he then rang the paper's Fringe desk every day at least once to remind them that a review was due. The result? A hammering: "trite lyrics . . . plagiarized tunes . . . will appeal only to deaf relatives of members of the cast . . ."

Going back to our manufacturer, the moral of this tale is painfully obvious. To tie up the odd loose end, I should say that accumulated years do not necessarily aid effective reviewing; if anything, ears are much sharper in youth (pardon? - ed) and the critical faculties have had fewer opportunities of being blunted. Nor are we in the habit of exchanging hospitality for globes; by other names that's bribery and corruption. I assure you if any of that sort of thing had come my way, you wouldn't find me still among the dark, satanic mills of Tooting. Oh no! A few heavy back-handers and I'd have moved up in the world, to Balham. ●



Richard White

Audio Analogue

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World Radio History

Modem. It's a term that ten years ago most of us had never heard of. Further more, flicking through my fifteen-year-old dictionary it's not even there at all! Which is exactly what I found my computer advising me of when I tried to "log on" the other day. "Could not detect modem. Is it connected and properly installed?" Rebooting and reinstalling the modem proved fruitless. I was on the verge of attacking the computer, John Cleese-style with a broken branch, when the idea came into my head that I should perhaps take a look inside. Now, with hi-fi this has usually proved a disaster, so you can understand my concern. However, I know a little about the workings of the inside of hi-fi separates, but absolutely nothing about computers. On the basis that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, which explained my cack handedness with hi-fi gubbins, I thought no knowledge whatsoever should be harmless! All I need to do is go in there, wiggle some boards about, and blow the dust out. Imagine my surprise when opening the computer I found it to be a neat, modular stack of boards and drives; just like a hi-fi separates system!

Speaking to friends far more involved with computers than me, I've realised that the whole culture of computer hardware is very much a separates culture (which explains where all those lost hi-fi fanatics of the 70s and early 80s turned to!). Again, as with hi-fi, this has the effect of polarising people in turning them on or off the technology. There are those who love to tweak and try out new cables, modems or what ever it may be, whereas others simply want it all together in one easy package. With computers that means a ready prepared package and an expensive "homeware" back up system. With hi-fi, a mini or "lifestyle" system will do the trick.

The element of Heath Robinson is implicit with both technologies. Less predictable is the influence that the burgeoning computer market has had in the

field of hi-fi separates and accessories. In retailing I've recently been aware of a younger affluent audience that before wouldn't have considered a hi-fi unless it said Sony and came in the box wrapped in brushed aluminium with twinkling blue lights. This new audience is partly here because of sexy new technology, such as MiniDisc, but often I find it's their primary interest in their computer that's brought them here. Certain crossover elements are obvious. A phono lead to connect the hi-fi to computer, or even a basic amp and 'speaker set up purely for the computer.

Then there's MP3. Any hi-fi retailer interested in the budget and accessory end of the scale really should be starting

computer hardware is very much a separates culture (which explains where all those lost hi-fi fanatics of the 70s and early 80s turned to!)

to stock these now. There may be those who consider them to be lo-fi (and they most definitely are at the moment), and to be left to the computer stores but this could have serious implications for their future survival. Hi-fi products are, more and more, relying upon some form of computer software, and there has to be a crossover point in retailing. If you don't believe me take a look at products such as the Philips Pronto remote control. At one time, a £250 remote control would be the preserve of the exclusive high-end hi-fi shops. Now, this particular model is widely sold, not because of a great resurgence in the interest for remote controls, but because it can be connected to a computer to download different screens via Windows. Not only that, there are various, both official and unofficial, Internet sites that can provide even more screen options. You may ask what rel-

evance this has. Well, my feeling is that if software can be downloaded to a remote control now, what's to say that this won't be the case with a CD player in the future? Agreed, there's no miraculous way of downloading an improved digital to analogue converter, or transport mechanism, yet as many hi-fi manufacturers begin to use more computer software in their machines, the possibilities become greater. It may begin by the user being able to add new screen displays or features to their MiniDisc, CD or whatever the prevailing source turns out to be in five years time yet, in time, it could be possible to download sonic upgrades to. The catch is whether or not manufacturers will actually want to do this. Whilst they may be able to profit from upgrades on the web, there are plenty of others out there willing to offer hacks for less or even free.

Whether sonic web upgrades come about or not, there's no denying that the interest in computers looks set to continue for some time, and the influence on hi-fi will prevail even if it's just as a means of connecting the two together and searching for DVD hacks via the web. Which brings me nicely back to my modem. Unplugging it, dusting it down and plugging it back in did the trick! Who said new technology was complicated? ●



Dominic Todd

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KITS HAVE NEVER

Ki88 VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT & Ka88 VALVE POWER AMPLIFIER KIT

Here is the amazing Ki88. The circuit is similar to that of the ever popular KEL 34 with a few changes to incorporate the Tesla, JJ branded KT88 power tetrode. This is a pure Class A push-pull design providing 36 watts into an 8ohm load. Gary Devon has come up with a gem of an output transformer (E1). Combined with the KT88 it offers a virtually unmatched result for a valve amplifier. Frequency response measured 11Hz to 75kHz, separation 71dB, noise 98dB, sensitivity 400mV and distortion 0.03%. "As valve amplifiers go, the Ki88 is one of the best measured performances I have ever come across", says Noel Keywood. Jon Marks says, "The Ki88 pulled a series of surprisingly fast, meaty basslines out of its trickbag when dealing with Suzanne Vega's Nine Objects Of Desire album. As if this wasn't enough, the mid and treble were nice too -

THE Ka88, THE POWER AMPLIFIER VERSION OF THE Ki88



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cymbals had a deliciously natural, golden shimmer without sounding soft, and vocals were extremely transparent and crisply defined. Ki88 didn't hang around when it came to exploiting the virtues of its four output valves on numbers such as 'Leaves' and 'Suspect Sustain' from Cirrus' Land's End Jazz CD. Saxophone had a wonderfully smooth, realistic character, and acoustic guitar mixed speed with harmonic richness to very impressive effect. Asian Dub Foundation and Moloko showed no sign at all of the sluggish, woolly bottom-end and poorly-delineated bass beats that most valve amps are to blame for. Which makes the Ki88 an all-round, high-end bargain." Weight 16kg, external dimensions with valves are 300mm(w) x 300mm(d) x 190mm (h).



£440

KEL34 E&I VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT

The KEL 34 E&I version is our second generation budget stereo integrated valve amplifier, providing a massive 40 watts of pure valve sound. With 4 line level inputs and one tape output. The KEL 34 E&I is a simple and elegant circuit design using a 6AU6 pentode input valve, an ECC82 double-triode phase splitter and a push-pull pair of Tesla, JJ branded EL34s. The result is a typically sweet, open valve sound with atypical bass control and power. The KEL34 E&I will work its magic into 'speakers of average sensitivity too. Jon Marks says, "tonally the KEL34 E&I is a bit of a smoothie. It has a fast, dynamic sound, plucked guitar strings and bass drum enjoy crisp

leading edges and great impact. Clear imaging and spacious sound staging meant voices and instruments really jumped out of the loudspeaker boxes. Overall the KEL 34 E&I is a beautiful power amp." At the price, this kit is second to none and will open up the benefits of valve amplification to a whole new class of audio nuts! Weight 12kg. External dimensions with valves: 33cm(w) x 27.5cm(d) x 18cm(h).



KEL34 Facelift - if you want your KEL34 to look like the Ki88 this is what you need - £75.00

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



K5881 MkII VALVE AMPLIFIER KIT

A 20watt, Class A power amplifier that uses reliable Russian 5881 output valves, a military version of the American 6L6, designed for low distortion audio work. Now with a super shunt regulated push-pull (SRPP) input stage K5881 offers amazing sound quality. It can be used with a simple passive pre-amp or one of our own pre-amplifiers, and it matches modern loudspeakers well. Weight 15kg external dimensions with valves 40cm(w) x 32.5cm(d) x 17cm(h).



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MkII with SRPP input stage! World Radio History

KEL80 MONOBLOCK AMPLIFIER KIT

Following the success of our budget KEL 34 40watt kit amplifier, we have come up with a 'bigger brother' design. The output stage utilises two pairs of TESLA EL34 pentodes in parallel-push-pull mode, allowing KEL80 to turn out 80 watts into an 8ohm load. Heading up the input stage we have the wonderfully linear Russian 6AU6 working into an American 5687 phase-splitter. KEL80's output transformers are 4ohm and 8ohm tapped. With an input sensitivity at around 380mV for full output, it will happily partner both passive and active pre-amplifiers. It is easy to assemble. Simon Pope says, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating and the KEL80 is a feast for the ears, with solid bass attack, lightning fast reactions, that emphasises musicality as well as power, at 590.00 GBP a pair, a definite valve winner. Each monobloc weighs 12kgs., external dimensions with valves: 14cm(w) x 8cm(h) x 11.5cm(d).

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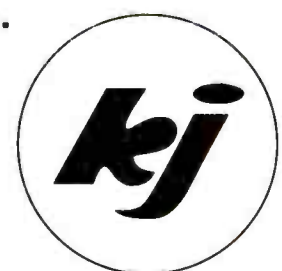
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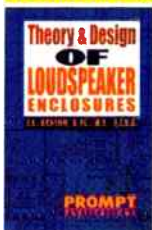
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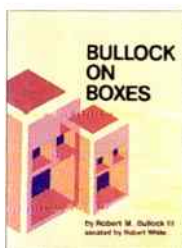
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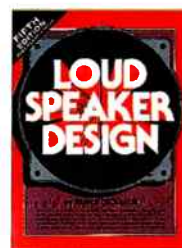
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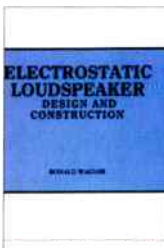
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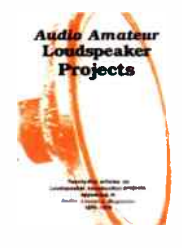
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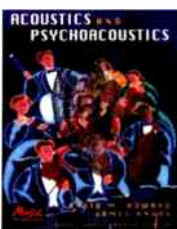
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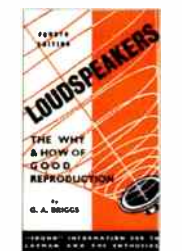
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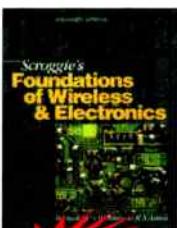
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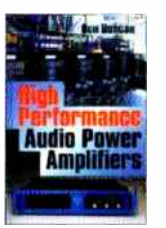
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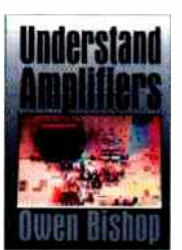
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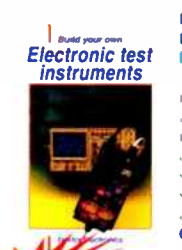
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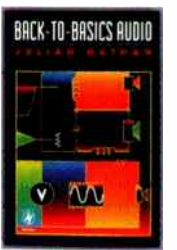
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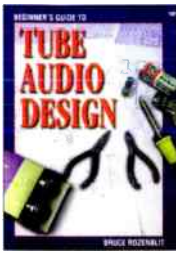


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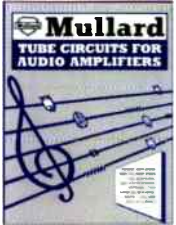


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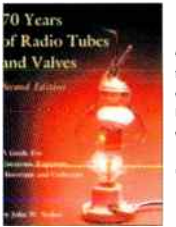
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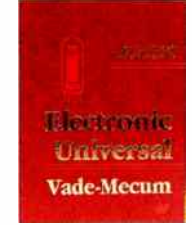
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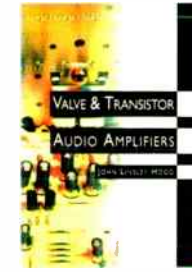
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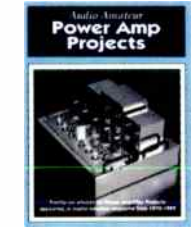
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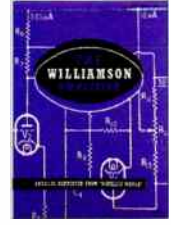
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Buying Guide

Our comprehensive new guide contains over 1000 hi-fi components, all tried and tested by Hi-Fi World's listening team. Backing up each one is our performance verdict to help you select the perfect upgrade or first purchase. Happy reading!

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buying guide

Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

Under £300

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Acoustic Energy AE100	£200	Jan 96	Reasonably neutral but ultimately lacklustre. Control of treble and mid-range poor.
Acoustic Energy Aegis One	£150	Sep 99	Weighty, powerful performers with plenty of character. Exceptional value for money.
Audio Gem Opals	£240	Dec 97	Partner the Opals with warm ancillaries and you get an involving sound. Avoid bright amps and sources.
Aura LSB-627M	£230	Aug 98	Energetic, bold and highly detailed, the Aura is one to consider for the budget-conscious.
Aura LST-627	£299	Oct 98	Like Aura's matching stand mounters, the 627Ms are lucid and controlled. Treble is brightish.
B&W 601	£200	Jan 96	Unrestricted and clean sound with satisfying musicality. An engaging subtlety not common at the price.
B&W DM302	£130	Apr 96	Clear open and detailed sound but balance too forward and weak bass.
B&W DM602	£250	Nov 96	Excel with taut hard-hitting bass with dynamic and uncoloured midrange. Metal dome tweeter bleaches out the treble.
Boston CR6	£150	Sep 98	With simple music, the CR6s work well, but not quite as well as the best of the competition.
Castle Isis	£230	Jan 96	A lively little animal, well worth the money.
Celestion 12i	£119	Feb 98	The 12is' powerful, confident sound belies a rather poor measured performance.
Celestion Impact 15	£200	Jan 96	Big presentation but a rather distant quality. Could sound boomy and confined.
Celestion Impact 23	£299	Nov 96	Sterling performance in the bass with speed and control. Good midrange projection.
Chario Hiper 1000	£235	Feb 99	Quality construction and sound marry to produce a very capable 'speaker. Open treble and firm bass for the size.
Eltax Liberty 3+	£150	Jan 98	A lot of loudspeaker for the money. Punch and slam in the bass but sometimes thin in the treble.
Eltax Liberty 5+	£200	Sep 99	Immediate 'hi-fi' sound with little subtlety or finesse. Bass inclined to boom, although mass-loading helps.
Eltax Symphony 6	£240	Nov 96	Although bright, the Symphony 6s score for clarity and power. Bass is fast and accurate.
Gale 2i	£140	Feb 97	Smooth, balanced performers that do a good job on any genre. Free from the nasties that afflict many at the price.
Gale Mini Monitor	£50	Apr 97	Not the last word in midrange or bass clarity, but gives real hi-fi results for a paltry £50.
GLL ICT100	£170	Nov 95	For their size and price they offer some super qualities, especially stable imaging.
Heybrook Heylette	£199	Sep 99	Better suited to Classical than Rock or Heavy Metal. Smooth and refined sound will appeal to many.
Heybrook Optima	£259	Oct 98	Capable all-rounders, the Optimas combine smoothness, insight and control to great effect.
Heybrook HB1 S3	£269	Nov 96	Excellent imaging with clear treble and midrange. Bass slightly dry and boxy but would suit a smaller room.
Jamo CS5 Actives	£200	Oct 98	In spite of a few colorations, the Jamos are fine examples of budget active operation.
JPW ML510	£130	Jan 98	With greater transparency and a bit more get-up-and-go, the 510s could be leaders of the budget pack.
Kef 60S	£200	May 96	The 60S is open and detailed but coloured too.
Kef Coda 7	£129	Apr 95	Rhythmic push and tuneful bass are the plus points of these small standmounts.
Kef Coda 8	£200	Jan 96	Breezy presence, good dynamics and a sense of fullness. Not the utmost in clarity, some box colouration.
Kef Coda 9	£299	Jul 96	Strong bass can get out of control, as can treble. This tends to overpower the midrange.
KEF Cresta 2	£150	Oct 99	A highly entertaining bi-wire budget mini. The only slight let-down is sound staging.
Kef Q15	£199	Feb 97	Impressive bass and a sweet clarity make the Q15s 'speakers that'll put a smile on any audiophile's face.
Kenwood LS90UK	£129	Jul 98	The LS90UKs have dry bass and limited tonal colour, but staging and imaging are superb.
Linn Sekrit	£298	Apr 96	Well-behaved and with a decent tonal quality.
Mission 700	£130	May 98	The 700s are easily outclassed by Mission's own superb 731 Pros at a £10 premium.
Mission 702e	£199	Sep 99	Well constructed and engineered but top-heavy balance lets the side down with its lack of subtlety.
Mission 731	£129	Apr 95	An initially impressive, up front sound but ultimately a little uninvolved.
Mission 731 Pro	£139	Jul 97	Musical makers with a clean, punchy sound. Real value for money.
Mission 731i	£130	Nov 96	Mission's babies are a truly worthwhile improvement on the original 731s.
Mission 731LE	£150	Nov 95	Excellent sound puts the competitors in the shade. Well built and pretty too!
Mission 732i	£200	Aug 97	If you've got £200 with 'loudspeaker' written on it, then the 732i should be on your shopping list.
Mission 771	£170	Jul 98	Superb stand mounters of real refinement and musicality. A touch bass light.
Mission 772	£230	Apr 99	Civilised standmounters which lack nothing in control, finesse or transparency.
Monsoon MM-1000	£200	May 99	A novel multi-media two-satellites-and-sub which nevertheless demands to be taken quite seriously.
Mordaunt-Short MS20i	£200	Jan 96	Very tight bass and an all-round big sound. Some sharpness in the treble but assertive and clear.
Nad 801	£100	Jun 97	Impressive bass with midrange clarity are pluses. Prominent treble stops the 801 from challenging the best.
Paradigm Mini Monitors	£230	Aug 97	The Paradigms have a generally enjoyable sound but treble is sharp and midrange recessed.
QLN 122	£270	Jun 96	Solid bottom end will drive a large room well, but they're a bit bright too.
RDL RA Labs Mini Ref	£99	Jul 95	Engineering is not tip-top, but with a smooth system they will produce a clear and open, if bright, sound.
Revolver Purdey	£200	Jan 96	Rather small sound for a big cabinet. Absence of deep bass hard to forgive.
Richard Allen Minette 3	£159	Sep 99	Very individualistic loudspeakers will need careful auditioning to ensure that they're right for you.
Rogers LS1	£149	Feb 96	Clear, bright and open but with weak bass. Best used close to or against a wall.
Rogers LS33	£250	Nov 96	Detailed and clear with a forward midrange. Could be a little rough on vocals; bass extension is limited.
System Audio 1005	£299	Aug 96	Excellent all-rounder that provides a real open window into almost every genre of music.
Tangent Monitor 11	£200	Nov 97	The Tangents' bass has attractive speed and impact, matched with smooth treble and open midband.
Tangent Monitor 2	£60	Jul 96	Good imaging as well as control. Tweets a bit too much but more than fine for the money.
Tannoy Mercury m1	£120	Jun 98	The best at the price and capable of embarrassing many more expensive 'speakers.
Tannoy Mercury m2	£140	May 97	For £140, you get a 'speaker with transparency and enjoyability unmatched at the price.
Tannoy Mercury m2.5	£160	Sep 99	A little brittle in the upper midrange but the virtues outweigh the faults many times over. Budget bargain.
Tannoy Mercury m3	£240	Nov 97	Even overall balance and taut secure bass, if not the deepest ever. Slightly lightweight and uninvolved.
Tannoy R1	£199	Nov 98	Worth an audition if you need to balance a bright source and amp, but treble lacks clarity.
TDL NFM 1	£120	May 97	Bright treble is partially balanced by taut, well integrated bass, but outclassed by the competition.
TDL Nucleus 1	£60	Apr 97	Clean, incisive, detailed and revealing, especially in the bass.
TDL Nucleus 3	£200	Sep 99	The more you listen, the more you appreciate them. Best with smaller scale music - not for headbangers.
W'dale Active Diamond	£180	Mar 99	Great value introduction to active. The sound is deep and powerful but could be a little coloured for some.
Wh D'm'd Anniversary 7.2	£150	Sep 99	Honest reproduction, but with a suspicion of bass boom. Lacking in finesse; little dated now.
Wharfedale Valdis 300	£150	Jul 96	Can work well if partnered to give weighty bass and smooth treble.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Heybrook Heylette



Mission 772

Billy Vee

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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

£300-£799

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Alesis M1 (active)	£549	Jul 99	Almost worthy of domestic bargain status, the M1s lack just a little smoothness and finesse.
Arcaydis AS2	£700	Oct 99	Quality drive units give smoothness, detail and imaging. Require hefty amplification and finish could be better.
Arcaydis ASC	£399	Jun 99	The ASCs have natural warmth and good imaging. Inclined to be a little power-hungry.
B&W CDM1SE	£600	Apr 98	Tuneful and confident, these 'speakers are well suited to Pop and Dance music.
B&W DM305	£350	Mar 97	All the ingredients for listening fun are in the DM305. Overall presentation could be more cohesive though.
B&W DM602 Series 2	£300	Aug 99	A fair design that needs partnering with smooth amplification in a well-furnished room.
B&W P4	£600	Mar 95	Good-looking solid 'speakers with great spirit and tenacity but with a dry treble. Not fans of classical music.
Blue Room Minipod	£400	Jan 97	Arresting style allied to an engaging sound makes the Minipods attractive. Best with smooth amps and source.
Castle Avon	£699	Dec 96	Taut, dry bass and lucid midrange but need matching to warm ancillaries to avoid sounding bright. Castle
Castle Harlech	£799	Aug 96	Bass power and extension will impress but overall sound is uneven and rather sterile.
Castle Inversion	£425	Aug 99	Unusual styling will polarize opinion, but sonically the '15s are fair performers. Imaging could be better.
Castle Kendal	£450	Mar 98	The Kendals have great clarity but need coupling to warm ancillaries.
Castle Severn II	£579	Jul 98	Apart from some hardness in the tweeters, the Severn 2s are accomplished all-rounders.
Chario Hiper 1	£399	May 95	Music makers through and through with a great feel for rhythm and dynamics.
Charlo Lynx	£549	Apr 99	The Lynxes are superbly built but their rising bass and treble suit home cinema more than hi-fi.
Dali 450	£700	Feb 96	A powerful and rich sound from these competitively priced floorstanders makes them worth a recommendation.
Epos ES12	£495	Oct 96	Strong, punchy bass allied to detailed and articulate midrange and treble.
Heybrook Heylios	£339	Mar 97	The Heylios stand out for their bass depth, dynamics and sound staging. Overall balance prefers Classical to Rock.
Heybrook Heylio	£389	Oct 95	Posses a neutral, fast and dry sound. A good match for soft sounding systems.
Jamo 307	£300	Apr 95	Delicate, detailed sound, albeit with rather imprecise imaging. Will work well on a bookshelf.
JPW ML910	£300	Nov 97	The 910s aren't perfect but make music fun. Quality, power and extension, the Millenniums are worth a listen.
JPW Ruby 2	£395	Oct 98	Once allied to warm electronics, the Ruby 2s mix insight with plenty of involvement.
Kef LS3/5A	£599	Jul 95	Partnered with the Rogers AB1, this is a substantial marriage.
Kef Q35	£350	Nov 97	Very accomplished midrange and treble but the dry in the bass. For Rock fans the upper bass speed is appealing.
Kef Q55	£499	Aug 97	The Q55s look rather expensive at £500 with their 'boom and tizz' presentation.
Kef RDM1	£499	Oct 97	The RDM1s soundsstage well thanks to their Uni-Q drivers. Can be uninvolved because of a lack of scale and impact.
Linn Tukon	£389	Dec 95	Highly musical standmounters that give similarly priced floorstanders a great deal to worry about.
Meridian A500	£750	May 95	Very polite and many will appreciate their civility. Deep powerful bass.
Mission 733	£300	Apr 95	Captivating floorstanders that bring music to life - what good hi-fi should do.
Mission 773e	£400	Nov 99	Nicely engineered slimline model. Some sonic trade-offs with the compact size.
Mission 734	£430	Sep 95	Engineered for low price and showroom appeal rather than absolute sound quality.
Mission 751 Freedom	£350	Apr 97	Charming little stand-mounters with a sweet, warm, musical sound.
Mission 752 Freedom	£578	Jan 97	Dynamic, punchy, and musical yet refined like few at the price. Bass lacks a little depth.
Mission 774	£500	Feb 99	With the right ancillaries, the 774s have a clarity and lack of colouration still rare at the price.
Mordaunt-Short MS25i	£300	Nov 96	Sweet sounding metal dome tweeter although the dry bass and rather plasticky midrange work against it.
Musical Technology PM15	£474	Jan 99	Sophisticated, neutral sound and fine musicality put the PM15s near the head of the class.
Near 10M	£500	Jan 96	A thin and hard sound but precise with it!
Neat Critique II	£445	Jan 99	Deserving 'speakers with good looks and build. Can fail to shine with over-polite equipment.
NHT 1.3	£389	Aug 95	Very crisp sounding 'speakers best suited to smaller rooms.
Opera Mini	£300	Nov 99	A mini 'speaker made for music. Well built and versatile. At worst, ponderous, at best, immense.
Opera Prima	£495	Feb 99	The Primas offer a taste of the high-end at a sensible price. They are more fans of Classical than Rock though.
Ortofon ConCorde 6	£329	Oct 95	Good value floorstanders with clean enjoyable sound - not quite supersonic, though.
Poik PSW150	£500	Jul 97	The PSW150 adds depth to a system but can sound obvious at times.
Proac Tablette	£600	Aug 98	Amp-sensitive and slightly boxy in the lower treble, the ProAcs are still highly musical.
Rel Q Bass	£350	May 96	Needs care in setting up but this subwoofer offers serious quality bass for not a lot of money.
REL Q100E	£500	Apr 98	Another capable sub from REL that boosts bass and improves sound staging.
Rogers AB 1	£499	Jul 95	When used with the Kef LS3/5a this sub delivers the goods, beyond a doubt.
Roksan RokOne	£595	Feb 97	Musically involving 'speakers that many will enjoy, but a little unrefined at times.
Sequence 400	£329	Apr 96	Good at orchestral scale but coloured in the midband.
Soundcraft Absolute 4P	£799	Oct 97	The Absolute 4Ps excel in all areas except for the rather bright, hard treble. Bass is exceptional.
Spendor 2030	£599	Jun 96	Smooth and coherent in their delivery with deep and taut bass extension. Not the most spacious sound.
Systemdek 165	£400	Feb 96	Dry and clean sound, but can become hard and confused when pushed.
Tannoy Precision P10	£300	May 98	Though very even in their performance, the P10s lack ultimate clarity and punch.
Tannoy Profile 633 plus	£300	Nov 96	Weighty bass and rhythmic detail work well on dance. Less satisfying with classical music. Firm imaging.
Tannoy Revolution r2	£350	Oct 99	Lively and exciting, will appeal to many. Solid built and confident sound makes them well worth the money.
TDL RTL 4	£650	Feb 95	Easy going with plenty of detail and timbral richness. Better with classical fare.
TDL T-Ilne 2	£550	Jan 97	Midrange and treble have good tonal colour, detail and speed. Bass is slow and blurred.
Technics SB-M01E	£400	Nov 99	Punchy and dynamic, yet refined. In a small environment, these highly detailed 'speakers are excellent.
Technics SB-M300	£350	Nov 95	A great sound with solid bass from a compact and well priced 'speaker.
Technics SB-M500	£450	May 96	Clean, dry and taut with good imaging and sound staging. More neutral than Mission's 752s but less euphonic.
Titan Mini T2B	£600	Dec 99	Heftily built standmounts with terrific punch and attack. The metal drivers might make classical a bit harsh.
Triangle Comete TZXe	£475	Jan 95	Quite pleasant, inoffensive sound but others costing less can offer more.
Wharfedale Valdue 500	£300	Oct 95	Good for adding scale and power to a weak system or budget separates.
Yamaha MSP5	£449	Jun 99	Ruthless to poorly-produced material and can sound cold, but their detailing is impressive.



JPW Ruby 2.



Opera Prima

Prices shown are those at the time of review

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Epos ES22 Speakers (Light Cherry)	£1185.00	£799.00	Pioneer 515 DVD Player (NEW)	£249.00
Linn Kudos Tuner (2Yr G/tee)	£775.00	£489.00	Quad ESL63 Electrostatic Speakers S/H	£995.00
Linn Kaber Passive (Black)	£2000.00	£1195.00	TAG 60i Integrated amp	£499.00
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Linn Wakonda Preamp S/H(1Yr G/tee)	£750.00	£399.00	TAG PA10 Pre Amp (2YR G/tee)	£499.00
Linn Wakonda/Kudos Phono S/H	£1400.00	£799.00	TAG 60P Power Amp (2YR warranty)	£579.00
Linn LK140 Power Amp (2Yr G/tee)	£750.00	£469.00	TAG 125 Mono P/Amps pair (2Yr G/tee)	£1695.00

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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

£800-£1499

Acous.Precn Elkos RF1	£800	Nov 99	Bass-light, but excellent in every other area. A sub is on the way. Very revealing of ancillary components.
Audionote E	£1450	Mar 95	Big, bulky and ultra-sensitive with quick pace and a well balanced sound, but not without flaws.
Audiovector M1 Sig.	£1479	Aug 98	The M1 Sigs may be a little laid-back, but they have a pleasant and involving sound.
Audiovector M2	£1499	Jun 98	The M2s are marred by a boom 'n' tizz presentation that suits Heavy Metal but not much else.
B&W CDM7	£999	Feb 98	With warm ancillaries the CDM7s produce a weighty, open sound. Bass could be faster.
Castle Howard S2	£1099	Mar 96	Fantastically deep and tight bass but some treble sharpness requires careful matching.
Celestion A2	£1499	Jun 98	Focus is not a strength, but bass extension and even tonality are. Metal tweeter can be bright.
Chario Academy One	£1199	Dec 95	Musical realism and a great real-wood finish make these 'speakers enjoyable, if not perfect.
Dipason Karls	£1250	May 99	Small cabinet precludes the deepest bass, but a sweet little act for all that. Seriously imaging abilities.
ELAC Jet 310i	£800	Jul 99	Lovely fast, clear sound majors on musicality. 10 year guarantee too.
Epos ES22	£1185	Jun 98	Aside from a slightly cool balance, the ES22s shine. Dynamics, bass depth and control are tops.
Event 20/20BAS	£829	Sep 98	Warm, detailed and well-endowed in the bass, the Events lack only a touch of overall control.
Harbeth DPM1 Active	£849	Sep 98	Now HHB's Circle Actives, these loudspeakers mix the best of pro and domestic to produce first-class results.
Harbeth HL Compact 7	£1329	Jun 96	Dry and analytical but truthful with it. A first class monitor ideally suited to acoustic or classical music.
Harbeth HL K6	£975	Dec 96	Clean, musical and classy - Harbeth have done themselves proud again!
KAR Torino	£895	Jan 97	The Torinos' stylish sound won't shame any system. That powerful bass does need space to breathe properly though.
Kef Reference 1	£995	May 95	Beautifully fluid and integrated mid band and treble but can be slow, with a little loss of bass control.
KEF Reference 2	£1499	Jan 95	Handles rock and classical with equal aplomb, with the ability to reproduce detail that flummoxes many other models.
Klipsch Heresy II	£1150	May 99	Horn and infinite-baffle hybrid with power to spare. Phasing and frequency accurate beyond belief.
KRK V8	£995	Sep 98	Ultra-detailed and revealing, the V8s are true pro more than domestic transducers.
Magneplaner MG 0.6 SE	£1370	Mar 95	Very clear detail and separation, but just fails to produce a fully 3-dimensional sound.
Magneplaner MG12/OR	£1200	May 99	Lightness of touch, dynamics and clarity in trumps. Needs powerful amplification for 77dB/W/m. Not a valve 'speaker.
Mirage 890i	£1075	Oct 95	An easy going, open and natural sound makes the mirages an attractive proposition.
Mission 754 F5	£1299	Sep 96	Articulate and informative sound with fine imaging and tight, deep bass.
Mordaunt Short 860	£1450	Dec 95	Fast, tight and informative, but a poor tweeter casts a grey shadow.
Musical-Tech. Falcon	£955	May 96	Give a big sense of scale on rock and jazz but not subtle and even enough for the critical classical listener.
NEAR Soundmast	£1199	Aug 95	An interesting, musical floorstander that's good value even at this price.
Origin Live Sovereign	£1225	Jun 98	The OLs have transparency and detail in considerable amounts. Bass can be loose though.
PT Ventricle	£896	Aug 95	Smooth and refined floorstanders that some listeners will find captivating.
QLN Signature	£1499	Mar 96	Super sound staging, openness and detail. Well worth seeking out.
REL Stadium 2	£995	Aug 95	Excellent bass performance means that this subwoofer is no toy.
Roksan Ojan 3	£1000	Jan 98	Unusual 'speakers with great rhythmic capabilities and bass. Could be more transparent.
Ruark Paladin	£1099	May 95	The Paladins possess a detailed and expansive soundstage but also a rather dry character
Spendor 2040	£899	Oct 96	The tweeter works well but a recessed midband and one-note bass are the Achilles heels.
Spendor FL8	£1275	Jun 98	The FL8s are warm, mellow performers which prefer Classical to Rock.
Tannoy D300	£1000	Apr 97	Impressive bass extension and control go hand in hand with precise imaging to make the D300s a snip at £1000.
Totem Model 1 Sig.	£1250	Sep 97	Good but the move from standard to Signature has taken speed and punch out of the Model 1s
UKD Callas Gold	£995	Jun 96	A rich and open sound, extremely musical if not strictly accurate. Great bass extension for their size.
UKD Divina	£1390	Jun 95	Not the most neutral 'speakers but they are extremely smooth with an overall coherence to the sound.
Veritas 7	£1000	Jun 99	The Veritas 7s combine neutrality and detail with fluidity and sophistication.
Zingali Concerto .1	£1100	Dec 99	Beautiful cosmetics but poor frequency balance. May be a partner for a subwoofer: otherwise too bass-light.



Klipsch Heresy

£1500-

Audiovector 6	£4600	Jun 95	If you have enough room and money the 6s are capable of a highly musical, involving performance.
BKS 107 Mikil	£1500	Dec 98	The 107 Mk2s may look slim but they have a solid sound and are fabulously revealing.
Cadence ES	£3500	Sep 95	Interesting design that incorporates an electrostatic tweeter. An impressive sound but an inconsistent performer.
Celestion A3	£1800	May 97	The A3s are quite simply superb. All you'll need to enjoy them is a large enough listening room.
Epos ES25	£1505	May 95	An extremely coherent and focussed sound; these are true audiophile speakers. Captivating with classical music.
Harbeth HLS8	£1999	Mar 97	Glassy clarity, bright treble, with bass that comes alive when given welly. Expensive though.
Heybrook Octet	£1800	Jul 98	The Octets are smooth, laid-back floor standers. Lack speed and transparency.
Jamo Concert 11	£2000	Dec 97	A worthy bigger brother for the Concert 8s, with a fast, transparent and even sound.
Jamo Concert 8	£1500	Jun 97	The Concert 8s are superbly clean and transparent. Their nature will show up any source shortcomings.
JBL S2600	£3500	Jul 96	Smooth, detailed and spacious with great scale and imaging. Capable of producing a real performance.
Kef Reference 3	£2000	Nov 95	For superb reproduction within large rooms, the 3s are a force to be reckoned with.
Kef Reference 4	£3099	Oct 96	Superb bass and near-electrostatic soundstaging make these involving 'speakers a bargain.
Living Voice Auditorium	£1500	May 99	Their strengths suggest a Classical 'speaker but they suit electronic compositions better. Rich tone but loose bass.
Proac Studio 150	£1500	Mar 99	Musically engaging but the tall ProAc's brightness suits them best for smooth valve amplification.
Slate Audio Stormforce	£8000	Feb 99	The best home for a reflex-loaded Tannoy dual-concentric, but they don't come cheap!
Spendor SP7/1	£1970	Jan 95	Gorgeously looking. Listening becomes an enjoyable experience, full of surprises from subtleties.
Spendor SP9/1	£3400	Apr 96	One of the clearest and most expressive loudspeakers you'll ever find for a large room. Easy to drive, too.
Tannoy AMS8	£2702	Aug 96	Bold, powerful sound with solid bass, focussed midrange and delicious treble. Well worth tracking down.
Tannoy D900	£3999	Sep 97	£4000 may be a lot to pay for a pair of 'speakers, but the Tannoys deliver to great effect in all areas.
Technics SB-M1000	£1500	Nov 96	Materially excellent value. Sound clean and extended but can lack involvement.
Thomas Transducers Brio	£4750	Feb 95	Capable of producing a captivating performance of lifelike proportions with a great air of naturalness.
Thomas Virtuoso Gold	£3395	May 98	Impressive horns that combine lightness of touch with power and clarity.



Jamo Concert 8.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Billy Vee

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Prices correct at time of press. E&OE

buying guide

Integrated £ Year Verdict

under £300			
Alchemist Maxim	£299	Mar 96	Fluid and musical but upper bass is a little dry. Useful phono stage with but with a little sibilance and ringing.
AMC 3025	£150	Nov 96	A lot for very little money - sweet sound and good build make the AMC 3025 a great starter amp.
AMC 3050A	£170	Feb 98	Offers plenty of power for the money but sound quality is not class leading.
Arcam Alpha 5 plus	£250	Oct 96	Good with efficient loudspeakers but generally needs more power and control.
Arcam Alpha One	£230	Jan 99	In a smooth system with a warmish bias the Alpha One makes a strong case for itself.
Aura VA80	£279	Apr 95	Excellent value for money and will get the best from any component. Needs a separate phono stage.
Aura VA80 SE	£250	Mar 96	The Aura has a smooth, civilised sound with fine detail. Bass punch really rolls along. Good phono stage.
Cambridge A1 MkIII integ	£100	Jul 98	Involving and finely detailed, the Cambridge pushes forward the boundaries for inexpensive amps.
Denon PMA 250SE	£160	Feb 97	A mix of control, delicacy and detail allows it to excel with any music.
Denon PMA 425R	£230	Sep 96	Good drive, punch and an open soundstage, but suffers from confusion plus a thin midrange and treble.
Harmon Kardon HK610	£180	Jun 95	Thorough-going down to earth liveliness. Bright but clean which gives appealing vivacity.
Harmon Kardon HK620	£280	Oct 95	Not quite a giant killer, the Harman is nevertheless a good solid budget buy.
Musical Fidelity E11	£299	Feb 98	A very capable integrated with a smoothness and warmth predisposed to classical rather than rock.
NAD 304	£239	Apr 95	Fine quality bass but rather lackadaisical as regards timing. Phono stage moderate. Needs careful matching.
NAD 310	£130	Jan 95	Good detail and a spacious open sound gives acoustic music and the majority of rock superb clarity.
NAD C320	£200	Apr 99	Younger sibling of the famous 3020 with many of its virtues to boot. Pre-eminently balanced and natural.
Pioneer A103	£130	Mar 95	Luxuriant presentation doesn't compensate for the tendency to un-rhythmic effects. MM phono stage.
Pioneer A300X	£230	Apr 95	Another highly capable all-rounder although a touch sterile sounding for some tastes.
Pro-ject 7	£259	Apr 95	On a budget, the Pro-ject has strong merit, including an excellent phono stage. Not for all systems.
Rotel RA 970BX	£250	Oct 96	Fresh sound with sharp attack. A slight midrange emphasis can make certain music sound rather forward.
Rotel RA 931	£150	Dec 98	For the money there's no faulting such a gifted performer.
Sony TAF446E	£250	Aug 95	Bright clear and detailed, but needs a touch more refinement to prevail.
Teac A-E2000	£180	Sep 99	Unusual power supply and very clear treble. Mid and bass so-so hot but the Teac's not expensive considering.
Technics SU A700 mk3	£250	Jan 97	A smooth unassuming sound misses out on the subtlety which brings music to life.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Audio Analogue Puccini.

£300-£799			
Affordable Valve EL34	£600	Feb 00	Low feedback integrated with plenty of slam. Not the ultimate in refinement but good value.
Alchemist APD43A Nexus	£799	Dec 99	A good looker with a smooth and powerful sound, if a tad sterile. Competition is strong at the price.
Alchemist Axiom	£300	Sep 95	Musically rewarding; deserves serious audition. Great British hi-fi on a budget.
AMC 3150A	£329	Nov 98	Not the most musical amp ever but good value. The tone controls and balance adjustment will appeal to some.
Arcam Alpha 6+	£350	Jan 96	Full and smooth sound, unfortunately with loose bass.
Arcam Alpha 9	£500	Dec 96	Excellent value. A detailed and open sound gives great atmosphere to all types of music
A. A. Puccini SE	£595	Dec 97	All the main ingredients like rhythm and dynamics present and correct. Natural smoothness and transparency.
Audio Analogue Puccini	£595	Sep 97	Excellent sound quality outstrips the competition at up to £1000.
Audiolab 8000S	£700	Dec 97	Powerful hefty sound which doesn't blench when driving awkward loads.
Calim Aria	£450	Oct 99	Looks great and Rocks with the best of them, but treble could be smoother.
Cyrus 3	£500	Oct 96	Highly refined and detailed performance with a clear well-proportioned soundstage.
Cyrus Straight Line	£398	Nov 96	A good, honest bit of kit with a fine musical sound and no glaring vices.
Densen Beat	£650	Dec 97	If a musical adrenaline rush is what you seek, fine. Listening in bulk, rather clinical and cold sounding.
Edmund ESI 10	£400	Apr 99	Solid build and a big sound make the ESI 10 worthy of audition. Not perhaps the transparent at the price.
Holff Audis	£750	Jun 98	Powerful and refreshingly pure; a sound investment.
Kenwood KA-7090R	£400	Apr 98	Excels with sound staging but lacks subtlety and tonal colour.
LFD Mistral	£499	Jun 97	An extremely enjoyable, lucid little amplifier that really gets to the heart of the music.
Marantz PM-66 KI-S	£400	Nov 97	An enjoyable and rhythmic sound but may be too lean for some bass-light speakers.
Monrio Asty RM	£500	Aug 99	Attractive integrated that offers a glimpse of real high-end performance. A touch bass light, though.
Monrio MJ	£695	Jan 97	An engaging musical performance; sweet overall sound. Doesn't cope with difficult loads so well.
Moth 30 Integrated	£320	Jul 95	A big open sound sound sets the Moth apart at this price. Low powered, though. Distinctly amateurish looks.
Musical Fidelity X-A1	£480	Dec 98	Two boxes don't form a pre and power in the X-A1 but the result is nevertheless a winning combination.
Myryad T-40	£399	Nov 98	Couple the Myryad with a warm system and enjoy. Possibly a little lightweight on the Reggae & Rap side.
Nad 317	£470	May 97	With 80 watts on tap, the NAD has power aplenty but is rather dynamically limited and ultimately uninvolving.
Naim Nait	£500	May 95	Rather monochromatic with midband emphasis and slightly dry bass. Good imaging but smallish soundstage.
Nakamichi RE-10 (receiver)	£400	Jul 99	A powerful performer in a competent package that is good value for money. Bettered by good separates though.
Orelle SA 100	£449	Jul 96	Clean, open, active sound. Smooth and detailed with good punch too. One of the best at the price.
Pioneer A-300R Precision	£400	Aug 97	A bargain at £400 pure and simple. Outclasses the competition in every area.
Pioneer A400X	£300	Oct 96	Complements all sorts of music with power and confidence. Outstanding value for money.
Quad 77	£595	Feb 95	Although classically orientated, the Quad will rock too. Precise and stable imagery and fidelity to tonal values.
Roksan Caspian	£695	Jun 97	Mixes the best of solid state and valve worlds (without valves!) to produce a seductive sound.
Rose Scion	£615	May 97	Great packaging and super sound make the Scion a winner.
Sonnesteer Campton	£579	Jan 96	Highly detailed and smooth sound. Worth searching out.
Sony TA-FB920R	£300	Feb 99	Partnered correctly to counterbalance its forwardness, the Sony offers a fast, rhythmic presentation.
Teac ABX7R	£700	Jun 96	Big and powerful sound, but a little unsubtle with it.
Technics SE-A900 MkII	£300	Mar 99	Nominally a separate pre and power, but the pre can't work alone. Exciting but unsubtle.
Thule Spirit IA60	£450	Nov 99	Benefits from a calm, controlled presentation. Could ideally do with more fire in its veins.
Token K50	£345	Nov 99	Well-specified low-feedback design gives punchy results, if a little unrefined. Well sustained power.
Valve Audio Exclamé	£310	Dec 99	The Exclamé does an excellent job of being all things to the the audiophile on a budget.



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Integrated £ Year Verdict

£1500-

Audionote Soro Se	£1999	Mar 95	Needs the right loudspeaker but a good musical presentation is in there somewhere.
Copland CSA 14	£1099	Apr 96	A sweet and subtle sound. Fine midrange; transparent and open with vocals.
Densen DM 10	£1299	Jun 95	Dual mono construction gives strong stereo separation. Brutal resolution of detail but not the clearest ever.
Exposure Super XV	£800	Oct 95	A stringy-sounding transistor amp for rock. Build and finish could be better and price lower.
Gamma Rhythm	£2499	Jul 96	Partnered with sensible loudspeakers of good bass depth, the Rhythm is capable of impressive performance.
Lavardin IT	£3200	Apr 99	Has clarity in spades and an extremely rare tonal purity. Outclasses many transistor alternatives with ease.
Mcintosh MA8000	£3735	Sep 95	A mighty confection of power, facilities and style, and it sounds good to boot.
Musical Fidelity A1001	£2499	Jun 98	Awesome power and seismic bass. A very good all-rounder with super-clean sound.
Musical Fidelity A300	£1400	Oct 99	High power integrated with phono. Exquisite manners and power to spare. Sets new standards at the price
MVL Integral A2	£850	May 99	An excellent performer with any music. Adept at handling subtle details. Difficult to beat at the price.
Papworth MVH-200	£1200	Jun 99	Very solid, enjoyable amp but not the smoothest top end or the most open sound-staging.
Shearne Phase 2	£800	Apr 97	Even-handed performer deals confidentially with music regardless of genre. Not as smooth as the best.
Sonic Frontiers Anthem	£1295	May 98	A characteristically competent and musical integrated. Prefers fairly efficient loudspeakers though.
Sonneteer Alabaster	£900	Oct 97	Excellent high-end integrated with a real love of music and plenty of poke.
Teac AB X10	£1000	Sep 95	Very strong all round performer with excellent build and finish. Verging on the expensive though.
Unison Res. Simply 845	£2950	Mar 98	Allied to all the right 'speakers will handle all musical genres with smoothness and power.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Pre-amps £ Year Verdict

Under £300

AMC 1100	£150	Mar 99	Tone controls cannot be defeated and the sum total is a little metallic but value in spades.
Creek OBH-11SE	£199	Apr 99	A very lucid, natural headphone amp which scores as highly on acoustic and Classical as it does on Rock.
Creek OBH-12	£200	Jul 98	Only poor cosmetics mar the Creek. Sonically it's a gem.
Moth 30 Passive	£149	Mar 99	Won't win prizes for best build but a flexible effort for a passive. Somewhat dry presentation overall.
Musical Fidelity X-Cans	£130	Mar 99	If you haven't yet experienced the world of quality headphone listening, the X-Cans is the way to start.
Musical Fidelity X-Pre	£200	Jan 98	A smooth, sweet and musical performer.
Musical Fidelity X-Tone	£120	Mar 99	Easy-to-use stand-alone modern tone control with subtle effect. At present deleted, worthwhile 2nd hand.
Project 7	£259	Feb 95	Immensely enjoyable and listenable. A rare mixture of sophistication and fun.
Rotel RC-971	£150	Mar 99	Five line-level inputs and tone controls make for flexibility. Partnered by the RB-971 power amp, good value.
Technics SU-C1000MkII	£299	Apr 98	Needs slightly more taut bass and a less grainy midrange to bring it up with the best.



Musical Fidelity A300

£300-£799

Audio Analogue Bellini	£475	Apr 98	Organic and transparent. Free from transistor hardness.
Aura CA200	£749	Mar 97	A smooth and sweet sound devoid of roughness.
Crimson CS610C	£440	Nov 98	The phono stage is the main area of weakness. Can sound a touch muddled at times.
Croft Epoch	£600	Jun 96	A fine sounding preamp, but the phono stage is weak in the bass.
Cyrus Pre	£650	Feb 96	Pre-amplifier has plenty of facilities, but sounds a little unexciting and 'conventional'.
Heybrook Signature II	£549	May 97	Impressive smoothness and tonal colour, transparent as well.
Meridian 501.2	£750	Nov 99	Impressive with high octave music, but lacks that bit of warmth to bring out the best in laid-back material.
PM Audio Lab L1S	£650	Dec 95	This valve pre-amp is very good value indeed.
Rothwell Indus	£499	May 99	Passive pre of box-of-switches, whichever way you look at it the Indus is stylishly finished and well conceived.
Sumo Athena II	£767	May 96	More valve-like than transistor in sound; highly competent if not spectacular.
Talk Hurricane 1	£500	Jun 97	Flexible with a strong controlled sound, but won't suit all tastes.
Technics SU-C1000	£350	Feb 97	Good when mains powered, even better running on its batteries. One to consider at the price.
Thorens TTA2000	£550	Jul 95	Poor sound quality and engineering let this pre-amp down. Pricy too.
Unison Res. Feather 1	£795	Aug 98	Warm but still exciting, it is only let down by a slightly recessed midrange



Croft Epoch Elite

£800-£1499

Audiolab 8000Q	£999	Jun 95	Highly recommended for its blend of operational sophistication, build and sound quality.
Croft Epoch Elite	£950	Oct 99	Fast and detailed with a breathtaking clarity and sweetness. Well worth saving up for.
Etalon PreampII	£1095	Feb 98	Smooth, even and transparent. Well worth the outlay.
John Shearne Phase 6	£895	Sep 96	Matched with a smooth amp and 'speakers the Phase 6 is capable of a transparent and rewarding performance
Linn Wakonda	£900	Apr 98	In terms of musicality and involvement it falls short.
Meridian 502	£1295	Dec 96	Transparent, detailed sound with good tonal range and very natural presentation.
Musical Fid. Nu-Vista	£1200	Sep 98	A truly competent pre-amp whose high-end sound comes with a very reasonable price tag.
Musical Fidelity X-P100	£800	Jul 99	Clear, fast and flexible. 'Son of NuVista' is a substantial chip off the same block.
Naim NAC102	£999	Apr 97	This even-handed performer images well and deals confidently with music regardless of genre.
Quad 7741	£850	Jul 96	Bright and detailed, but phono stage is inadequate at this price.
TAG McLaren PA10	£850	Nov 98	Justifies its price with a very musical and revealing performance.
XTC Pre-1	£1000	Nov 96	This pre-amp is highly detailed and spacious.

£1500-

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



AMC 2200

Power amps £ Year Verdict

Under £800

AMC 2200	£150	Mar 99	Super value separate with first-rate sound staging. Midrange subtleties sometimes suffer but at this price ...!
Arcam 9P	£400	Dec 96	A detailed and open sound gives great atmosphere to all types of music.
Arcam Alpha 10P	£600	Jul 98	This power amp lags behind the best of the competition, and the build is flimsy.
Audio Analogue Donizetti	£575	Apr 98	As smart as an Armani suit, they sound powerful in a natural, organic manner
Aura PA100	£749	Mar 97	A smooth, sweet powerful sound free from the rough brightness that afflicts many solid-states.
Creek A43	£399	Mar 99	Shows what a skilled designer can do, even when hooked up with a passive pro. A very realistic approach
Cyrus Power	£449	Feb 96	The Cyrus Power is simply impressive in all respects.
Linn LK100	£650	Apr 98	Well built, but judged purely on a musical basis they fall short.
Linn LK240	£750	Aug 97	The LK240 plays tunes exceptionally well, tonal colour and image precision are not its forte though.
Meridian 505	£795	Aug 97	Crisp, clear images are set in a broad spread between the 'speakers but the 505 lacks stage depth and grunt.
Monarchy SM-70	£595	Jan 99	The Monarchy is a smooth, warm amp most at home with 'speakers that are easily driveable.
Moth 30 Power	£249	Mar 99	Refined approach with the lighter acoustic music but lacking a little in overall clout.
Moth Stereo 60	£549	Dec 95	This power amp unfortunately suffers from sharp sounding treble and poor depth.
Musical Fidelity X-A50	£500	Jan 98	Very smooth, sweet and musical performers, not over-analytical but very involving.

Power amps £ Year Verdict

under £800

Quad 77/67	£600	Jul 96	With good punch, speed and attack its not bad at all but can be a little uninspiring.
Rotel RB-971	£225	Mar 99	70 Watts a channel helps give lucid presentation with deep sound staging. Perhaps on the bright side.
Shearman Phase 3	£689	Apr 97	The Phase 3 possesses impressive clarity, detail and dynamics.
Talk Tomado 1	£500	Jun 97	A flexible power amp with a strong, controlled sound, but won't suit all tastes.
Technics SE-A1000	£400	Feb 97	Smooth, warm sound has plenty of grunt when needed and is very enjoyable to listen to.
Thorens TTP 2000	£500	Jul 95	Its best feature is the key on/off switch, otherwise its a case of poor sound quality and engineering.

£800-£1499

Chameleon Ruby	£995	Jan 96	Well specified and powerful, but dry and short of life. Suits Rock on bass-heavy 'speakers.
Chord SPM 400	£1325	Mar 98	This amp has it all - detail, transparency, slam and rhythm. In a word, excellent.
Crimson CS630C	£800	Nov 98	These monoblocs have a tonal richness and bass speed rare amongst powerful amps.
Croft Series V	£800	Jun 96	Fast, clear and detailed sound will win friends in both the transistor and valve camps.
Delph Da Capo	£1469	May 95	Quality bass and a clear midband but the treble can be harsh at high volume.
DPA 200S	£1245	Jul 93	Serious audiophile product at an affordable price. Well constructed, pleasant to use and fine sounding.
Galactron Power	£1200	Nov 95	Smooth sound but dull balance make the Galactron suitable for bright systems.
HD Audio Duo	£1185	May 95	Not dissimilar to the Audiolab monoblocs, the sound has a sweet top and amazing clarity.
Heybrook Signature II	£1051	May 97	Not quite as transparent as it could be but impresses with its smoothness and tonal colour.
Meridian 556	£950	Nov 99	Impressive with high octave music, but lacks that bit of warmth to bring out the best in laid-back material.
Meridian 557	£1400	Dec 96	Great control and dynamics allied to seductive smoothness. A rare combination of power and delicacy.
Musical Fidelity X-A200	£1000	Aug 98	Hugely powerful and controlled, the X-A200s are still superbly musical.
MVL Integral A2	£895	May 99	An excellent performer with any music. It is hard to imagine the A2 being beaten at the price.
Myryad MA120	£1000	Apr 96	The sound is a somewhat acquired taste and a little rough in places.
Omak Jewel One	£899	Jul 95	A lot of amplifier for the money. Big, warm, sweet sound places it ahead of most.
Quad 707	£800	Jul 97	The 707 embodies a rare blend of grace and power in its sleek grey casework.
Rothwell Rubicon	£949	May 99	Low on power at 8 watts but fairly musical for all that. Good resolution of detail and texture.
Sumo Polaris III	£898	May 96	More valve-like than transistor in sound; highly competent if not spectacular.
TAG McLaren 60P	£850	Nov 98	Fully justifies the cost with a very musical and revealing performance.
VRR Adur	£1495	Jun 95	Lovers of light piano-based fare and Baroque music will appreciate this amp's delicacy.

£1500-

Audiovalve LC8	£1995	Mar 95	Eschews the traditional lavish tube sound for a brighter and leaner approach.
Canary 301	£3055	Nov 98	The 301 puts the 300B's traditional virtues to good use in a push-pull design that will drive most loudspeakers.
Cary 300B SE	£3975	Feb 95	Cary have a winning amplifier that is a prime example of how a 300B can sound.
Cyrus aPA7	£2000/pr	Jul 99	There's no shortage of clarity and control here, but the aPA7s don't come cheap.
Etalon Ampli	£2925	Feb 98	Very natural, substantial presentation with lots of power on tap.
Final Music 6	£1500	Feb 99	Battery powered amp puts convincing scale and three-dimensionality into suitably sensitive loudspeakers.
Focusrite Red 5	£2057	Feb 96	Powerful, smooth and detailed sound. Not as clinical as some professional amplifiers can be.
Gamma Aeons	£4999	Apr 97	Sound quality of these monoblocs is impressive but marred by a rather obvious hum. Build could be better.
Marantz 9	£8000	Mar 97	These monoblocs are superb, producing a beguiling performance of great control and verve.
Micheli Alecto	£1989	Oct 98	The new Alecto is crisper, cleaner and more controlled than earlier incarnations.
Musical Fld NuVista 300	£3300	Dec 99	Simply beautiful sound and inexhaustible power. Higher price than usual for MF gear - limited edition product.
Orchid RC750	£6600	Aug 96	A powerful grip on music, but articulate and detailed too. A rare combination.
Shearman Phase 1	£1999	Oct 94	Good sound quality and an impressive tonal balance.
Sugden Symetra	£1550	Oct 96	The Symetra monoblocs impress with their grip. They run hot and sound warm.
Tube Technology Genesis	£2599	Jun 94	Valve monoblocs that produce explosive bass, midrange as clear as a bell and shimmering treble.
Unison Res. Smart 300B	£4250	May 98	Powerful, neutral sounding amps thanks to their modified 300B valves, but a little expensive for the same reason.
Unison Res. Power 35	£1525	Aug 98	A great compromise between delicacy, power and practicality. Very musically satisfying, too.
Vadis S15	£2350	Jul 98	The S15's purity and clarity are impossible to beat for the money. Bass is not brilliant, but still better than most.
XTC POW-1	£2000	Nov 96	This power amplifier is smooth and seductive, although a little pricey.

CD Players £ Year Verdict

under £300

Aiwa XP-V74 portable	£80	Aug 99	Natural rendition uncommon amongst portables but a little compressed with it.
AMC CD8	£150	Oct 97	The CD8 is free from grain but can sound too polished at times.
Cambridge CD4SE	£200	Feb 98	Natural and very life-like, the CD4SE embarrasses many pricier players.
Denon DCD-425	£150	Apr 97	Crisp, up-beat player which is inconsistent in its overall presentation.
Denon DCD-635	£180	Feb 98	Rhythmically slick and dynamic, the Denon errs to the cool side of neutral.
Denon DCD-835	£280	Nov 98	Warm and smooth, the 835 is laid-back rather than in-your-face.
Goodmans Delta CMD	£199	Jun 99	Well-tailored CD/MD pairing and a doddle to use. Sound quality is spot-on for the price.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



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CD Players £ Year Verdict

under £300

Boommans GCD90K	£170	Aug 99	Portable. A secure performer thanks to its 20 second anti-shock system. Sound quality good.
Grundig CD3	£240	Sep 94	Great for simple Jazz and Folk, but soft bass slows things down.
JVC XL-VZ20	£157	Jan 99	Slightly muddled in the bass, the '230 isn't the most rhythmic of players.
Kenwood DP-306/II	£180	Feb 98	One of the best budget all-rounders there is. A shade treble-heavy.
Kenwood DP-5050	£250	Aug 93	Waffly bass and enthusiastic treble mean the Kenwood prefers Classical to Rock.
Kenwood DIF-2010	£180	Jan 99	A fine performer. Lacks only some of the spirit of its predecessors.
Kenwood DPC-395	£100	Aug 99	Portable. Has build and appearance on its side but not the greatest sonic performer in portables.
Marantz CD-53	£249	Jun 94	Upholds the Marantz tradition of lively CD players.
Marantz CD-67	£270	Nov 96	Fine vocal projection and treble. Bass is deep if not that tight.
NAD 510	£200	Oct 95	Hard to criticise at the price, with a typically smooth, fluid NAD sound.
NAD 522	£170	Jan 99	Warm and smooth, this is a cultured player. Can be over-civilised at times.
Parasound SL-00410 port	£100	Aug 99	Portable with limited dynamics but nonetheless musical and finely detailed.
Philips CD721	£130	Feb 96	Not the most accurate machine, but holds its own at the price.
Pioneer PC-133	£140	Feb 95	Rolled-off treble limits detail. Light bass retains foot-tapping ability.
Quad 67	£7	May 93	One of the top players at the price with great speed and grip.
Royal RCD 9400K	£230	Oct 94	Controlled and invigorating player albeit a touch sterile.
Teac CD-P3450SE	£200	May 97	Refuses to become flustered. Can lack emotion as a result, though.
Teac CD-P4100	£249	Nov 92	Like many of its contemporaries, the Teac is too smooth to shine.
Technics SL-PG490A	£100	Jan 99	In spite of a bias towards bass and treble, this machine remains a bargain.
Technics SL-PS-10D	£200	Feb 98	Typical Technics' bright and bassy sound. Prefers Dance and Rock.
Yamaha CDX-480	£200	Mar 95	Mature, laid-back machine drops points for inferior timing and imaging.
Yamaha CDX-590	£230	Feb 98	Detailed, refined but not particularly engaging or exciting.
Yamaha CDX-593	£180	Jan 99	Lean and up-front, the Yamaha is involving on Rock but can sound rough.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Technics SLPG490 CD

£300-£799

Alchemist Nexus	£599	Jul 99	Listening is 'sumptuous' but perception of fine detail a little more difficult.
AMC CDM7	£340	Jun 96	Very musical outfit which gains sweetness with optional valve output stage.
AR-07	£300	Jan 92	The '07 is even-handed but has no real forte.
Arcom Alpha 7	£320	Jan 97	Superbly-designed, instinctively musical player destined for success.
Arcom Alpha 7SE	£330	Nov 99	Refinement comes second to speed in the 7SE, so careful cabling is required for the best results.
Arcom Alpha 8SE	£599	Jun 98	The 8SE builds on the strengths of the standard 8 with HDCD filtering.
Arcom Alpha 9	£799	Dec 98	Apart from its tonal brightness, the Alpha 9 is a very capable machine.
Audie Analogue Paganini	£749	Apr 99	Effortless, wholly musical delivery. The Paganini does for CD replay what the Puccini does for amplification.
Audio Innovations Avo	£449	May 96	Grainless treble is detailed but the Alto misses that vital emotional spark.
Auris CD66	£450	Jul 93	High measured distortion mars the treble and bass is dry.
Ortek CD45	£499	Oct 98	A competent player with a musicality that will seduce any music-lover.
Cyrus 6AD 1.5	£398	May 99	Great detail and imaging. Classical and Jazz suit the 1.5 down to the ground but Rock can sound harsh.
Cyrus 6ADS	£598	Dec 96	Lacklustre with Classical, dramatic and lively on Dance and Rock.
Denon DCD-1550AR	£350	Jul 98	Clean and precise, the Denon lags only in warmth and openness.
Denon DCD-1650A/R	£700	Jul 99	Refined and enjoyable. Its in-built smoothness can get in the way of absolute transparency.
Harman/Kardon HD730	£300	Aug 96	Strong on dynamics and drive, but lifeless treble can dampen music.
Harman/Kardon HD740	£300	Jun 99	A smooth, musical and rhythmic player, but midrange best suits Classical rather than Rock.
Helios 3	£700	Jul 99	It is unusual to find a player with such definite loves and hates. First class with acoustic, otherwise maybe!
Linn MkII	£798	Apr 95	Tonally hard but possesses many, if not all of the Linn rhythmic strengths.
Marantz CD-92 KI-Sig	£500	Sep 96	This is a rare player, greater than the sum of its parts.
Marantz CD-63SE	£350	May 95	Taken as a whole, the CD-63SE is one hell of a CD player. No digital nasties.
Myriad T20	£600	Dec 98	With its brightness balanced by warm ancillaries the T20 will win friends.
Ortek CD-1300	£650	Mar 97	Clean and tidy on electronic music. Not so good with acoustic material.
Pioneer PD-1804	£400	Sep 96	Fluid midrange leads a dry bass and tonally-limited treble.
Pioneer DV-717	£550	Sep 99	Detailed and sweet-sounding, the DV-717 brings out the best in most discs. Not the last word in neutrality.
Royal RCD-911	£300	Aug 99	Good with ordinary CDs, excellent on HDCD. Construction is very solid too.
Royal RCD-905A Diacryl	£375	Dec 94	Fast, clean sound verges on the clinical at times.
Royal RCD-921	£350	Sep 98	Refinement is a plus point, but lack of vitality holds the Royal back.
Royal RCD-975	£450	Sep 96	Tuneful, pungent bass are the pros, flat sound staging and tone the cons.
Sony CDP-K3000ES	£500	Mar 98	Neutral, dynamic and stylish but not quite up with the best.
Sony CDP-XB300E	£300	Dec 99	A classy customer with a sophisticated and smooth sound that's very hard to fault.
Sony CDP-K6000E	£300	Mar 97	In spite of fine sound staging and clarity, the Sony fails to involve.
Teac CD-8	£350	Jan 96	Clean and dry, the Teac is rather sterile compared to the competition.
Technics SL-PS-10	£450	Sep 95	Not the last word in bass control. Midrange is more persuasive.
Teac CD100	£600	Apr 99	A very smooth and refined player with the added bonus of good detailing. Can lack rhythmic bite at times.
Triforce Genesis	£549	Sep 96	Warm and bassy, but extremely natural. Not the most consistent player.
Triforce Revelation	£799	May 97	When it's good, it's very good indeed. Can get confused on dense mixes.



Marantz CD63 KI-Sig.

£800-£1499

AudioLab 8000	£1000	Dec 96	Sweet treble and full midrange give the 8000CD a lucid sound.
Cosmos CDA 260	£1199	Feb 99	Perhaps lacks the last ounce of strength on Rock, nonetheless has winning all-round ability.
Symbol CDP12	£1279	Dec 97	Its warm, musical sound plus HDCD compatibility are a strong combination.
Cyrus 6AD-7	£899	Jan 95	Up with the best at the money, the Cyrus simply sounds 'right'.
DPA Renaissance	£895	Jun 95	Breath-taking imagery and dynamics. Not strictly accurate, but who cares?
Hilmar/Kardon HD7720	£800	Jan 94	Construction is price-correct, but not the excessively relaxed sound.
Heybrook Signature	£989	Oct 97	The Heybrook loses out because of its rough treble and lack of clarity.
Just Xara	£950	May 98	It's not cheap but the Xara scores for firm bass and exciting presentation.
LFD Mistral	£999	Nov 97	The Mistral is outclassed in areas like pace and bass depth.
Marantz CD-17	£800	Jul 99	Commendably solid build, smooth top-end and velvety overall sound.
Marantz CD-17 KI-S	£1300	Sep 97	The KI-S has a valve-like smoothness and clarity.
Meridian 506	£875	May 95	Characteristically dry Meridian balance which could do with more emotion.
Musical Fidelity X-Ray	£800	Feb 99	Bright, clear and well-built, the X-Ray's transparency can be hard on poor recordings.
Ork Thrasos Humana	£1099	Apr 98	This very natural one-box fully justifies its £1000 price tag.
Quad 77	£850	Nov 95	Competent, entertaining machine with neat styling and remote.
Roksan Caspian	£895	Aug 97	The Caspian is a gifted player well worth its asking price.
Shinn Audio Phase 7	£1499	Dec 99	The Phase 7 leads the pack for smoothness and tonal colour more than for detail and excitement.
Sugden 60T-1	£850	Mar 93	A superb all-rounder with particularly convincing rhythms.
Teac CD 1210 R	£1150	Sep 99	Outstanding build married to outstanding build, at a price which isn't expensive considering what's on offer.
Teac VRDS-10SE	£850	Apr 96	Draws you into the music. Soundstaging fine but treble is a little bright.
Teac VRDS-95	£1300	Aug 96	Solid build doesn't make up for sound which lags in integration and detail.
XFD CDP 1	£1250	Dec 97	Rhythmically satisfying, but can sound hard in the wrong system.



Roksan Caspian CD.

£1500-

Anthem CD1	£1600	Mar 98	Sweet sound and numerous features make the Anthem fine value for money.
Numatics 837	£5460	Sep 94	Amongst the best with its belt-drive transport.
McIntosh CDM-7109	£2635	Dec 95	Unmatched quality from CD at a high but fair price.
Meridian 508.24	£1995	Jul 98	The 508.24 is one of the top performers at its price.



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AMPLIFIERS

LFD Mistral Line-Level Int. MINT / LIKE NEW Boxed /Manuals	500.00	369.95
Croft Vitale Valve Pre-Amp. The NEW Pre-amp. (Superb at this price) Available to Special Order Only NEW Standard 350.00 *Deluxe *(Timber Fascia / Brass Control Knobs)		400.00
NAD 3130 Int. 2 x 30 Watts / Phono-Stage Etc: VGC / Manuals	250.00 +	119.95
Musical Fidelity X-A1 2x50 Watts Int. Amp. NEW	N/A	479.00
Musical Fidelity B-1 2 x 40 Watts Int. VGC	300.00	149.95
Papworth Audio M-100 Valve Mono-Blocs MINT / Boxed / 2x 100 Watts (EL-34's)	3800.00	1995.00
Audion Premier Silver Night (2-Box Valve Pre. with Phono-Stage) MINT	1500.00	795.00
Audion Silver Nights Valve Mono-Blocs (300B's) MINT / Boxed / New 300B's Fitted	2300.00	1195.00
Revox B-750 2x75 Watts Int. VGC	800.00	299.95
Marantz PM-66 Kl Signature Remote Etc:MINT / Boxed Etc.	400.00	249.95
AMC 3050A 2 x 45 Watts / Full Remote Etc: MINT / Boxed Etc.	300.00 +	169.95
Quad 405 Mk1 Power Amp.G.C 2 x 100 Watts	N/A	179.95
Technics SU-A800 Rem. Int. Amp.MINT	350.00	189.95
Technics SU-C1000M Remote / Battery Pre.MINT	350.00	199.95
Pioneer A-656 Int. (2 x 100 Watts / M.M./M.C. Phono Etc:) VGC (Inexpensive Power-House Amp.)	500.00	169.95

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Castle Tay Bi-Wire (Rosewood) (MINT / AS NEW)	350.00	199.95
Rega Ela Floorstanders (Black) MINT	500.00	£249.95
Celestion 7 II (Black) MINT	250.00	£119.95
APOGEE CALIPER FULL RANGE RIBBON SPEAKERS (Restoration project/need finishing) SOLD AS-SEEN or "reasonable" offers Lots of Leadspeaker Cables in Stock both New & Used	3500.00	500.00

Meridian 207 / 209 C.D / D.A.C. / Pre-Amp.VGC	1500.00	495.00
Mission DAD-5 Remote / DAC-5VGC	600.00	269.95
Micromega Stage One Full Remote / Digital out etc:	550.00	229.95
Micromega Logic Remote Etc: G/C	N/A	99.95
DPA Renaissance 24-Bit / Remote /Deltran-Sync-Lock MINT	950.00	595.00
DPA Enlightenment DAC Digital To Analogue Convertor MINT	850.00	425.00
Audiolab 8000 DACMINT / AS NEW	900.00	549.95
Harman Kardon HD-7500 Remote VGC	350.00	149.95
Musical Fidelity X-Ray (24/96) (Superb Player) NEW Ex-Dem.	799.00	699.00
Musical Fidelity X-100 Missing-Link C.D. Line-Buffer / VGC / Boxed	120.00	59.95
Musical Fidelity DigiLog DAC Cosmetically Challenged But Works Perfectly	350.00	99.95
Sony CDP-XE 900 E RemoteMINT / AS NEW	300.00	169.95
Philips CD-830 Remote VGC / Digital Out (Surprisingly Musical)	400.00	129.95
Philips Cdl 210 (Interactive) Remote MINT	400.00	59.95
Nad Monitor 5000 VGC / Digital Output	310.00	149.95
Nad 5420 VGC	150.00	79.95
Marantz CD-67 Rem. MINT	250.00	169.95
Marantz CD-63 SE Rem. / Digital Out Etc: VGC / Boxed/Manual	300.00	159.95
Marantz CD-63 SE Rem (Another One) MINT / Manuals Etc:	300.00	159.95

Hundreds Of Compact Discs In Stock And Always WANTED
(Complete Collections Purchased - JAZZ in particular)

Quad FM-3 GC	N/A	79.95
A.V.I. S200 MT MINT /As New (Deposit On) Sugden FM VGC	600.00	349.95
Sugden R-51 VGC	N/A	90.00
Sugden T-48 VGC	N/A	95.00
Leeson FM1 F.M. Tuner (Very Rare) VGC	N/A	89.95
Nytech CT-206 VGC	N/A	449.95
Q.E.D. T-231 VGC	N/A	99.95
Meridian 104 VGC	N/A	89.95
Musical Fidelity T-1 VGC	N/A	149.95
Yamaha TX-470 Remote FM / Pre-Set VGC	N/A	229.95

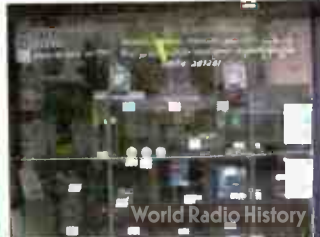
Project 0.5 / Ortofon OM-10 G / C	170.00	85.00
Manticore Mantra c/w Rega RB-250 / Linn K-5 VGC	500.00+	199.95
Linn Armboard (Cut for Linn) (2 In Stock) VGC	N/A	Each 10.00
Mission 775 SM / 774 Arm / Ortofon VMS-20EII M.M Cartridge VGC	N/A	£249.95
Monacor SPR-6 M.M Phono-Stage / P.S.U (Brilliant Value) NEW	N/A	26.95
Musical Fidelity X-LP (The One At This Price) M.M / M.C Phono-Stage	NEW	N/A
Musical Fidelity XL-P2 Mono-Bloc Phono-Stage/ X-PSU NEW and Superb (M.M /M.C) (Switchable Impedance)	N/A	499.90
Revolver Rebel c/w Arm / A.T M.M Cartridge MINT	N/A	129.95
Audio Technica AT 1005 II Tonearm VGC	N/A	69.95
Linn Ittok LV II VGC / Boxed	N/A	199.95
Linn Bassit Plus Tonearm MINT	N/A	79.95

Denon DRM 10. HX 3 Motor Etc: VGC	N/A	119.95
Denon DRM 550. HX-PRO Etc:MINT/AS NEW	160.00	129.95
Denon DRM 800A. 3-Head / C.D Direct Etc: MINT	300.00 +	169.95
Denon DRS-640. Front-Loader / HX-Pro Etc:VGC	200.00 +	109.95
Denon DRM-24. HX 3-Head Etc:VGC	250.00	90.00
Marantz DCC-82 Digital Recorder MINT / Boxed /Some Tapes	650.00	249.95
Nakamichi BX-100E. 3-Motor / 2-Head Etc: VGC	500.00 +	199.95
Nakamichi 581. Variable Bias / Variable Gain Etc: VGC	Loads	199.95
Sony TC-KE 400S Dolby S Etc: MINT / AS NEW	250.00	149.95
Yamaha KX-500 HX-Pro / Vari-Bias Etc: VGC	160.00	99.95
Aiwa ADF-640 3-Head / 2-Motor Etc:MINT	300.00	119.95
Technics RSB-565 Direct-Drive / HX-Pro etc: G/C	250.00	99.95
Technics RS-TR 373 Tone / Arm Reverse Etc:VGC	230.00	119.95

Yamaha DSP-E1000 Remote Pro-Logic Processor / DSP VGC	700.00	249.95
R.A Labs Shielded Centre-Speaker NEW / Boxed	139.95	119.95
TDL CSS Shielded Centre-Speaker MINT	150.00	89.95
Jamo Shielded Centre-Speaker VGC	80.00	39.95
Solid S-100 Surround Speakers VGC / Boxed	130.00	89.95
Musical Fidelity X-Tand Stacking Blocks NEW	N/A	29.00
Cable Talk L.S / Incon Cables Now In Stock "NEW"		P.O.A.
Golden Dragon 300B Valves (4 Of / All Good) (prices are for each)	90.00	30.00
Sound Organisation L.S. Wall Brackets MINT	N / A	40.00
Lovan Trisolator Isolation Platform (Adds Mass-Loading to C.D Players Etc:) NEW	99.95	79.95
Lovan Classic II Stand (For Power Amps. Etc:) NEW	50.00	40.00
Target B-5 (5-Shelf Stand) VGC	220.00	139.95
LFD Power - Cord VGC	60.00	30.00
Roni IS4W Input Expander (4-Way Line-Level Expander)	NEW	15.00
Chord Siren Incon 1x Metre	70.00	35.00
Cable Talk Broadcast 2 Incon 1x Metre NEW	99.95	79.95
Cable Talk Broadcast 2 Incon 1/2 x Metre NEW	79.95	59.95
Cable Talk Monitor 2.1 Incon 1x Metre	49.95	34.95
Ixos Gamma L.S Cables 2 x 3.5 Metres (Unterminated)	40.00	19.95
Soniclink Bi-Wire L.S Cables 2 x 3.5 Metres (Terminated)	N / A	50.00
Roni 4 m.m Banana Plugs (Gold Plated)		6.95
(Screw-Type, Don't Require Soldering NEW (prices for 4)		10.00
Roni Optical Linc Cables (C.D / Minidisc to D.A.C. Etc:) NEW		
Monacor SPS-20 Anodised Adjustable Polished Cone Equipment Supports NEW (Superb Spike System at a very good price) Set of 4	19.95	11.95
Ixos Sorbothane Feet Set of 4 NEW	N / A	10.00
AQ Sorbothane Feet Set of 4	N / A	5.00
Parastatic Disc Preener 3 In Stock (price is for each)	N / A	5.95
Kontakt 60 Contact Cleaning Spray 100 ML NEW		
A Few Left Reel to Reel Tapes (71/2) Please Phone for details!		N / A
Various. Prices on application (71/2" only left)		
B-Tech BT 928 Stereo Headphone Amp. C/W Tone / Volume Control /P.S.U (Excellent Value) NEW	200.00	60.00
Hi-Q (By Chantry) Headphone Amp. Volume Control / P.S.U / VGC	200.00	60.00
Monacor DC-100 Carbon-Fibre Brush NEW (A must)		5.95

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CD players £ Year Verdict

£1500-

Naim CD2	£1998	Apr 97	CD2 excites at the expense of subtlety. More at home in a Naim system.
Philips Compact Disc	£2099	Feb 98	One-box player with sound capable of mixing it with the best.
Teac CD-X1	£2300	Jun 92	You'll either love or hate this machine's great flair and confidence.

Turntables £ Year Verdict

Under £800

Clearaudio Soutron	£750	Feb 99	If you seek a powerful presentation where musicality takes precedence over absolute finesse, this could be the answer.
Linn Saali	£400	Sep 94	Definitely a turntable for devotees of attack and strong bass lines. Not strong on imaging.
Mitsubishi CD-2000	£775	Apr 99	Great sound, superb build and excellent upgradability make the 'spider' a wonder at the price.
Michael Meyer	£539	Jan 94	Silent and beautifully made, with transparent reproduction.
Rega 333	£200	Nov 94	Based on a Rega Planar 2. Both pleasant to use and look at with a mature sound, all for £200.
Pink Triangle Tantalus	£575	Oct 97	Simply the best at the money. Combines PT's customary transparency with real authority.
Project 1.2	£200	Jun 97	A bargain at £200 with its substantial and involving sound.
Project 4	£350	Dec 93	Involvement and rhythm are priorities. Highly recommended.
Project 6.1	£435	Sep 94	The 6.1 gives a very full, strong sound. A very exciting deck.
Pro-ject Classic Cherry	£450	Jul 99	Emminently capable player that can be upgraded with superior cartridges.
Pro-ject Debut	£109	Dec 99	Produces an enjoyable and confident sound on a budget. There are better turntables around, but not at this price!
Systemdek 232	£500	Aug 96	Clear and precise sound through midrange and treble puts it up with more expensive rivals.
Systemdek 3300	£415	Sep 94	Detailed sound stage and broad imaging with a good, even range of tonal colour.
Systemdek 333	£450	Jan 93	Combined with an SME 309 it achieves great results, with a massive sound stage.
Thomas TD165 MK2	£405	Sep 94	Tonally smooth with a warm midrange, but a little too laid back.
Thomas TD180	£180	Feb 95	A good, basic budget bargain.
Thomas TD250 MK4	£199	Jun 93	Superbly lucid and clear midrange, but lower reaches are a little lightweight.
Vestax SDT-2000	£225	Sep 99	Price includes cartridge and phono stage. A fit-and-forget solution to LP replay, of exceptional versatility.
Vinyl Ready Resonance 1	£600	Nov 95	With fine detail resolution, transparency and a neutral balance the Resonance 1 represents super value.
VPI Junior	£500	Oct 97	The Junior is a very good deck indeed, with an assured and involving sound.

£800-

Aphoton Symphony	£1860	Nov 92	The Symphony has to be one of the best the British can offer. It's expensive, but a true sophisticate.
Basis 2001	£2995	Jun 99	It's not cheap, but the 2001 shows just why vinyl is still a sonically viable format.
Michael Orto	£1950	Apr 95	Fast and detailed with crisp sheer treble and clean, deep bass.
Orto 3 CommensCarbis	£900	Oct 95	Solid as a rock and almost as heavy, it's a satisfying performer, but not quite the best.
Orto Live Cassa-A	£950	Dec 98	Nice looks and a good sound, but can be bettered on price.
Orto Live Cassa-S	£2250	Oct 98	The Oasis-S is a cool, lean but very transparent performer thanks to battery power. Up against strong competition.
Pro-ject Perspective	£900	Aug 98	Aesthetically, the Perspective is a winner, but better sound can be had from cheaper decks.
PT Anniversary	£2390	Oct 96	With its battery supply and ultra-quiet DC motor, the Pink displays great accuracy and neutrality. A top-flight deck.
Robson X Series X	£1295	Jan 97	An undoubted bargain and class leader in all areas with a precise, confident and well-balanced sound.
SME Model 20	£2500	Oct 92	This is a deck for those with a substantial record collection who demand the best. Exemplary sound.
Technics SL-1200 LTD	£1000	Apr 97	Looks expensive at £1000, but don't let that put you off the capable standard version.
Wilson Hornet	£1775	Jul 96	Gives a technically excellent rendition but fails to really communicate the emotion in music.
Wilson Bahdach Full Circle	£2000	Mar 98	Offers clarity in abundance with a natural ease. Looks gorgeous too.

Phono stages £ Year Verdict

Under £500

Orto OB1/2/3/4	£160	Nov 97	One of the best MC phono stages on the market at the price
Orto OB1/3/4/5	£110	Nov 97	Smooth and truly musical, exceedingly worthy entry-level phono stage.
Orto OB1/3/4/5	£350	Sep 97	A beautifully made, fine sounding device that looks great too.
Lehmann Black Cube	£395	Oct 98	Capable of involvement, neutrality and insight usually the preserve of stages three or four times the price.
LPJ Mito	£299	Sep 97	The most lucid and musical budget phono stage around - a true audiophile bargain.
Musical Fidelity X-LP	£130	May 99	First-class inexpensive phono. MM and MC inputs catered for. Low on distortion, high on clarity.
NAD PH1	£40	Sep 98	At this price the NAD is an accomplished all-rounder. Slowish bass will suit leaner systems though.
Pro-ject Phono Box	£40	Dec 99	Very competent little MM & MC stage at an astonishing price. First-rate starter package.
SED Discman	£35	Jan 97	A bargain. Beguilingly musical presentation, with more than enough detail and power for a mere £35.
Tronix RO 970BX	£130	Nov 94	Combine with a good cheap line level integrated and it will show you how good vinyl can be.
Sumner Sedyly MC2MM	£399	May 98	The Sedley combines transparency and fine dynamics with excellent rhythmic ability.

£500-

Anthem Pro 1P	£899	Aug 98	Despite a sizeable price tag the Anthem offers a smooth, lucid sound and superb build quality.
Audio Innovations P2	£749	Feb 96	Fantastic bass and super insight make this one of the best phono stages around.
Axentia 8000PPA	£800	Oct 94	Instruments can have a somewhat flat perspective, but excellent clarity.
Orto OB1/3/4/5	£495	Oct 94	Could be too forceful for some, but with excellent detail and extremely powerful bass.
Kimber Perception	£525	Oct 94	Extremely impressive results, especially with MM cartridges.
Linn Linn	£850	Oct 97	Marries beautifully into the Linn family, but not too hot with other components.
Michael Leo	£528	Oct 94	Gives a thoroughly cohesive picture of a recording with a very tight and rhythmical bass.
Michael Leo HR	£850	May 93	Perhaps too good for some record collections. Extremely revealing.
Robson Anniversary D58	£945	Oct 97	Doesn't worry about genre, it just gets on with the job of making music in an enjoyable way.
Sonic Frontiers Phono 1	£2000	Apr 98	Expensive, yes, overpriced, no. The Phono 1 is a superb all-round phono stage.
Sumner Sedyly Phono	£495	Mar 96	Liquid sound with great dynamics, but a little hissy and muddled too. Beguiling, but not perfect.

Cartridges £ Year Verdict

Under £200

Clearaudio Alpha	£130	Apr 99	Tends to sound quite hard at the top but imaging and detail are good. Best in a warm system.
Denon DL183M	£110	Aug 97	First manufactured in 1963, it sounds mature and sure-footed rather than over the hill.
Denon DL110	£65	Mar 94	May be a little soft-natured for some. Splendid dynamics and an even tonal balance.
Orto OB1	£185	Feb 98	Better Goldring's 1042 without difficulty. MC quality from an MM.
Orto OB1	£90	Jan 93	One of the best MMs at the price with strainless delivery.
Shure 1012GX	£60	Jul 93	Great with Rock music, the 1012GX is the best value low-price MM.
Grado Prestige Silver	£119	Apr 97	Good tracking and inoffensive sound, but somehow lacks sparkle in any department.
Linn RS	£58	Sep 94	Rhythmic bite compensates for a lack of vibrancy in music (MM).
Orto OB1 (10 Mill)	£40	Jul 99	Excellent tracker at a good price. Warm amplification is needed to tame this sure-footed budget entry.
Orto OB1	£100	Jan 93	Smooth operator and very good value for money (MM).
Orto MC15 Super II	£110	Mar 95	In the right system, can be masterful with its dry and accurate response.
Orto MC25E	£170	Sep 95	A considerable achievement that adds true verve a pizzazz to the MC15 Super II
Orto MC25E	£120	Jan 93	Light and dry presentation with good presentation (MM).
State Brass MM	£185	Sep 97	If you like the V15 you'll love the Brazen. Works well with an SME 3009.
Sumner Sedyly Phono	£100	Oct 92	Excellent value for money. It does its job of transcribing the information on the disc without fuss or bother.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Pro-ject Classic Cherry



Lehmann Black Cube



Clearaudio Alpha

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Cartridges £ Year Verdict

£200-

Cartridge Man Music Maska	£549	Feb 99	Good price, high output and a winning musicality make this Moving Iron cartridge the one to beat.
DNM Lens	£1300	Jan 99	A Goldring make-over that tracks well and sounds good. Pricey, though.
DNM Rice MM Cartridge	£255	Jun 98	This betters the Mica, has super-MM virtues.
Dynavector DV30X-H	£299	May 99	Delightfully musical sound makes the Dynavector a very strong contender in the budget MC stakes.
EMT 1873	£850	Oct 96	Solid bass and smooth, musical sound make this rare MC cartridge worth the money.
Golding Excel VX	£495	May 97	Has fine midrange clarity, but is bettered in other areas by cheaper competitors.
Linn Arko	£1200	Dec 97	Linn fans will love it but it's up against strong competition.
Linn Klyde	£489	Jun 95	Sumptuous sounding cartridge that borders on the bass heavy but has a good feel for music.
Linn Lydon	£649	Jun 95	Externally smooth, civilised MC with no obvious weaknesses.
Ortofon Jubilee	£1250	Mar 99	Detailed, musical and sure-footed, the Jubilee goes a long way towards justifying its elevated price tag.
Ortofon MQ25F	£225	Sep 95	Delightfully sweet, musical sound with added refinement on FL that takes some beating.
Ortofon MC20 Supreme	£450	Jun 95	Involving yet refined presentation but some could feel it's slightly coloured.
Ortofon MC7500	£2000	May 94	Conveys the full gamut of emotion from A-Z with the fervour of a live concert. Expensive, but the business.
Ortofon Rohmann	£1000	Apr 96	A top quality MC with superb tonal quality and excellent imagery.
Shure V15VMR	£295	Mar 97	Warm, dynamic rendition of music with great detail and Impact (MM).
Transfiguration Spirit	£1000	Jul 98	A balanced all-rounder that misses out only on the last ounce of detail and bass weight.
Van De Hul MC10	£840	Jun 95	The MC10 is very hard to fault. A honey, pure and simple.
VHM Grasshopper IV	£3750	Dec 95	Allows music to flow with superb fluidity and reveal things which were previously unheard - at a price!

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Ortofon Jubilee

Tonearms £ Year Verdict

Hadcock GH 228 SG	£595	Dec 98	Construction won't worry SME but its sound quality will unsettle a lot of the competition.
Origin Live RB250RB300	varies	Nov 97	These modified arms are a considerable improvement on the originals
SME 206	£689	Jan 93	Tight, neutral sound with good tonality, but lacks the IVs pace and precision.
SME3V	£828	Mar 92	Sexy chassis and staggering engineering along with potent performance earn it a place in audio history.

Tuners £ Year Verdict

Under £200

AAC T7	£130	Jul 97	Although it has a tempting price, its sound quality is poor compared with its rivals.
Arcam Alpha 7	£230	Mar 97	An attractive, smooth sounding tuner that won't break the bank.
Cambridge T500	£180	Feb 99	The T500 is one of the most gifted tuners under £500; a very accomplished all-round performer.
Denson TU-200L Mini	£130	Jun 99	With its smooth, inoffensive sound and abundant facilities, the MkII is a worthy addition to the tuner line-up.
Herman/Kardon TU 950	£1200	Jul 96	Sound quality is generally impressive. Let down by a rather constricted sound stage, but still good value.
Kelwood KT-2080	£130	Feb 97	Smooth, even balance allows the KT-2080 to convince with whatever it's receiving. £130 well spent.
Marsatz ST-57	£150	Oct 97	The ST-57 is a smooth, warm tuner but lacks a little clarity and transparency.
Mission Cyrus FM7	£299	Apr 94	Musical, communicative and extremely detailed and a steal at the price.
NAD 412	£190	Jun 96	A remarkably musical and natural sounding tuner. Unbeatable at the price, or even twice the price for that matter.
Origo T401	£160	May 94	A competent machine, but time has taken its toll on the sound quality.
Opera Radio	£230	Jan 95	Sounds on the whole more than its price, but in other respects it isn't especially competitive.
Hotel RT-930AX	£175	Aug 94	The RT-930AX is a glowing little bargain. real quality at a very realistic price.
Sony ST-545E3	£250	Apr 97	The Sony is worth every penny of its asking price. If you're a fan of radio this is one to go for.
Shny ST-SE700	£180	Aug 97	The ST-SE700 is one of the best at this price. LW reception is a welcome bonus.
Teac T-460	£120	Oct 99	An inexpensive and versatile tuner, difficult to fault as such. Sound quality on the dryside.
Technics ST-GT-350L	£140	Jun 95	Not a bad buy at all and a very good fit for budget and mid-price systems.
Yamaha T3500 ROS	£200	Feb 95	If you want something for casual listening with superior aesthetics, this might be the one for you.



Hadcock 228SG

£200-

Arcam GFT 885 L2	£399	May 93	Quite musical but does not rejuvenate the waves! Good solid performance but less than luxurious.
Arcam Alpha 10 DRT		Jul 99	Arcam's digital radio couldn't be simpler to use. Compared with good FM the benefits are marginal as yet.
Summaster 931	£4347	Nov 94	This is not a cheap tuner, but its cheaper than buying a radio station, which is the only possible alternative.
Cross T43	£399	May 98	A great little tuner. This is the one in the price bracket.
Cyrus FM2.5	£400	Oct 99	Fine, smooth and musical; commendably simple in style and operation. Only its price counts against it.
Denson TU-910	£400	Mar 98	A stylish, well-built tuner which has a detailed sound but needs careful partnering
Fanfare FT 1	£1350	Mar 95	Whether it's sweaty disco or symphony hall, the Fanfare comes up to scratch.
Kelwood KT-8500L	£300	Oct 95	A good value, excellent sounding rds tuner, but lacks full EON facilities
Linn Krenalin	£1645	Mar 92	Commendable basic performance but, considering the price there are limitations.
Magnon Cyrus FT101A	£749	Apr 92	Worth auditioning but bass rather dry and light.
Marsatz ST-17	£600	July 99	Knock-out build quality and rich velvety sound. Poor-signal mute a bit too enthusiastic.
Merrill SD4	£660	Mar 96	A clear, natural sound with good punch. Has strong rivals at the price, but acquits itself well.
Micromega Tuner	£700	Jul 95	An unusual design from Micromega that's well built but sonically unrewarding and expensive.
Myriad ST100	£530	Nov 99	Low on facilities, but when it comes to looks and sonic performance, it's the business.
NAD 702	£330	Jul 94	Well worth auditioning, even if you've never previously considered a receiver.
Naim N4T (3)	£499	Sep 93	Soft and pure, especially across the midband. Speech very well reproduced plus solid weighty bass.
Nitaramini ST35	£350	Dec 94	Looks good, but the sound quality isn't really worth the asking price.
Pioneer F-504SD75	£300	Dec 98	One sole mark against the class-leading transparency is its slightly dry character.
Pioneer F-504RDS	£350	Nov 95	Well engineered and competent tuner, but a little uninspiring.
Real Music RH110	£895	Mar 94	This classy looking tuner can hold its head up high amongst the best tuners at the price.
Real RT-990BX	£500	Apr 95	The price of twenty concert tickets, and for that you can listen as if you were there. A bargain.
Teac McLennan T20	£1100	Mar 99	Extremely well built with a lucid if slightly dry sound. The only real drawback is the high price.
Thorens TRT-2095	£500	Dec 97	An otherwise competent tuner is let down by a rather processed character.



Marantz ST-17

Cassette £ Year Verdict

Under £300

Aiwa AD-F380	£150	Apr 98	No Dolby S, but three heads and two capstans make the Aiwa a bargain.
Denon DFM-550	£160	May 96	Good enough for the price and no worse than the competition.
Denon DFM-555	£150	Jul 99	Its slant towards features prevent the Denon taking the audiophile honours at the price.
Denon DM8-6505	£230	Aug 96	Top sound quality with ferric and chrome makes this deck a steal.
Grundig CF4	£250	Jan 95	Fair on pre-recordeds, OK when recording, but speed stability isn't great.
JVC TD-V862	£300	Sep 98	Only the lack of Dolby S conspires against the otherwise excellent JVC.
Kelwood KK-5000S	£200	Jan 97	Stable transport gives fine results on metal and chrome. Rough on ferrics.
Nad 613	£230	Jan 96	Decent playback and good recording when used carefully.
NAD 614	£270	Sep 95	Excellent electronics are let down by a low-grade transport.
Notat RD-908BX	£230	Oct 95	A solid, competent machine which is reasonable value for money.
Sony TC-K011	£150	Dec 93	Auto-tuning is mediocre and the general results are unexceptional.
Sony TC-K480	£170	Jan 93	A mix of average heads and electronics doesn't make for happy taping.
Teac V-610	£100	Apr 97	The V-610's performance matches its price well, but audiophile it isn't.
Teac V-600	£150	Sep 94	Satisfactory for in-car recordings, but the low price shows.
Yamaha KC-580 SE	£250	Sep 97	The '580 lives up to its SE tag with a fine performance in all areas.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Cassette £ Year Verdict

£300-

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Alwa AD-S950	£300	Feb 95	Vice-free playback is mirrored by impressive recording.
Denon DR19-B10	£300	Jan 92	On the right tapes, the Denon repays with delightful sound quality.
JVC TD-V1010	£400	Sep 92	Disappointing on replay but recording is another kettle of fish altogether.
Kenwood KX-7060S	£330	Dec 94	Convincing all-rounder except for heavy-handed noise reduction.
Nakamichi 1.5	£500	Jan 92	The Cassette Deck 1.5 has no rivals in its ability to recreate a realistic performance.
Nakamichi DR-1	£780	Jun 93	Not perfect but as close as you can get for the money.
Nakamichi DR-3	£300	Mar 93	Unfortunately keeping the price down keeps performance below Nak's norm.
Onkyo TA250	£350	Oct 94	Top transport but the electronics aren't on a par.
Pioneer CT-95	£1000	Mar 97	On chrome and ferric, the '95 is smooth and natural. Not so good with metals.
Pion'r CT-S550S Precision	£340	Feb 99	Three heads, ease of use and high quality make the Dolby S equipped Precision a strong contender
Pioneer CT-S740S	£430	Jun 96	Complex but superb in every important area.
Sony TC-K611S	£330	Feb 94	A little muffled on pre-recordeds but pulls out all the stops on recordings, esp. with metal tape.
Teac V-6030S	£550	Nov 97	Solid build and solid sounds. Top-notch at the price.
Teac V-8030S	£650	Aug 95	One of the highest quality Dolby S decks available.
Technics RS-AZ7	£300	Jul 96	Excellent bass but mid and treble lack dynamics. Auto-tunes poorly on metal.



Sharp 772

Minidisc £ Year Verdict

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Alwa AM-F70	£250	Oct 99	Solid all-rounder that doubles as a superb dictaphone. Not No 1 as regards MD portables though.
Denon DMD-1000	£300	Nov 99	Sound quality up with the rest, wears its years well. Beginning to look expensive.
Goodmans GMD 520	£160	Nov 95	Very good value, built quality a touch plastic-y but stylish with it. Sonically very worthy.
JVC XM-228	£230	Sep 99	Well-built recorder. Good but not exceptional as Minidisc improves generally.
Kenwood DMF 9020	£500	Aug 99	An excellent tool for home recording; combines convenience, superb sound and a fair price.
Pioneer MJ-D508	£200	Nov 99	Sensible and well featured MD. Excellent transcriber of digital, shows up on analogue a little.
Sharp 722 portable	£230	Aug 99	Flash looks with solid build. First-class portable with domestic potential, but it isn't cheap.
Sony MDS-JB930	£300	Nov 99	UK Special Edition, so it sounds alright! Keyboard compatible with no difficulties in operation.
Technics SJ-MD100	£230	Nov 99	Solid, obviously meant for serious use. Excellent editing features. Sound up with the rest.

Recordable CD £ Year Verdict

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Marantz DR700	£600	Oct 99	A very solid all-rounder with impressive playback sound quality. Dearer than many though.
Philips CD-R 880	£500	Oct 99	Spot on with digital sources and impressive with analogue; playback a touch cold sounding.
Philips CDR-765	£360	Oct 99	Big value package. Whether the 'free' CD player function will earn its keep is a moot point.
Pioneer PDR-555RW	£500	Oct 99	Worthy of consideration but a bit of a mixed bag all round. Plenty of drive.
Traxdata Traxaudio 900	£500	Oct 99	Not the cheapest on the market but has an obliging way with playback which may turn the scale.

DVD £ Year Verdict

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
DVD-3000	£700	Aug 98	The Denon is a fine performer with CD and better still with 24/96.
Denon DVD-5000	£1500	Mar 99	Build is second to none. Sound is very solid convincing, but not as musical as the 3000.
Panasonic DVD-A350	£700	Jul 98	The A350 wipes out the CD-only competition at the price and threatens players up to £2000.
Panasonic DVD-L10	£1000	Nov 98	Isn't cheap, but it's an outstanding portable and a capable domestic device.
Sony DVP-S715	£700	Aug 98	The Sony is warm and smooth but lacks clarity and precision.
Sony DVP-S7700	£700	Oct 99	Looks good, sounds better. Deserves very serious consideration.
Sony PBD-V30 (portable)	£700	Jun 99	The Sony is an engrossing performer in a sturdy and attractive design.

Headphones £ Year Verdict

Model	Price	Year	Verdict
Ergo Model 2	£140	Apr 99	Wonderfully lucid and transparent panel-like sound.
Jackin Float 2	£100	Apr 99	Clarity and openness are their traits, rather than slamming bass, but still good value.
Sennheiser HD-580	£200	Nov 98	In the company of a smooth, warm system the 580s can shine.
Sennheiser HE50/V70	£1000	Feb 95	Electrostatic that set a class standard and can put a case for chucking out your power amp and 'speakers.
Vivanco FMH-6800	£80	May 98	Have a lot of potential but basic operating problems have to be cleaned up first.
Vivanco SR850	£50	Nov 95	Excitement that is rarely heard in headphones, but have a little trouble with heavy orchestral loads.



Sony PBD-V30



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CD Transports £ Year Verdict

Audiolab 8000 CDM	£1249	Aug 94	Distinguished by a wide array of facilities, Thoughtfully designed and high quality.
Cyrus Disc Master	£1800	Jul 94	Smooth and cohesive. The Disc Master looks good and comes with the Disc Master within the price.
DPA Enlightenment	£695	Mar 95	Solid and lifelike sound with Rock music and full bodied on Classical.
Kierwood DP-X9010	£530	Feb 92	Superb build for the money and a very musical sound. Benefits greatly from clocking.
Micromega Duo	£3435	Apr 93	Excellent build quality and a sound quality to match.
Monarchy DT-40A	£1595	Jun 94	Isn't cheap but has a solid dependable sound with a big, powerful presentation.
Parasound C/BD-2000	£1695	Jun 97	The belt drive is an interesting idea but the Parasound is bettered by cheaper transports.
PT Cardinal	£1440	Feb 95	Heart-stopping speed and impact contribute to what is an exceptionally good machine.
Rotel RDD-980	£450	Jul 96	Good, clean dynamic sound with a neutral and pure midrange tone.
Sonic Frontiers 3	£6999	Sep 98	A handsome machine both sonically and aesthetically. We love the camera aperture-style loading system.
Sonic Frontiers SFT-1	£2295	Aug 96	Top flight machine with an easy, musical and enjoyable sound, for those that can afford it.
Teac P-30	£2500	Jun 97	Costs a lot of money and sounds nothing short of superb.
Teac VRDS T1	£499	Feb 95	Enjoyable player with good insight. Good finish and keen pricing make it a thoroughly good buy.
Thorens TCD 2000	£900	Jun 96	A soft and warm sound will please vinyl lovers, but it's not the last word in detail.
XTC CDT1	£1200	Apr 96	A warm and musical sound with a taste of high-end refinement and detail.



Sonic Frontiers 3

CD Convertors £ Year Verdict

Alchemist TS-D 1	£300	Jan 99	Smooth, natural and relaxed on the ear, highly persuasive with acoustic material. A bit soft on Rock and Dance.
Arcam BB500	£750	Aug 97	Smooth and accurate treble and easy-going rhythm. Measured and engaging; good value too.
Audiolab 8000DAC	£900	Aug 97	Treble roll-off serves to remove some of the music's sparkle; lags behind the group leaders somewhat.
Cambridge Dacmagic	£150	Jun 95	Instant upgrade for a budget player but out of its depth with In a properly designed hi-fi CD player.
Chord DSC 900 DAC	£1700	Dec 98	The Chord combines smooth composure with musicality and transparency. Fort Knox build and priced to match.
Creek OBH-14	£239	Jun 99	Combined DAC and passive pre-amp; at the money there is no competition.
DPA Digital SX64	£800	Aug 99	Combines lack of grain and tonal richness with typical DPA speed and lucidity.
DPA Enlightenment dac	£795	Mar 95	Powerful, taut bass and remarkably solid higher frequencies. A nice touch with acoustic music especially.
DPA Enlightenment	£825	Aug 97	An engrossing listen with good manners to boot. Never uninvolved or lacklustre, plays with realism.
DPA Little Bit 3	£300	Nov 95	Don't be misled by the name - it's the budget convertor to have. Impossible to criticise for the money.
DPA SX512 DAC	£8000	Jun 98	A real smoothie for high-end digital conversion. Given the right transport, an outstanding sound is on the cards.
Link DAC 2	£300	Nov 99	Bargain price, priceless performance. A DAC to take very seriously indeed.
Manson Silhouette PSU	£895	Aug 97	If detail is high on your list of priorities, with a more forceful, hard-edged presentation, this looks like a very good bet.
Midiman Flying Calf	£109	Feb 99	A great little DAC which simply can't be beaten at the price. A bargain in all areas.
Midiman Flying Calf	£300	Jun 98	First-class as a DAC; doubles as an ADC for archiving to CDR - great value.
Monarchy Audio Delux 18	£595	Aug 97	Never offensive; its multi-bit convertor packs a mighty bass punch. Useful analogue volume control.
Monarchy Delux 18	£795	May 95	Delicate brightness does a lot to open out music and create a sense of space.
Musical Fidelity X-24K	£300	Jan 99	Crisp, detailed and dynamic, the MF is a genuine music maker, if a touch hard and bright at times.
Musical Fidelity X-DAC	£300	Nov 97	Outstanding value for money. Excellent sound in the usual attractively styled package.
Orella DA188	£399	Jun 95	Nicely built with quality components, the DA-188 has a lively sound. Solid bass, tidy midrange and crisp treble.
Pink Triangle Da Capo	£1400	Feb 95	Old hand at the game. One of the first HDCD-compatible convertors still a fine piece of gear.
Pro Audio	£699	Nov 95	A fine musical performance makes this idiosyncratic CD convertor worth searching out.
RDP 980	£450	Jul 96	An affordable route into two-box players. Good, clean dynamic sound with a neutral and pure mid-range tone.
Sonic Frontiers DAC kit	£240	Jan 95	Easy and fun to build, competitively priced and delivers fine sonic results.
Sonic Frontiers Processor 3	£7000	Sep 98	An awful lot of money - use it forever. Quality which can outlive any amount of cheaper purchases.
Sonic Frontiers Transdac	£699	Jul 95	The transdac has a smooth and focussed sound, but partnered with the Ultra Jitterbug looks expensive.
Thorens TDA2000	£700	Jun 96	Partnered with the TCD 2000, produces a sound that is certainly focussed, detailed and spacious.
XTC Dac	£1200	Apr 96	A taste of the elegantly smooth, slightly laid-back sound - the epitome of American good taste.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



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World Classic

Cassette

Nakamichi (various)
Yamaha TC-800GL

See main Guide

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

CD Players

Meridian 207
Pioneer PD-91

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

Amplifiers

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

Ancestors of hi-fi, consequently expensive nowadays. As with all vintage stuff, overhauling is de rigueur before use. Line of 'good for their time' pre-amps. Use of **6F86** pentode for high gain rules out ultra performance. Not the highest-fi. Excellent workaday classic. In good order the 20 will not disgrace itself. Various upgrades are available from specialist repairers. Plentiful monobloc equivalent of Stereo 20. Reasonably inexpensive and a tweakers' dream. Genuine hi-fi on a budget. You can't argue with success! NAD's budget integrated gave thousands their first taste of hi-fi and remains great value. By no means a bad job and value for money. With its matching 303 pre-amp makes a good introduction to audio classics. One of the all-time classic mono amplifiers. Unusual circuit but it works beautifully. 22 pre-amp not up to today's standards. Seventies transistor integrated has an eminently likeable smoothness and musicality. Limited inputs via DIN sockets. Nice transformer and electronics, shame about the casework. With tweaking, this 150watt can sound sweet.



Leak TL12 Point One.

Loudspeakers

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

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

Vinyl

Acos Lustre
Alphason HR100S
Ariston RD11
Garrard 301 & 401
Goldring Lenco 00 & 99
Haddock 228
Linn Axis
Michell Focus One
Shure M75
SME 3009 IIS
Thorens TD124
Thorens TD150
Trio L-07D

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



Thorens TD124.

Tuners

Leak Troughline (original)
Leak Troughline II & III mono
Leak Troughline III Stereo
Marantz ST-0

Interesting ornament but no longer hi-fi. Bandwidth limited to 55MHz to 100MHz only. Arguably the best-sounding tuners ever. Adaptation for stereo easy via phono multiplex socket. Excellent tuner with indifferent stereo decoding circuit. Best when adapted to use modern outboard decoder. Possibly the ultimate Tardis console, including an oscilloscope for checking the strength of signal. Expensive even now.



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Cambridge Dac Magic	£ 75.00	£ 150.00
Audio Alchemy DDS 2	£ 395.00	£ 900.00
Exposure V Active x over (3 Way)	£ 295.00	£ 905.00
EAD 7000 Transport	£ 795.00	£ 2495.00
Magnum P200 pre amp	£ 795.00	£ 1895.00
Gale 401	£ 150.00	£ -
Alchemist Kraken	£ 195.00	£ 580.00

New in This Month

	£2995.00	£ 3999.00
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Tube Tech. Synergy 1	£ 275.00	£ 400.00
Exposure IX Power supply	£ 795.00	£ 1500.00
Krell KSA 80	£1795.00	£ 3800.00
Jadis JA500	£8995.00	£21,000.00
Restek Monoblocks Exponent (1.2kw)	£8495.00	£12,000.00
NRG 401M	£5495.00	£13,000.00
Naim Nap 135	£1995.00	£ 3500.00

	£ 295.00	£ 600.00
PRE AMPLIFIERS		
Exposure VII	£ 295.00	£ 600.00
Mark Levinson No 26 S + Phono	£2795.00	£ 5400.00
Electrocompaniet EC4.5 (New)	£ 895.00	£ 1195.00
Naim Nac 52	£3495.00	£ 5500.00

	£1795.00	£ 2995.00
SPEAKERS		
Acoustic Energy AE2 Sig + Strnd	£ 795.00	£ 1500.00
Acoustic Energy AE1 P/Blik + Strnd	£1200.00	£ 3200.00
Quad ESL 63	£ 985.00	£ 1800.00
QLN Sig. + Stands	£1995.00	£ 2800.00
Shahinian Obelisk	£2995.00	£ 8500.00
Apogee Mini Grand		

AV COMPONENTS

	£ 495.00	£ 1000.00
C.D PLAYERS & DACS		
Meridian 206 Delta Sigma	£2495.00	£ 3000.00
Wadia 830	£1895.00	£ 2599.00
Krell KAV 250 C.D.	£2495.00	£ 4290.00
Krell KAV 300 C.D.		

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Naim Nat 02 Tuner	£ 550.00	£ 800.00
Audiolab 8000T Tuner		

Power Amplifiers

	£ X-Dem	£ 995.00
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Audio Research VT60	£ 1295.00	£ 2200.00
Arccom GF565	£ 1495.00	£ 1848.00
Rogers E40A (new)	£ 1495.00	£ 2000.00
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Musical Fidelity A3 Integrated	£ 795.00	£ 1100.00
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Acuphase E203 Integrated	£ 3795.00	£ 5180.00
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Cello Audio Palette + master supply	£ 3995.00	£ 8000.00
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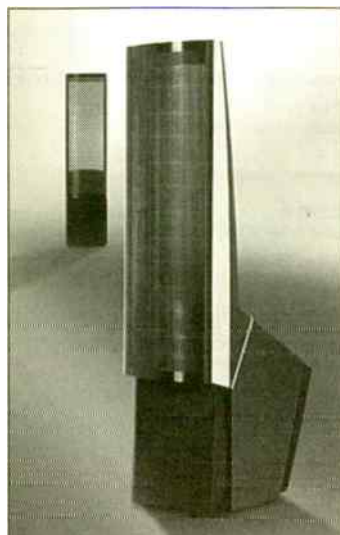
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Audio Alchemy Power Station 2	250	99	Beard M1000 125W Monoblock 6550 Triode	6500	2250
Deva 600 CD Player	699	349	Bartolomeo Trasparenza ST140 Stereo Power amplifier	1499	699
Deva DAC	495	199	Conrad Johnson MV55 Power Amplifier	1995	1199
DPA Enlightenment CD Player	995	695	Graff 50/50 Push Pull Power amplifier (New & Boxed)	2100	1795
DPA Enlightenment SX 64 DAC	850	499	Plinius 5150 Remote Integrated Phono (New & Boxed)	1900	1299
Mark Levinson No39 CD Player	4999	3950	Radford STA 35 Valve Power Amplifier	1000	499
Meridian 203 DAC	499	119	Roksan Caspian Integrated (New & Boxed)	795	595
Micromega Stage3	999	495	Quad 33/303 Amplifiers (New caps fitted)	N/A	250
Monrio Bit Match Transport	950	650	Unison Research Pentode 35 Valve Integrated (4xEL34)	1500	995
Monrio 18B2 DAC	950	599	Unison Research Smart 845 Monos	3500	1799
Nakamichi DV10 DVD DTS/5.1	799	599			
Primare D20 24/96 CD Player	695	575			
Quad 67 CD Player	950	549			
Turntables Tonearms & Cartridges			Loudspeakers		
Aphelion Audio 401 Plinths (New & Various Finishes)	250	169	Acoustic Energy Aegis 2 Beech	299	199
Decca London Gold (Garrot Re-build)	N/A	195	Audio Note AN-E/L Rosewood Loudspeakers	1680	950
Decca London Gold (J.Wright Re-Built/Podded)	N/A	250	Audio Note AN-J/SP Light Oak Loudspeakers	1230	750
EMT HSD15 Special MC phono Cartridge (New)	995	650	Audio Note AN-K/SP Light Ash Loudspeakers	1070	629
Linn Troika (No cantilever)	N/A	150	Celestion SL600 Loudspeakers	675	275
Linn Ittok LVII Tonearm	N/A	325	Impulse Maya Loudspeakers	695	399
Linn LP12 Valhalla/Basik Plus/K9	650	299	Impulse Lali Cherry	1895	999
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Roksan Xerxes Piano Lacquer Cognoscenti/Artemiz	3000	995	Totem Arrow Cherry	950	699
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Roksan Xerxes X Black/Tabriz/Corus (New & Boxed)	2072	1200			
Tubaphon TU2 MC Phono Cartridge 50hrs	695	425			
Preamplifiers			Cables & Accessories		
Audio Note M1 Phono Preamplifier	750	599	Air Sus Cherry Platform	169	99
Audio Note M2 Line Preamplifier	999	750	Cetech AV Carbon Platforms	250	169
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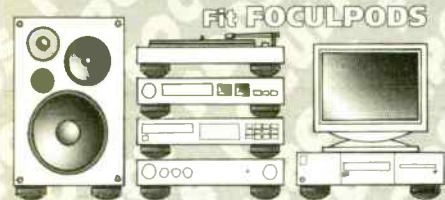
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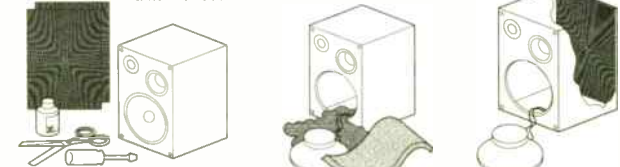
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V20

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WHAT HI-FI: Verdict *****

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

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Small but perfectly formed MC3

MC3

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

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The MC3 captures all the subtleties from the most complex recording without resorting to thrusting or spitting it out. Its extreme clarity and grainless presentation makes for a superb vinyl experience.

ART DUDLEY: Leading American hi-fidelity critic.

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

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Equally impressive are the speaker stands, which are a variation on the above 3-D Sink, working in just 2D (vertical and in the cone movement direction), which amaze everyone who hears them (£500/£600 a pair). Works equally well on stand or floormounted. Add the Isolda transmission line speaker cable which matches the impedance between the amp/cable and cable/speaker and you're another step up. Alternatively there is another excellent rack by Arcici from America which has the advantage that shelves can be spaced to your requirements and being more stable could be more suitable for some turntables. You will be amazed that these stands do just to the sound of your video recorder, or DVD player, and of course home cinema systems can benefit just as much (think of all those sub-woofer frequencies) and Townsend now do a cheaper A/V range to carry TV sets etc. Do phone!

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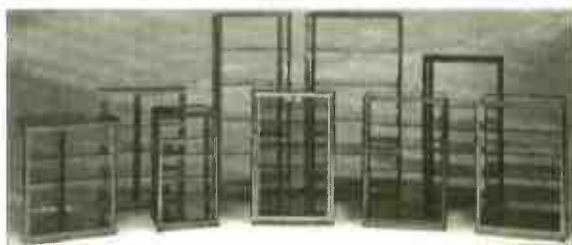
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Kef Q30	£350	£248
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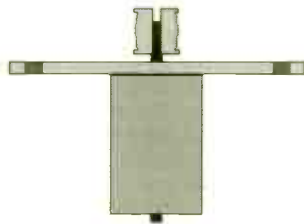
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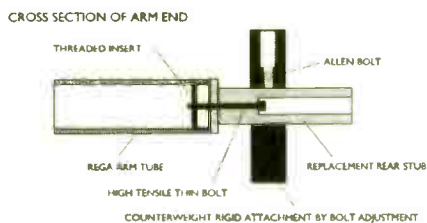
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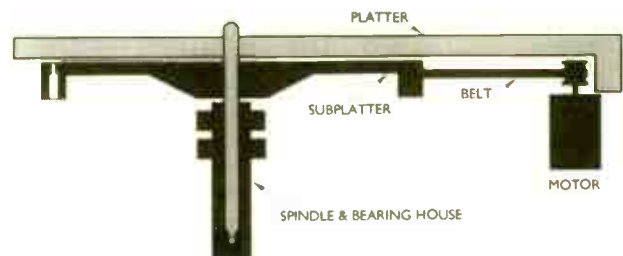
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Linn Mimik2 CD Player	EX/DEMO £875	£500
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Measured Performance

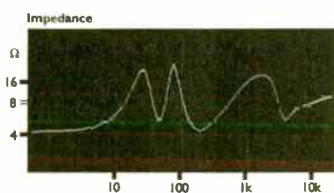
loudspeakers

ALR JORDAN

The ALR Jordan has a smooth frequency response from 16kHz down to 100Hz, our response analysis shows. With a rise in output below 1kHz it will have a full-bodied sound, but should also come across as accurate, cohesive and detailed due to lack of a crossover suckout. The tweeter looks like a good one, since there is no peakiness in its response.

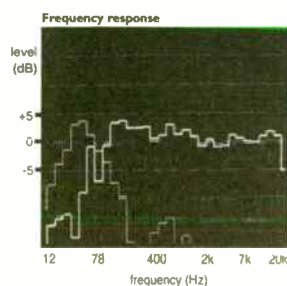
The rear-firing, mass-loaded bass radiator works from around 80Hz downward, peaking at 50Hz and running usefully down to 25Hz or so. It should give this 'speaker some deep, solid sounding bass.

The impedance curve has some steep slopes, meaning there's a lot of energy-storing reactance here, not a good thing. It looks as if a notch filter is operating at 3kHz or so, to cause such behaviour. Overall impedance measured a healthy 7 Ω , making the current draw reasonable



for most amplifiers.

This is a well engineered loudspeaker that should give good subjective results. NK



FINAL 0.3

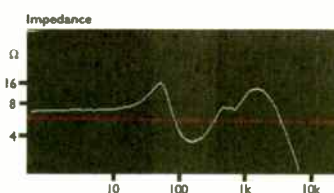
It isn't easy to match an electrostatic panel to a conventional cone bass unit. The Final managed this better than I expected, although measured frequency response does have its peculiarities. Not all of them are matching phenomena either.

The panel itself has a hump from 600Hz-1kHz which will push vocals forward a bit. The bass unit comes in progressively below 600Hz, taking output down to 60Hz. There's a suckout from 80Hz-100Hz though, likely to make the bass sound boomy. Bass output rolls down slowly below 500Hz or so, which is likely to make the overall balance seem a bit bass light.

The electrostatic panel peaks up at 10kHz, which may add a little sharpness

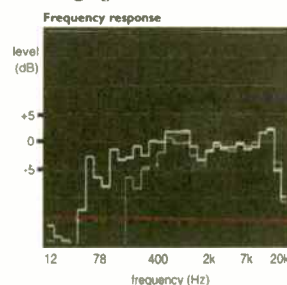
or bite to the treble. However, electrostatics are usually so smooth this may not be unpleasant. Above 12kHz output drops away quickly, but this will probably have little affect subjectively.

The Final has an evil impedance curve that plunges down to 2.5 Ω at 150Hz and below 2 Ω above 5kHz. Overall impedance measured a very low 2.2 Ω , so an amplifier with real current delivery is needed. Above 2kHz or so the electrostatic unit acts as pure capacitance, with little



sign of a 1 Ω or so limiting resistor. Producing just 83dB from 2.8V input (much more than one watt in this case) efficiency was low, as was sensitivity. An amplifier of 60W or more is needed.

Like most electrostatics the Final is a difficult load and 'speakers like this tend to highlight amplifier differences. Otherwise it manages reasonably well as far as things go. NK



amplifiers

MONRIO MP1

The MP1 produces plenty of power, 120W into a normal 8 Ω load and no less than 210W into a low 4 Ω load. This is plenty enough to go very loud even though the case is quite compact.

Distortion levels were held well in check, with little rise from 0.02% at high frequencies and at high power outputs.

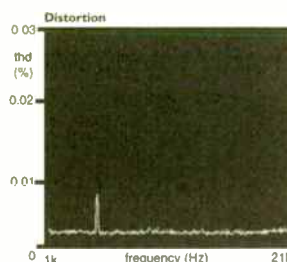
Low input sensitivity means the Monrio needs a preamplifier with gain, the usual x3 figure being about right.

Frequency response was broad and

flat. I'd expect good bass delivery and clean treble.

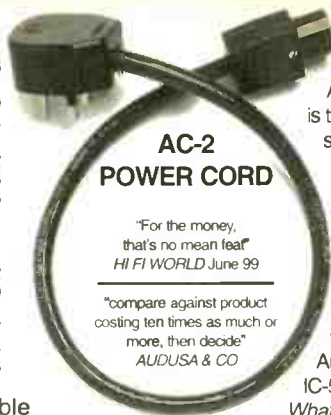
This power amplifier measured well in all respects. NK

Power	120W
Frequency response	4Hz-180kHz
Noise	-116dB
Distortion	0.02%
Sensitivity	1.2V
dc offset	3mV



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Analogue Interconnects, IC-50, IC-80, IC 100, IC, 200. - refer What Hi Fi for review ratings. Hi-Fi World Sep 99 - IC-50 "this months bargain". Speaker cables - SS800, BIWIRE, SS1000

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MVL A2+ AMPLIFIER

The A2+ exhibits bass lift of +2dB at 33Hz and treble lift of +4.5dB at 70kHz in its frequency response. In effect it has a built-in loudness control that emphasises low and high frequencies, something that will give it obvious presence in a show-room comparison with other amps. The tone controls altered matters little and had no proper zero point, what's more the characteristic was also independent of volume control position, unlike modern loudness controls. Asked about this, MVL claimed sine wave tests would not show behaviour with music. However, noise and impulse tests gave a similar result: bass and treble lift. Fundamentally then, the MVL A2+ isn't accurate.

Power output was a massive 153W into 8Ω and 225W into a low 4Ω load, so the amplifier will go very loud.

Power tests showed the A2+ has very soft clipping (output overload), suggesting low feedback. Sure enough, although distortion was low in the midband it rose to no less than 0.8% at high frequencies (10kHz), from low right up to high power outputs. MVL claim in their handbook that this amplifier has "extremely low distortion", but it does not: anything past about 0.3% at 10kHz is usually audible as roughness or coarseness to the treble, so the A2+ may well start to sound fatiguing after a while. Only listening tests can assess this.

The disc stage was very insensitive, needing 9mV for full output, against a usual value of 3mV. It displayed similar amounts of bass and treble lift as the CD input.

The MVL A2+ has MVL's own Sound Sentinel dynamic enhancement circuits that impose considerably upon performance. It is not technically an accurate unlike the simpler A2 without Sound Sentinel. Whether the A2+'s sound is preferable can only be a matter of taste.

THE TECHNOLOGY

The A2+ amplifier reviewed here has MVL's own Sound Sentinel enhancement circuits that are intended to improve the sound quality of sources. Specifically, a poor sounding CD player would experience greater enhancement than a high quality player.

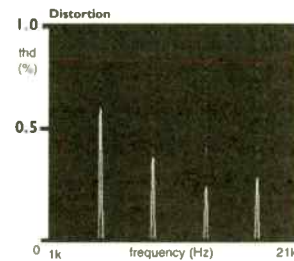
In truth, Sound Sentinel applies bass and treble boost under all circumstances, most subtly with the bass control turned fully anti-clockwise, which also negated treble control action. With full bass dialled in, the treble control seems to alter treble lift, so these controls are confusingly interactive. Subjectively, small amounts of bass and treble lift do add presence, but detract from fundamental accuracy and are very much a matter of taste.

MVL claim that Sound Sentinel works

differently with music than test signals. However, we used music-like noise and impulse test signals as well as conventional sine waves; there was little difference.

The A2+ will certainly have a distinctive sound. Just bear in mind that it is not technically accurate. NK

Power	153W
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	135Hz-16kHz
Separation	33dB
Noise	-90dB
Distortion	0.8%
Sensitivity	400mV
dc offset	1mV
Disc	
Frequency response	28Hz-4kHz
Separation	30dB
Noise	-79dB
Distortion	0.8%
Sensitivity	9mV
Overload	70mV



cd players

MYRYAD MCD500

Our response analysis shows the Myryad MCD500 CD player has a ruler flat frequency response that extends right up to 21kHz, the upper limit for CD. The lower limit measured 5Hz, plenty low enough for good subsonics. The Myryad measured academically well in terms of frequency response.

Distortion was low right down through the dynamic range, our analysis showing a complete absence of distortion harmonics at -30dB. The low -60dB value of 0.04% contributes toward a high EIAJ dynamic range figure of 109dB, putting the Myryad up with the best in this area.

With good channel separation and low noise this CD player measures impeccably in all areas. NK

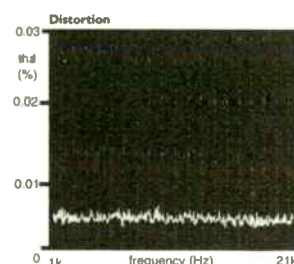
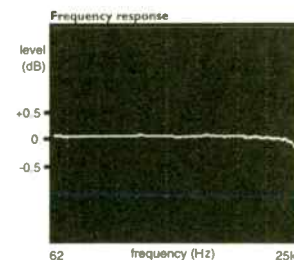
Frequency response 5Hz-21kHz

Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.006	0.007
-30dB	0.006	0.006
-60dB	0.038	0.04
-90	29	30

Separation	left	right
1kHz	120	119
20kHz	102	101

Noise	-103dB
with emphasis	-103dB

Dynamic range	109dB
Output	2.38V



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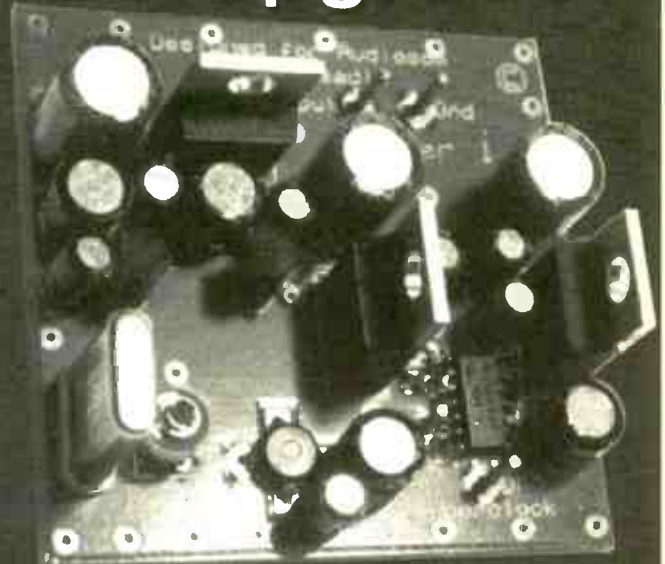
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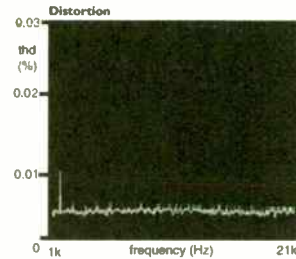
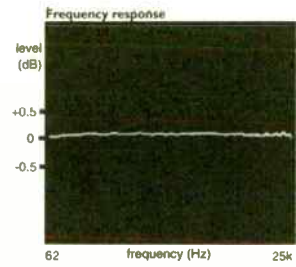
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NAD S500

NAD have given this flagship CD player a near-perfect measured performance as far as 16-bit CD players go. The frequency is as flat as you can get, distortion as low as possible (discounting Denon's Alpha Processing scheme) and channel separation wide. Noise was low too and output normal at 2.25V. The S500 measured impeccably and should sound smooth and refined. NK

Frequency response	5Hz-21.1kHz	Dynamic range	109dB
		Output	2.38V
Distortion	left	right	
-6dB	0.006	0.006	
-30dB	0.007	0.007	

	left	right
-60dB	0.39	0.38
-90	29	29
Separation	left	right
1kHz	107	109
20kHz	102	105
Noise		-103dB
with emphasis		-103dB



portable players

AIWA HM-AX50

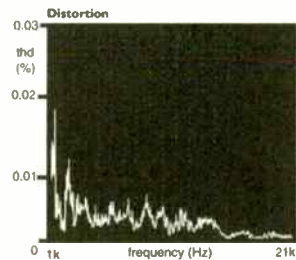
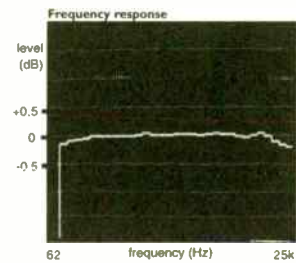
The AM-HM50 produces the sort of flat frequency response expected from a good CD player, so as an MD it's right up to the mark, reproducing all frequencies from the lowest to the highest evenly.

Like many battery driven portables though it has less dynamic range than a full size player, noise measuring -70dB below full output. That's quiet enough, but it means that low level signals sink below noise and indeed I couldn't get the Aiwa to reproduce much below -70dB or so. Bear in mind that rock music is generally compressed up to the 0-30dB range so whilst this player wouldn't rival a full size machine it's quite good enough for portable use.

Maximum undistorted output was a loud 300mV with distortion at around 0.05%.

The tiny Aiwa works well, giving a measured performance good enough for portabe hi-fi. NK

Frequency response	20Hz -	
	20kHz	
	left	right
Distortion		
-6dB	0.05	0.05
-30dB	0.05	0.06
-60dB	1.6	1.7
-90	-	-
Separation	left	right
1kHz	93	93
20kHz	89	90
Noise		-70dB
Output		0.3V



CASIO WMP-1 MP3 WATCH

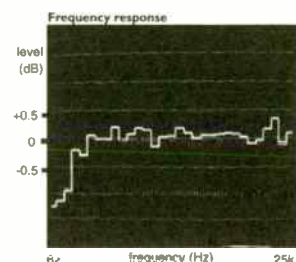
We could not load test files into this watch for measurement, because software wasn't supplied. Casio told us it was an early working 'photographic' sample. However, long term averaging of the single music track onboard revealed a few useful indicators of performance.

Frequencies from 30Hz up to 16kHz were being output with an even energy distribution, so this is a minimum likely frequency response. MP3 files are commonly performance-limited by the encoding software, so much better might be possible. It's a good performance for a watch!

Maximum output was 260mV, similar to larger portables, giving plenty of volume with most headphones.

Always bear in mind the biggest limiting factor to sound quality are earpieces. Use hi-fi headphones, like lightweight Sennheiser HD40s or such like and a watch that measures like this will impress. NK

Frequency response (min)	30Hz-16kHz
Output	0.26V



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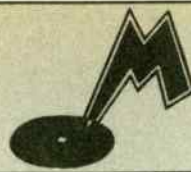
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PIONEER PDV-LC10

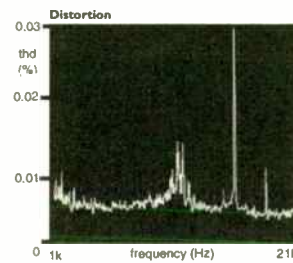
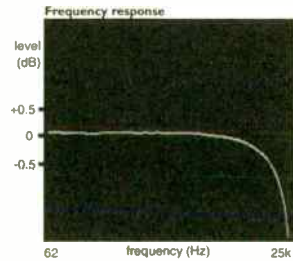
Our analysis clearly shows early top end roll-off from the PDV-LC10, meaning it will give a softer sound than a conventional CD or DVD player. This is not to say "dull" however. Connected to a hi-fi system frequency response is wide enough to reproduce all audio frequencies up to 15kHz.

Distortion levels were a little above the norm for CD too, about double what is expected. Again, this won't make a huge difference in the context of what it is, a portable where sound quality is not a primary concern, but it won't help home hi-fi use.

Noise was similarly higher than the theoretical maximum, but it was with most of the portables and at -82dB still low enough to be inaudible.

It doesn't compare with full sized DVDs but the PDV-LC10 still turns in a respectable measured performance. NK

Frequency response	6Hz-15kHz	
Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.01	0.01
-30dB	0.04	0.04
-60dB	1	1.1
-90	45	39
Separation	left	right
1kHz	96	96
20kHz	94	94
Noise	-82dB	
Output	1.5V	



SONY MZ R55 portable MD

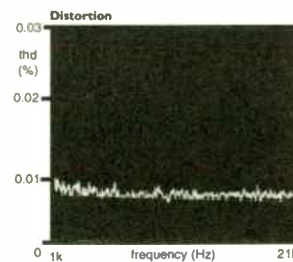
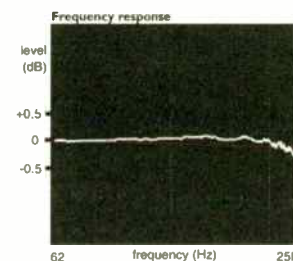
Sony's MZ R55 miniature MD recorder follows in the wake of the recording Walkman, offering a level of performance that's almost good enough for professional use. This recorder resolved a very low level -90dB test signal - unusual for a machine of the type. From -70dB up to 0dB there was minimal distortion, like full sized MD recorders. Our analysis clearly shows that at -30dB the spectrum analyser was measuring noise rather than real distortion when it returned a value of 0.02%.

Noise was a little higher than than the theoretical minimum for a 16-bit system but at -88dB still low enough to be inaudible.

Frequency response measured flat to 20.5kHz, with a small roll-off at the top end; just enough to ensure a smooth sound.

The MZ R55 has an excellent measured performance, better than CD in terms of low distortion. NK

Frequency response	6Hz-21kHz	
Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.01	0.01
-30dB	0.014	0.014
-60dB	0.07	0.068
-90	32	31
Separation	left	right
1kHz	88	89
20kHz	87	88
Noise	-88dB	
Output	0.76V	



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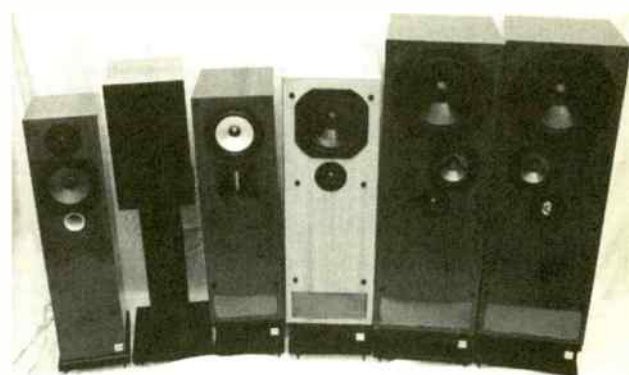
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HARBETH HL Compact 7SE latest edition £700. Ariston RD40 turntable RB250 Sumiko Blue Point £290. Celestion Ditton 66 studio monitors £390. Creek OBH9SE phono-stage £95. Atacama 12" stands £35. All mint/excellent. Tel: 0208 952 2044 (Jun(I))

KIMBER 0.5m PBJ CD interconnect £40, DBF FPTHOM speaker cables 2m bi-wire £30, DBF black velvet 1m £20, DBF Azure 0.5m £30. Tel: 01293 786 453 evenings or weekends (Jun(I))

ROKSAN CASPIAN CD player with remote control. Boxed with manual, recently serviced by Roksan Audio with new laser. Immaculate condition. As new. £500. Reason for sale, upgrading. Tel: 01335 370 594 (Jun(I))

IMPULSE H6 speakers, rare Burr Oak finish, excellent condition. Boxed. £550. VDH CSI22 HB 2x6 metres speaker cable £60. Tel: 0141 339 7387 evenings (Glasgow) (Jun(I))

MOTH PHONO amplifier MM/MC mint £130 ono. Moth active line level pre-amp & matching power supply, mint £160 ono. Tel: Alex 0208 985 4452 or Email: alexkirkham@yahoo.com (Jun(I))

AUDIO RESEARCH SP9.II £1000 ono. Helius Orion 2 £260. Michell Iso with Hera £300 ono. Audion Intro Pre Valve Phono £300. System Deck turntable £120. Snell Type E.II Silver wired with stands £900 ono. Tel: 0956 301 065 (Jun(I))

IMPULSE H2 loudspeakers. Awesome dynamics. Beautiful condition. Boxed. £1150 ono. Audionote Miraa "Special" phono stage. MM/MC. 10 hours use only. £525 ono. Tel: 01785 677 639 evenings and weekends (Jun(I))

GAMMA ACCOUSTIC Space Reference pre and power valve amps. Mint condition. Light use. 18 watts per channel. New valves. Any inspection. Cost new £8000 will accept £2750. Tel: 01726 824 114 (Jun(I))

ROKSAN DP1.5 transport and XLO interconnect £275. Tel: 01984 629 086 (Jun(I))

WANTED WELL used Dynavector cartridge, any model. Cash waiting or exchange various Shure Ortofon models. Tel: 01772 432 263 Jun (I)

REVOX B77 One owner from new, immaculate condition, two speed, Nab reel adaptors, Variable speed control £650. Revox Tuner 261 as above condition, high blend separation, Threshold station stereo control, manual/auto tuning £350. Tel: 01305 772 150 (Jun(I))

ACOUSTIC STUDIO monitor loud speakers, 12 inch polywoofer, 5" liquid cooled mid-range, 3" liquid cooled tweeter, 125 watts, 95db per watt, hardly used, with boxes and warranty. Cost new £1795, sell £800 ono. Tel: 07939 238 954 (Jun (I))

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TRIO L-07CII 150 watt monoblocks £375. QED silver profile 12 2m £20. Pickering 75000s £65. Early Linn arm £30. Decca International £20. Tel: 01273 727 476 (Jun(I))

LINN SYSTEM, Karik/Numeric, Kairn, 2No Klouts, Keilidhs £4850, Keswick Audio Figaro speakers Rosewood £450, Tannoy P4 Speakers in Cherry £500, Gale 401 speakers in Walnut £275. Tel: 01977 643 629 (Jun(I))

MUSICAL FIDELITY XA50 £325, X-Pre £120, X-PSU £85, X-Cans £85, Opera Prima £395, Alchemist Kraken Power £350, Helios Model 3 £475, AVI NuNuetron £380, Rotel RC/RB850 £175. Tel: Darren 01482 891 375 (Jun(I))

QUAD 34 Pre Amp with 405/2 power amp £300, AVI Pre Amp, latest spec £450, AVI Stereo Power Amp £400, Teac P500/D500 2 Box CD Player £475, Linn Keilidh Speakers £350, Audio Innovation 400 integrated valve amp £300. Tel: 01977 643 629 (Jun (I))

REVOX B710 Cassette recorder, Muxplex filter, Dolby, Tape bias, memory select, Superb condition £450. Revox Furniture, Stacking system in Walnut, Base unit storage with glass doors. 2 of £85 each. Tel: 01305 772 150 (Jun(I))

BEAUHORN VIRTUOSO Gold fully horn loaded speakers "be there" (£3395) bargain £1995. Audio Innovations 'First Audio' monoblocks 7.5 WPC £750. Second Audio's £1195. Move forces sale (may part-x). Tel: 01472 329 668 (Cleethorpes) (Jun(I))

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WANTED ORIGINAL Lowther TP1 corner horn with PM3 drive unit. Any condition considered. May be interested in anything Lowther. Private enthusiast. Tel: 01886 853 385. Email: a.j.king@tesco.net (Jun/I)

KRELL PAM 7 preamp with power supply £450. Quad 510 monoblocks 125 watts £495. Celestion Ditton 66 Studio monitors teak £395. All items mint or near as. Tel: Brian 0208 908 4633 or 0208 952 2044 (Jun/I)

SNELL K's Huygens £395. Vintage Rowe 7868 valved amplifier £295. Audioplan silver interconnect £70. Dean Alto's £145. Audio Innovations 800 preamp £175. Matching power amplifier £350. Walker CJ55 SME MP II £170. Wanted: Source/ well tempered turntable. Tel: 0113 255 9475 (Jun/I)

LINN KABERS ash black active cards, latest spec, unmarked, boxed, passive crossovers available, demo if required. £795. Tel: Jerry after 7pm 01702 545 622 (Jun/I)

STUDER 1/4" tape recorders EMT turntables. Very good condition Tel: 0121 356 9636 (Jun/I)

EAR 519 monoblocks pair £2300. Ear 802 preamp £590. Magneplanar MG1 speakers £550. Black Slink 4m interconnects offers accepted for parts or whole superb range. Tel: 01305 262 359 Email: rolandtarr@mon-mouthroad.freeseerve.co.uk (Jun/I)

UNISON RESEARCH Mystery One preamp; Unison Research 845 monoblocks twenty four watt per channel; Unison Research Simply phono stage; Tim DeParavicini's "The Head" amp. New price £6100. Bargain £3600 mint. Stunning Italian amps, beautifully carved wood and they synergise gloriously with Quad Electrostatic ESL 63's. Not only can you have great valve sound but gorgeous looking Hi-Fi as well. Tel: 02891 461 603 (Jun/I)

SUGDEN SIGNATURE AU41 remote pre AU41 power £600. Naim MC (separate MM boards) two box phono stage £200. Both for £750. No boxes. Tel: 01733 810 516 (Peterborough) (Jun/I)

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QUAD 34 preamp with phono stage and MC module £175. Mint. Quad 606 £375. Mint. £500 both. Celestion Ditton 25 floorstanders walnut excellent condition original packing £175. Tel: 0208 952 2044 (Middx) (Jun/I)

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MICHELL ALECTO monobloc amplifiers, wide band width, low distortion, 125w 8ohm, 200w 4ohm, boxed, £1250 (£1950). Audioquest 3.5m Midnight £149 and 3.5m Cobalt £199 speaker cables. Tel: David 01296 747 852 (evenings) (Jun/I)

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REVOX B77 MK 2 one owner from new £395. Tel/Fax: 01202 291 435 (Jun/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000 DAC £350 (£900). Arcam Delta transport and black box 50 DAC £550 (£1280). Castle Howard S2's oak finish £750 ono. Nordost flatline gold bi-wire 2x2m £35. Tel: 01202 381 413 (Jun/I)

CELESTION DITTON 66 Studio monitors teak, excellent condition £395. Creek OBH 9SE phono stage virtually unused £95. Tel: Brian 0208 952 2044 (Jun/I)

WADIA 22 CD transport 4 digital outputs AESIEBU coaxial (BNC) toslink ATT glass optical extremely low jitter boxed in mint condition £980. Tel: 01626 352 682 (Jun/I)

MICROMEGA STAGE II, CD player, boxed £135. Nakamichi MR2, professional tape deck, just had complete overhaul by Nakamichi costing over £100+, £195. Cambridge Audio DAC, Dacmagic II £90. Kenwood KA-3700 Dolby decoder/amplifier £75. Tel: 01484 846 253 (Huddersfield) (Jun/I)

NAIM NAC 52 supercap latest spec immaculate condition £3150 ono. Tel: 01444 418 984 work 01276 472 386 home (Surrey) (Jun/I)

SME MODEL 20 turntable last MK1, Mint, boxed; £1600. Naim NAC 82 pre. 16 months old mint: £1600. Linn Sara 9s with stands, boxed: £340. Tel: 0208 337 1725 or 0976 695 218 (Jun/I)

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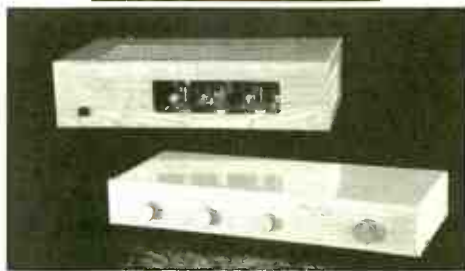
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PROAC STUDIO 100 with Foundation stands £450. Would swap for power amp. Phillips digital compact cassette recorder with 30 tapes £125. Moth record cleaning machine £125. Tel: 01604 661 052 (Jun/I)

SUGDEN 51 pre amp with 51 power amp £850, Lowther Horn speakers £375, Gale 401 speakers in walnut £275, AVI Pre with Mono Block Power Amps £750. Tel: 01977 643 629 (Jun/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000Q pre-amp £730. 8000A int-amp £280. DPA PDM1 Series 2 DAC £130. VDH CS112 speaker cable 2x10m £100. Ixos 100.X03 0.6m interconnects £50. Technics SL1700 turntable £80. Tel: 01889 882 551 (Jun/I)

LINN LP12, Aro, Lingo, Circus £950. Audionote Meishu amp (phono version) £1800. Audionote type E/SP inc. stands £900. Mana Reference table £250. Mana Mini table £100. All mint. Tel: Nick 0114 245 4601 (Jul/I)

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WANTED. Linn Akito ton-earm vgc. For Sale Sennheiser headphones HD565 Ovation boxed mint condition £50. A&R C77 magnesium bodied cartridge £10. Rega Elys cartridge £30. Both boxed. Tel: 01709 547 176 (Jun)

REVOX B760 tuner £400. Revox B710 II £300. Mission Cyrus 2 + PSX Mark 1 £150. Wharfedale 510 spks £70. Sony 915E CD player £120. Mint Thorens 160B Mk2 + Mayware TMC cart £50. Sonamp power amp £250. Dual 505 vg £20. QED headphone amp £30. Creek 4040 £40. Pioneer TX7500 tuner £80. Wharfedale 50 spk £50. Philips 4506 reel to reel £50. Tel: 0207 394 0870 (Jun/I)

V.D.H. THE Second interconnects (phono), 1.0 metre £140 (£275). 0.6 metre £100 (£200). Goldring Excel VX MC cartridge, very low mileage £160 (£525). All in mint condition. Tel: Rod 0208 205 6778 (NW London) (Jun)

CASTLE AVON floor-standers - yew - boxed - v.g.c. £425. Cable Talk Reference interconnect 1m pair £75. Cable Talk Concert 3m bi-wire £75. Tel: Chris 01296 661 105 (Jun/I)

THETA PRO-PRIME DAC mint condition, boxed. Original owner from new. Big effortless sound. £750. Tel: 01509 215 230 (Jul/I)

HEYBROOK SIGNATURE amplifiers including two power amps, two power supplies and preamp, on Signature stand £900. Heybrook Sextets (perfect match for Signatures) £400. Heybrook Quartets including matching stands £250. Tel: 0113 269 6570 (Jun/I)

TECHNICS SU-A900 Mk2 £190. Rotel 820BX4 £75. Marantz CD50SE and Dac-in-the-box with extras £120. Ixos 105 £12. Chord solids £50. Brother Electronic Notebook £90. All mint, boxed with instructions. Tel: 01253 500 881 (Jun/I)

ROTEL MICHl RHA10 'hi-end' pre-amp. Superb. Still mint after 6 years cossetting. (£999) £230. Musical Fidelity X-Cans headphone amp with Golden Dragon valves. Mint but minus power supply (available from MF) hence £35 only. Tel: 01752 773 369 (Jun/I)

HP3561A DYNAMIC signal analyzer frequency 0.000125Hz - 100kHz. Full specification upon request. As featured in April 2000 Hi-Fi World. Price £3000. Tel: Daytime 01952 605 451, evening 01952 253 515 (Jun/I)

CROFT SERIES 3 OTL monoblocks 45w per ch. Upgraded using premium parts. Fantastic open sounds. £800. Tel: 01384 271 571 (Jun/I)

KRELL KSA50 £750. Rappaport Pre 1A £200. Spica Angelus loudspeakers £500. Marantz CD700 recordable £250. Sony professional portable cassette £150. Audio Research SP9 Mk II pre-amp £800. D115 MkII power amp £900. Arcam C200 pre £150. Tel: 01704 530 928 (Jun/I)

REVOX B760 amplifier £200. Marantz SP50 surround processor £75. Sony STS-700ES tuner £75. Denon DRM33HX cassette £75. Thorens TD160 LVX £100. Mission Cyrus amplifier £75. Yamaha 410 tuner £40. Tel: 01704 530 928 (Jun/I)

SHAHINIAN HAWKS, 2 years old, walnut finish. In excellent condition, boxed. Can demonstrate. Tel: Andy 07776 218 951 (Jun/I)

FOR SALE, drive units in pairs, Scanspeak 25w 8561 bass/mid £110. Scanspeak 25w 8565 bass £155. Scanspeak 13M 8636 Kevlar midrange £75. Scanspeak 13M 8621 midrange £50. Dynaudio T330D tweeter £150. Tel: 01664 851 217 (Leics) (Jun/I)

NAKAMICHI DRAGON 1994/5 serviced mint (£2200) £1100. Studer A80 1/4" reels (£1000s) £380. Ultimate machines. AVI pre and monoblocks latest remote £800. Boxed Spendor BC1's BBC monitors £115. Tel: 0161 764 8888 or 0161 762 9884 (Jun/I)

Classified Ads

Van den Hul:

(all new, unused)

Loudspeaker-cables:

CS-122 Hybrid: £ 9.50 m
Teatrack Hybrid: £ 16.50 m
New Royal Jade Hybrid: £ 7.50 m
Magnum Hybrid: £ 25.- m
Revolution Hybrid: £ 59.- m
Revelation Hybrid: £ 69.- m

Interconnect-cables:

The First Ultimate: £ 189.- 0.8m p.
MC Gold: £ 299.- 0.8m pair
MC Silver IT: £ 999.- 0.8m pair

Cartridges:

MC One Super: £ 639.-
The Frog HO: £ 1099.-
Grashopper IV GLA: £ 1999.-

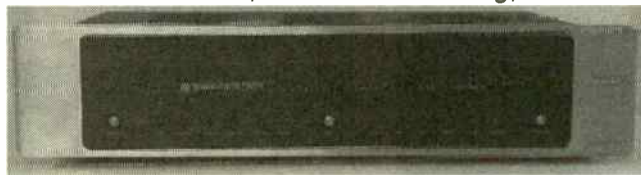
C.E.C. TL-5100 CD-Transport



belt-drive, black coloured, Digital-out:
Cinch+AES/EBU, 2 years warranty, new, boxed
was: £ 900.- now: £ 499.-

Sonic Frontiers SFD-2 MK II

Tube DA-Converter, 20 Bit Ultra Analog, ex-demo



was: £ 5.700.- now: £ 2.600.-

NBS-Cable (new, boxed)

Interconnects:

NBS Statement:

XLR 2,4m was:£ 7.500.- now: £ 2.900.-
XLR 1,8m was:£ 6.250.- now: £ 2.500.-
XLR 1,2m was:£ 5.000.- now: £ 2.200.-
RCA 1,8m was:£ 6.250.- now:£ 2.500.-
RCA 1,2m was:£ 5.000.- now:£ 2.200.-

Digital-Connects:

NBS Statement:

AES/EBU 1,0m
was: £ 2.500,- now: £ 1.250,-

NBS Professional:

AES/EBU 1,0m
was: £ 1.500,- now: £ 750,-
RCA 1,0m
was: £ 1.500,- now: £ 750,-

Burmester 935 II+933 II

Pre- and Poweramplifier, new, boxed



was: £ 5.000.- now: £ 3.250.-

VAC Renaissance 70/70

8 x 300 B Tube, used, good condition



**was: £ 8.350.-
now: £ 3.000.-**

B+W MPA-810

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see page 130 for details

AUDIOLAB 8000CDM £600. Cyrus III £350. Musical Fidelity X10D £45. Harman Kardon TC1000 £150. VDH First £80. VDH CS122 4x5m £140. VDH First Ultimate £130. VDH Teatrack 2x2m £50. Tel: 07971 810 145 (Jun/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000 DAC, mint condition, £375. Naim 62 preamp, new style, £175. Naim 32.5 preamp, superb sound, £175. Tel: 01275 543 447 after 6pm (Bristol area) (Jun/I)

NAIM 180. 12 months old. First offer £795. Naim 72/90 £550. All excellent condition. Epos 11's with stands. Minor repair required. £165. Naim phono boards. MM/MC £30. Tel: 0141 641 0496 (Jun/I)

SD1 ACOUSTIC Two's speakers floorstanders vgc. Panel like sound excellent with vocals, £475. Tel: 01634 723 223 (Medway) (Jun/I)

AUDIO ANALOGUE Bellini/Donnizetti pre/power amps boxed £600 (£1095). Linn Akito tonearm £130 (£300) pair. Siltech interconnects 0.5m £100 (£210). Tel: 0208 926 6916 ansaphone (Jun/I)

UNISON RESEARCH Simply Two £550. Klipsch KG 4.5 floorstanding loudspeakers £300. Micromega Stage One CD player £100. M&K LCR 55 speakers £250. All boxed mint. Tel: 0208 654 9850 (Surrey) (Jun/I)

NAIM NAP 140, NAC 62 vgc, boxed, one owner £450 ono. Marantz CD85, good condition £200. Tel: 01943 607 336 (W.Yorks) (Jun/I)

MERIDIAN 501 pre amp. Excellent condition. Boxed. Manual. TV CD tape plus many other inputs great sound. Giveaway price. (upgrading) £340 ono. Tel: 01633 254 673 (Jun/I)

FISHER X100 valve amp FM50 tuner and MPX200 decoder £150. Goldring Lenco 88 deck £40. Cerwin Vega AT20 speakers £75. Tangent RS4 speakers £150. Designwise Glen speakers £70. Tel: 01379 898 676 evenings (Jun/I)

NORDOST CABLE. 4 metre stereo pair flatline twin bi-wire boxed £65. Chord interconnects Cobra phono to din £20. Phono to phono £20. Tel: 01895 235 547 (Jun/I)

QUAD ESL 63. 97 Spec. Special Piano laquer finish. Black wood also available. Including stands. Mint, boxed. Reluctant sale. £1300. Aura Evolution 100 chrome amplifier £200. Tel 01376 329 499 (Essex) (Jun/I)

WANTED: Linn Isobarik, latest spec, must have external X/over and panel stands. Tel 01376 329 499 (Essex) (Jun/I)

RUARK TALISMAN-II. Biwireable floorstanders plus 4 litre tub of Soundbytes. Boxed, mint. Still under warranty £400 (£749 + £25). Impeding house move allows upgrade to more amps and bigger Ruarks. Tel: 01483 281 234 (Surrey) (Jun/I)

GARRARD 401, SME 3009II, SME plinth. Good condition, £135 ono. Tel: 01503 250 679 (evenings or weekends) (Jun/I)

SME SERIES V tonearm. Perfect, boxed, with full toolkit and manual. Legendary quality. Sensible offer secures. Wanted: REL Stentor subwoofer (black). Tel: John 01865 862 745 (leave message) (Jun/I)

WANTED: WORKING or for spares. Rogers A75 amp, A100 amp, Pantera tuner. Tel: 01938 553 559 (Weshpool) (Jun)

AUDIO INNOVATIONS P2 phono stage, heavily upgraded, new caps, silver wire etc. £600. Lumley M120 valve mono blocks, boxed, £1150. Michell Alecto mono blocks, new model, boxed £1500. ATC 10's, black ash, boxed £400. all excellent condition. Tel: 01844 347 729 (Jun/I)

1m TRANSPARENT ULTRA interconnect £400. 1m Cable Talk Gold interconnect £150. 2.5m Harmonic Strings loudspeaker cable £200. 1m Renaissance Audio Silver digital cable £100. 0.6m Renaissance Audio Silver blue interconnect £200. 2 way switching box, silver wired £45. Solid Link yellow mains cable £30. Kimber mains cable £30. Tel: 01844 347 729 (Jun/I)

SILVER WIRED Nuance pre-amp/psu, very detailed £375. Lowther Acoustas, silver voice coils, vgc, nice cabinets £350. Dynavector 17D/2 (£450) little use £175. S.D. Ribbon speakers (£2400+) £500. The 'Source'. Odessey arm, 3-D psu £650. AR Legend, RB300 £150. Audion-Silver-Nights mono's £750. Tel: 0151 353 0930, mobile 07720 636 678 (Wirral area) (Jun/I)

QUAD 63's pair, mint condition, recent Quad service, very reluctant sale, boxed, £1250 ono. Roksan DP1 CD transport + Roksan DA1 and power supply. Mint condition, boxed £700 ono. Tel: 01446 418 207 (Jun/I)

QUAD 67 CD, new laser and service 3/4/00, £650. 66 preamp, never used £450. 66 tuner £300. Stands Unique sound support with isolation platform £150. Wanted: Tannoy Buckingham grills. Tel: 0121 742 2015 (Jun/I)

SUGDEN MASTER-CLASS Pure Class A power amp. Mint, boxed £2000 (£3000) One year old. Sugden AU51C pre-amp £550 ono (£995) Two years old. Tel: 0385 771 819 or 01293 611 293 (Jun/I)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS transcend Decade transport, 9 months old, cost new £3295, asking £1900. Audio Synthesis Dax Decade, balanced output dac/digital preamp, cost new £3490, asking £1900. Tel: 01296 437 314 (Aylesbury Bucks) (Jun/I)

WILSON BENESCH Asside hi-fi stands. 4 tier version, asking £400 inc 4x shelves. 2 tier version, asking £200, inc 2x shelves. Target R5 speaker stands £140. Tel: 01296 437 314 (Aylesbury Bucks) (Jun/I)

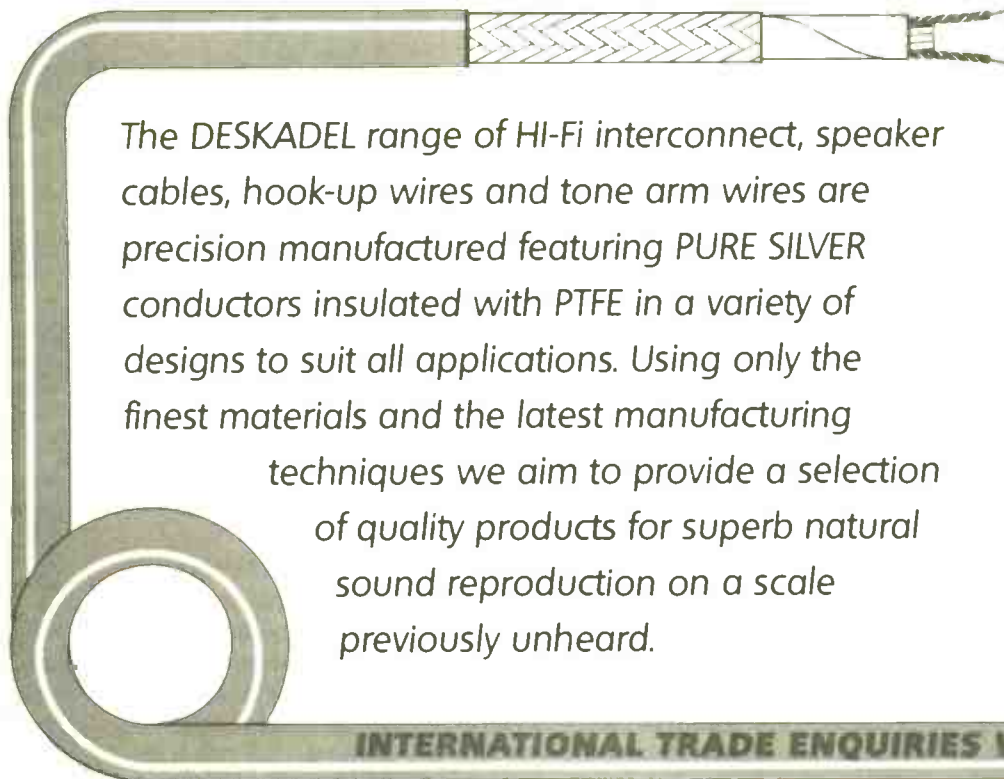
TRIANGLE ANTAL Loudspeakers, Audio Note silver wired, cost new £900, asking £450. Stands Unique tuned speaker supports. Cost new £300, asking £140. Tel: 01296 437 314 (Aylesbury Bucks) (Jun/I)



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Garrard, BBC301, EMT SME, Ortofon, Decca, etc.
VALVE AMPLIFIERS
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MERIDIAN 506.2 CD £650 boxed manuals as new. Papworth Audio MVH200 integrated amp £525 (£1200) boxed excellent condition. Conrad Johnson PV10A and MV55 pre-power £1850 boxed manuals excellent condition. Proac Response 1SC speakers and dedicated Target stand £875 boxed mint condition. Castle Clifton speakers and Atacama stands £135 boxed. Two sets Mit Terminator2 interconnects £135. Mit Terminator2 speaker cable biwire 8 foot £180 boxed. Nordost Blue Heaven interconnect £75. Aiwa ADF450 cassette deck £35 boxed manuals. Assorted speaker cables and power leads available. Phone for details. Apex Acoustics. Tel: Steve 01527 450 500 Email: apexnm@aol.com (Jun/I)

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New. Discounts available. Deliver Anywhere UK. Please telephone for details. Five Ways Hi-Fidelity Ltd (Est 1972), 12 Islington Row, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 1LD Tel: 0121 455 0667. Tues-Sat 10.30-6.00 (Jun/I)

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

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TECHNICS SP-10 Mk2 turntables £248. Revox PR 99 Mk3 £648. Studer A80 VU £398. Studer A810 £348, EMT 950 £498. Rogers brand new DB-101 £148, LS3/5a £398, AB-1 £298. Tel: Stirling Broadcast 01256 851 001 (Jul/I)

CD IN Line attenuators. Fixed -12dB £25/pair. Variable -8dB to -18dB £47/pair. Improve volume control and remove input overload. Tel: Grant 01752 202 841 (Jun/I)

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NAGRA IVS £1200, EMT 948 £450, 950 £750, Technics SP10 £260, SLP1200 CD £500, Revox G36HS £500, PR99 MkII £850, B126 £450. Studer A810 £600, B67 £500, A710 £550, B62 £500, A807 £750, A80 £650, Rogers LS5/8 £250, Nagra T £1500. Uher RM £160. Tel: 01246 235 024 Fax: 01246 550 421 (Jun/I)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS Passion pre-amplifier (passive) & Audio Synthesis Desire power-amplifier RRP £2250 - £1300ono, Audio Research SP9 mk1, boxed, as new £750, Audio Research LS15, boxed, as new £2,200 ono. Krell KSA50 Mk2 power-amp, as new £1,100. DPA Enlightenment Drive plus DAC, 24bit 96khz technology, guaranteed, (new £1,900) £1,000. ATC SCM20 speakers, in yew, immaculate, boxed £900. U.K.D. Opera Callas Gold speakers, immaculate, RRP £1500 - £500. Denon DCD1520, manual, bargain - (New £500) £100. Yamaha DSP A990 AV amp, as new £230. Transparent balanced interconnect, RRP £300 - £120 ono. Transparent power cable, including 3 RF boxes, new £250, accept - £150. XLO 4.1 DIGI cable 0.5m, new £350, - £170 ono. Transparent power cable, 2 RF boxes - RRP £150 - £90. Nordost Blue Angel balanced cables, 1mtr, RRP £128 - £70 ono. Deltac Black Slink, 0.5mtr pair, RRP £147 - £70. Ortofon 7 nine's cable 1mtr, RRP £250 - £170. Tel: Jules 01792 280 061 (Jun/I)

CLASSE CA100 amplifier £925. CAV75 £1495. B&W 610 £130. Arkaydis ASC with matching rosewood stand £525. Quality mains cables and interconnects for home trial. Contact Audio Visual Concepts 01628 440 873 (Jun/I)

PRIMARE D30-2 CD player (new) £1100. Primare D20 CD (new) £600. Primare A30.1 amp (new) £1000. Primare A20.1 amp (new) £600. Magnaplaner SMGa speakers, boxed as new £250. Tel: 01952 502 097 (Telford) (Jun/I)

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KRELL FPB600 £8000. Krell KSA300S £5000. Krell FPB650m x2 £offers. Krell KST100 (grey) £1495. M/Levinson 23.5 £3995. Mark Levinson 20.6 monos £5500. Krell KRC-3 £2795. Krell Pam-7 £995. M/Levinson 31.5 CD £7500. Wilson Watt 5.1 £18000-£8500. Sonus Faber Amati Homage £9500. Rogers LS3/5 15 ohms £350. Tannoy 15" Gold x2 £850. Tel: 0207 349 9675 or 0958 607 613 (Jun/I)

HOME CINEMA, brand new Dolby pro-logic surround processors by Onkyo, WHF five star stunning at £300 our price only £99. Hi-Fi purchased. Free parking. Major brands stocked. Tel: Audiofile Objective 01992 478 666. (Jun/I)

AUDIO SELECTION - Showroom - come & listen - generous part exchange. incs. coffee - Available - Audiolab 8000AII, NAD312, Marantz CD63II KISI, CD42, TDL T-Line 2's. Manufacturers-your Hi-Fi sold on commission! Tel: Jim, 01206 510 392 (Colchester) (Jun/I)

EX-DEM SPECIALS Meridian 502-557 pre-power £2149. Meridian 501.2-556 pre-power £1259. Meridian 551 £599. Meridian 504 £569. Cyrus AEQ7 phono stage £349. Cyrus ACA7 pre-amp £559. Monitor Audio Studio 60 (black) £3495. Meridian DSP5000C centre £1399. Tag McLaren 60i integrated £499. Tag McLaren PA10 pre-amp £549. Tel: 02380 337 770 (Jun/I)

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 - Power amplifier

Finish: silver or matt black



Roksan was formed in 1985 to offer sound reproduction systems of the highest quality for the most discerning of music lovers.

Today... nothing has changed, except of course the products... same standards – but now more affordable.

ROKSAN

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*Beauty is not
only skin deep.*



The new **78** series

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