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NOVEMBER 1998 £2.30

For Music

REVOLUTIONARIES

New R1 loudspeakers
from Tannoy

DIY SUPPLEMENT No40
(Overseas inside)
free with this issue

TICKET TO RIDE

Panasonic's DVD-L10
portable DVD player

WINNING FORMULA

TAG McLaren
PA10 pre and
60P power amps



£3500
COMPETITION

WIN JVC'S TD-V662 TAPE DECK,
MICROMEGA'S TUNER, ELEMENTAL
AUDIO STANDS AND XRCDS

CLASSIFIED ADS 6 PAGES OF BARGAIN HI-FI

ISSN 0961-7663



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World Radio History

From dream...

...to reality



The Nautilus™ is an acoustic engineer's dream: its radical cabinet technology and high mark spread have reshaped the audio landscape. Literally. For the B&W Nautilus™ loudspeakers sound like no other. Its performance can only be followed by other hi-fi cabinet designs. It is built with the best low-distortion materials available.



B&W's Nautilus™ 801 fuses the innovative Nautilus™ tube technology with a series of industry firsts: Fixed Suspension Transducer™, Kevlar® drive units, Matrix® cabinet bracing and Flowport™ technology. The result is an unprecedented purity of sound. The reason EMI's Abbey Road studios, along with best in the recording industry, are now upgrading to the Nautilus™ 801. Listen and you'll see – at your nearest authorised Nautilus™ 800 Series dealer. For more info contact B&W: 01903 750 750 or visit our website <http://www.bwspeakers.com>

B&W

LISTEN AND YOU'LL SEE

World Radio History

One of the hardest steps to take in the world of hi-fi is that upgrade from a first system. Moving from the Midis, Minis and Micros which masquerade as the real thing to a decent separates set-up is simple by contrast. But where do you go from components which cost £100-£200 each? This month we've rounded up five of the best £330-£450 integrated amplifiers to ease the selection process.

After the upgrade, unless your original equipment has already been consigned to the classifieds, you'll have a spare amp on your hands. Far from being a waste of space, this actually holds the key to unlocking the potential hidden in your latest purchases. Through bi-amping, you can lift the performance of your loudspeakers far above what they could achieve when driven by a single power stage.

Why stop at bi-amping, though? With a passive pre-amp (unnecessary if one of your integrations has Pre Out sockets), a little DIY work and



JON MARKS

Maplin's DR66 active crossover, you can go the whole hog and convert most two-way loudspeakers to fully active operation. For a mere £33 (plus about £15 for a power supply), going active in this way has to be one of hi-fi's biggest bargains, as every aspect of a loudspeaker's sound improves markedly. For more on this, check out both the main magazine and the Supplement.

Going active isn't particularly difficult; going green is. While recycling bins for newspapers and tin cans are springing up everywhere, hi-fi seems slower to join the environmentally-friendly

bandwagon. We tracked down three of the companies in that small group which are committed to lightening their load on the environment.

A fresh arrival already making waves is also welcomed this issue. TAG McLaren Audio is the result of the acquisition of British stalwarts Audiolab last November by TAG Electronic Systems. Techniques d'Avant Garde, most famous until now for their involvement in Formula One racing and bespoke watch manufacture, are set to become one of the biggest players on the UK hi-fi scene with their 12-model F3 series. We found out what the range has to offer with a review of the PA10 pre and 60P power amplifiers.

And finally, if you like your music on the move, have a look at our test of Panasonic's DVD-L10 portable DVD player. This piece of masterful miniaturisation allows you to watch your favourite DVD films on the train or bus, and its sound quality is sure to be the talk of the hi-fi community.

HOW WE TEST THE PRODUCTS

- Hi-Fi World has its own advanced test laboratory and acoustically treated listening room. No other hi-fi magazine has the benefit of such facilities.

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

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



WORLD VERDICT



OUTSTANDING - Superb sound, something we'd use ourselves.



GOOD - Has strong merit. Well worth an audition.



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



POOR - Seriously flawed. Not worth considering.

Contents

12...
**£330-£450 INTEGRATED
AMPLIFIER GROUP TEST**



31...
**PANASONIC DVD-L10
PORTABLE DVD PLAYER**



37...
**SONY'S SS-BG30 GREEN
LOUDSPEAKERS**



53...
**CANARY 301 VALVE
POWER AMP**

Reviews

Amplifiers

**12... £330-£450 INTEGRATED
AMPLIFIER GROUP TEST**

Jon Marks and Richard White put their ears to five integrations. Audio Analogue's Puccini, Pioneer's A-300R Precision, AMC's 3150a, Myryad's T-40 and Mission's Cyrus Straight Line fight it out.

**28... MAPLIN DR66 ACTIVE
CROSSOVER**

If you want to go active but your wallet doesn't, sample Maplin's DR66 active crossover.

**41... TAG MCLAREN AUDIO PA10
PRE AND 60P POWER AMPS**

Will this £1700 pre and power make or break Britain's youngest major hi-fi company, TAG McLaren Audio? Jon Marks has the answer.

**53... CANARY 301 VALVE POWER
AMPLIFIER**

The famous 300B power triode is back, this time in a 28watt push-pull heavyweight amplifier from Canary Audio of America. Can it make a convert of solid-stater Tim Liu?

**57... CRIMSON ELECTRIC CS610C
PRE AND CS630C MONOBLOCS**

Weighing in at just over a grand, this three-box amplification solution from Crimson Electric offers a Moving-Magnet/Moving-Coil phono stage alongside its 100watts per channel.

Compact Disc

**31... PANASONIC DVD-L10
PORTABLE DVD PLAYER**

For sound and vision on the move, Panasonic have come up with the amazing DVD-L10, which will play video DVDs as well as CDs and 24-bit 96kHz high-definition discs.

39... DENON DCD-835

Denon's latest player at £280 undercuts the competition financially, but can it knock them out with a sonic uppercut? Find out with Dominic Todd.

Loudspeakers

73... TANNOY R1

Size isn't always everything, as Simon Pope discovers with these tiny, two-way tots from Tannoy.

Features

23... PICK 'N' MIX

Jon Marks and Richard White track down the perfect gifts for the LP lover who has everything, tune in to JVC's latest XRCD2 recordings and discover what professional loudspeaker stands can teach their domestic counterparts.

25... MINIDISC MERCHANTS

Buying blank MDs is not a problem, but pre-recorded? Richard White names the purveyors of these little rarities.

37... GREENING HI-FI

Recycling and re-use are the buzz-words on the lips of the environmentally friendly, but what is the hi-fi industry doing to clean its act up?

78... VIVA V-FET

David Price looks back to a time when a transistor which resembled a valve made its mark on audio history.

80... HAPPY 40TH

Richard White celebrates the 40th anniversary of Gilbert Briggs' seminal transducer tome, Loudspeakers, Fifth Edition.

Regulars

7... NEWS

The latest dispatches from the hi-fi industry brought to you by our intrepid news hounds.

11... NEXT ISSUE

Just a few of the delights that await you in a month's time.

34... COMPETITION

This issue's give-away goodies include the stylish Micromega Tuner, Elemental Audio's £1900 loudspeaker stands, JVC's TD-V662 cassette deck and 30 audiophile XRCDs.

42... READERS' LETTERS

Queries are answered and advice given in six pages of paper and electronic correspondence.

50... HI-FI WORLD LIBRARY

A range of audio publications to satisfy the most hardened DIYer.

55, 61, 65, 70... COLUMNS

World's panel of learned listeners investigate the mysteries of hi-fi.

62... SPECIALIST HI-FI DEALERS

Three pages of dealers steeped in component experience.

66... MEET YOUR MAKER

How to get in touch with your favourite equipment creators.

74... HI-FI WORLD KITS

Build your own with one of World's amplifier and loudspeaker kits.

89... DIAL-A-DEALER

If you're ready to part with your hard-earned for new or used equipment, here's an area-by-area guide to the places to buy from.

111... MEASURED PERFORMANCE

Chief examiner Noel Keywood checks out the electronic health of this month's hi-fi reviewees.

119... WORLD FAVOURITES GUIDE

We separate the best from the rest with a line-up of all the top performers.

125... OLDE WORLDE

David Price goes square-eyed with Marantz's ST-8 tuner and its built-in oscilloscope.

127... READERS' CLASSIFIEDS

Six pages of true hi-fi treasure.

138... ADVERTISERS' INDEX

Music Reviews

81... ROCK AND POP

RECORD OF THE MONTH:
Unkle, Psyence Fiction

84... DANCE/AMBIENT

RECORD OF THE MONTH:
Eat Static, B-World

87... JAZZ

93... CLASSICAL

RECORD OF THE MONTH:
Dmitri Shostakovich, Symphonies 7 and 8

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AUDIO PUBLISHING LTD
64 CASTELLAIN ROAD
MAIDA VALE,
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CONTACT NUMBERS

10am - 6pm
Tel: 0171-289 3533
Fax: 0171-289 5620
Email: edit@hi-fiworld.co.uk
Individual queries cannot be answered by telephone.

MAIL ORDER

Tel: 0171-266 0461
(24 hour answerphone)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

See page 97 or our web site: www.hi-fiworld.co.uk for details.

Editor
Jon Marks

Editorial Assistants
Richard White
Simon Pope

Contributors
David Price
Leo Lam
Dominic Todd
Haden Boardman
Tim Liu

Music Reviewers
Peter Herring
Simon Hopkins
Jon Clarke
Sara Davis
Leon Palmer
Stuart Lenz
Ian Nicolson

Production Editor
Designer
Clive Ashby

Advertising
Designer
Faiza Chunara

Photography
David Noble

Sales and Marketing
Manager
Amanda Sweeney
0171-289 3533

Technical Manager
Nick Lucas
0171-221 0691

Accounts
Ken Heath
Credit Control Manager
Louise Palfrey

Publisher
Noel Keywood

Distributed by:
Marketforce Ltd, 245
Tottenham Court Road,
London, W1P 0AU
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ABC
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Concert 11

Concert



No. 1 IN EUROPE

Over the past 30 years Jamo has established itself as the largest loudspeaker manufacturer in Europe producing over one million speakers every year. This has been achieved by a unique combination of technical excellence and the best in Scandinavian design.

The critically acclaimed Concert series is an expression of these values. Our highly skilled engineers continue to strive for excellence, producing innovative and stylish loudspeakers offering creative solutions for both hi-fi and surround sound.

Millions of people around the world have chosen Jamo products. To find out why you should be choosing Jamo, call free on 0321 300316 for a free information pack. Lines are open 24 hours a day, every day of the week. All callers will be entered for our free draw to win one of 10 exclusive leather CD wallets every month. Don't forget to mention Hi-Fi World when you call.

Call Free 0321 300316 and WIN

<http://www.jamo.co.uk>

"THE SOUND OF EXCELLENCE"

WHAT HI-FI?

"The Jamo boasts clarity to rival the very best, offering a wonderfully lucid touch with voices and small off-screen details that draw you effortlessly into the soundtrack. More impressive is the power that roars forth from explosions such as the one that concludes *CutThroat Island*. There's slam and punch before a low bass rumble finale, all conveyed with the minimum of treble harshness. The Concert Center may not be cheap, but makes movies so involving it's worth every penny."

Concert Center
WHAT HI-FI? First Test May 1997
 ★★★★★

HI-FI CHOICE

"This transparency makes the speaker sound more like a Quad Electrostatic than many a box, and equips it superbly to portray every nuance of complex musical mixes. To the unaccustomed listener this can be disconcerting, as both harmonious and deleterious recorded minutiae will be revealed for what they are."

Concert 8
 Alan Sircom
Hi-Fi Choice December 1996

HI-FI NEWS RECORDS & REVIEW

"This is a speaker adept at pulling the music out from its hiding place, making everything clear, open and up-front, the stripped pine of the loudspeaker world; and it makes the normally forward and punchy B&W sound as though it has fallen asleep."

Concert 8
Hi-Fi News and Record Review
August 1997

HI-FI WORLD

"Had I reviewed the Concert 11s before the Concert 8s, I would have rated them as excellent all-round performers. I would also have been at a loss having to describe the Concert 8, which is currently one of the best two-way designs ever built, in my opinion. As it is, if you're after a capable floorstander, you'll be doing yourself a disservice if you don't audition the Concert 11s."

Concert 11
Hi-Fi World December 1997
 ●●●●●

Home Entertainment

"In certain respects, the system is capable beyond what most people's dreams, or what many film soundtracks deserve, partly because it's ready to serve another master, namely high fidelity music reproduction."

Concert 8/ Concert 11/ Concert Center
Surround Sound System
Home Entertainment September/October 1997
 ★★★★★

WHAT HI-FI?

"Play a disc like Anne-Sophie Mutter's *Berlin Recital* and the Jamos deliver a wonderfully realistic picture of the violin, allowing you almost to feel the resonance of the soundbox and see the bite of the bow on the strings. The music simply flows forth, seemingly passing in the blink of an eye, so caught up in the performance do you become."

Concert 8
WHAT HI-FI? First Test April 1997
 ★★★★★

Gramophone

"I was considerably impressed by the Concert 8, which has a seamless clarity rarely to the fore these days. It can exhibit natural dynamics and succeeded in making me jump a couple of times when a sudden transient occurred in the music, even though I had been expecting it."

"For the classical listener, however, it can offer something that few other box loudspeakers can: that insight into the music that we all desire but all too rarely experience."
Concert 8
Gramophone February 1997

WHAT HI-FI?

"Indeed, the term 'non-coloration' is apt for these speakers, because they add nothing to a system's sound that isn't already there. Their performance is clean and crisp, conveying everything - and we mean everything - a recording has to offer courtesy of their free-ranging clarity, dynamics and soundstaging. It's a breathtakingly involving view."

Concert 11
WHAT HI-FI? First Test January 1998
 ★★★★★

HI-FI WORLD

"In summary, the Concert 8 is one of the most advanced loudspeaker designs on the market today"

"The '8s are a no-compromise, no-expense-spared credit to their designers. Jamo are now firmly in the super league and the competition had better beware!"
Concert 8
Hi-Fi World June 1997
 ●●●●●

AWARDS



Concert 8
 Highly Commended
 "Best Stereo AV Speaker"
 Home Entertainment
 Awards '97



Concert 8
 Nominated
 "Best Loudspeaker
 up to £2,000"
 Hi-Fi News Awards '97



Concert 8
 EISA European
 Loudspeaker of the Year
 '97-'98



Concert 8
 Gramophone
 Audio Choice '98 Award
Concert 11
 Gramophone
 Audio Choice '98 Award



DVD GETS THE BLUES?

DVD could be set to benefit in the future from a major hike in storage capacity with the arrival of new blue-laser technology over the next year or so. Discovered by researcher Shinji

Nakamura of Nichia Chemical Industries in Japan, the blue laser diode has a wavelength of around 410nm, far shorter than the 650nm of the blue/red lasers fitted to DVD machinery and the 780nm of CD. This would allow smaller pits and bumps to be recorded and read from discs, therefore increasing storage capacity.



Nichia are set to start distributing samples of the laser (which has a claimed lifespan of 10000 hours) by the end of this year. Previous examples have failed to make it out of the laboratory

because they lasted a few hours or only minutes.

The blue laser is aimed mainly at the computer market and future DVD ROM drives, but could eventually find its way into audio DVD equipment.

Nichia Chemical Industries:

<http://www1a.mesh.ne.jp/nichia/>

ONE FOR THE ROAD

The latest news from Arcam tells of a fresh £235 integrated amplifier. The 35watt Alpha One features five line-level inputs and a tape loop, as well as bass and treble controls (which can be by-passed using the Direct button).

The One isn't alone, though. Arcam have also decided to replace Alphas 7 and 8 with 7R and 8R variants. In the former, the 'R' suffix brings with it an Alps motorised volume potentiometer and remote control for £299.90. The 8R's £80 premium has been spent on higher-spec components and a bigger power supply than the 7R's, which sees its output hit 50watts.

As is Arcam's custom, all of these amplifiers carry Pre Out/Power In sockets on their rear panels to enable bi-amping.

A&R Cambridge
Pembroke Avenue,
Denny Industrial
Centre,
Waterbeach,
Cambridge CB5 9PB
Tel: 01223 203200

KEF ON TRACK

The Monitor Series from KEF has just been filled out with the arrival of the RDM Three. This floor stander incorporates a new version of the company's 'Racetrack' elongated bass driver housed in a 27-litre, front-ported enclosure. Above this sits the Uni-Q driver with its 160mm polypropylene midrange and 25mm soft-dome tweeter.

The RDM Threes come wrapped in either Red Lacquer or high gloss Cherry Wood for the sum of £1499 per pair.

KEF Audio
Tovil,
Maidstone,
Kent ME15 6QP,
Tel: 01622 672261



CD'S CDS

Compilation Direct is a new business which has decided to plug an obvious-once-you-see-it gap in the market and offer bespoke compilation CDs. The gist of the scheme is that you send for their catalogue, make your selection and, in due course, you or your loved one will receive a personalised disc with all your favourites enshrined in "perfect sound forever". The idea is limited only by Compilation Direct's choice of material.



At present there is a broad range of classical music, which ranges from Bach on through Elgar, and Mozart to Peter Warlock. Added to these is a smattering of orchestral film and television themes. Your very own play list burned onto a CD-R will cost £12.99, and delivery time is currently around two weeks.

Compilation Direct
Tel: 01993 770633

CAPTURE THE ESSENCE

...the essence of a live performance, the mood... the rhythm... the soul. You just can't beat it!

But you can come close, that's why you own a hi-fi system. That's also why you need to use the very best cables you can afford, because only then, can you be sure that your system is being allowed to work to it's full potential.

We at QED recognise that the only way to ensure the best results, is to insist on an unparalleled level of signal accuracy. To prove this, we undertook one of the most comprehensive studies ever undertaken, on how and why cables effect system performance*. Not that you need to worry about the technicalities, all you have to do is enjoy the results!

* A summary of this research "The Genesis Report" is available on request.

For a colour brochure on the full product range call us now on (01276) 451166

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QED Audio Products Ltd,
Ridgeway House, Ridgeway Close,
Lightwater, Surrey GU18 5XU
Fax: (01276) 452211
Email: panic@qed.co.uk
Internet: http://www.qed.co.uk



The very best in Hi-Fi Cables and Accessories for over 25 years

Qnect Silver Spiral Price from £78.00/pair



OCT 98

WHAT HI-FI?



"Music is presented in a natural and unforced manner... Silver Spiral excels in detail and dynamics...If your looking for an interconnect...Silver Spiral deserves to be at the top of your shopping list."

Qnect 2 Price from £27.00/pair



AUGUST 98



MARCH 98

MARCH 98

WHAT HI-FI?



"Qnect 2 was one of the best-liked cables in the test. Qnect 2 fully deserves a Best Buy."

"Great price, great cable, well made. Nifty name, neat plugs. Five stars. Next..."

Qudos Silver Price around £4.95/m



MAY 98

WHAT HI-FI?



"...what a fabulous little cable this is! Insightful, involving and able to dredge out even the smallest of details, ...In a sensibly-priced system (say, £1000 or so) it's a bargain."

Qudos Original

"Sensational sound... You won't find a better cable at this price."

Price around £2.50/m



APRIL 96

WHAT HI-FI?



Profile 4 x 4

"This is incredibly good value cable, revealing clarity and depth of image that is downright stunning. We recommend the QED unreservedly."

Price around £9.00/m



APRIL 97

WHAT HI-FI?



RESEARCH RESURGE

Acoustic Research are swimming strongly in the audio pool with a range of products perched on the hi-fi/AV watershed. In addition to a selection of co-axial and scart leads, the company is offering phono-terminated interconnects in three-foot (£24.99), six-foot (£29.99) and 12-foot (£34.99) lengths. These are manufactured from twisted-pair, overall-shielded cable which is earthed at one end to give a pseudo-balanced configuration. The plugs themselves are gold-plated and incorporate a split centre-pin which is claimed to improve contact pressure.

On the loudspeaker side there's a flat cable made from two ribbons of Oxygen-

Free Copper encapsulated in a self-adhesive plastic ribbon, which can be painted over after fixing.

On a more conventional note, Acoustic Research offer a figure-of-eight 76-strand 'speaker cable in 30, 50 and 500-foot lengths. Priced at £34.99 for the 30-foot stretch, the Pro Series 12 Gauge, like the flat ribbon, can be painted after installation for minimal decorative disorder.



Acoustic Research
Emlyn Street,
Farnworth,
Bolton BL4 7EB, Tel: 01204 862026

PENTOWTHER

Pentacone, suppliers of turntable felt mats and interconnects, have announced the arrival of a very large baby, the Pentowther loudspeaker cabinet. This houses one of Lowther's renowned PM6A twin-cone drivers, air-loaded by an eight-foot, quarter-wave, folded horn which suffers few of the customary size constraints. And as you may already have guessed, the "Penta" part refers to the five-sided enclosure which manages to fold the horn in what is claimed to be the least distortion-inducing way.

The Pentowthers' price has yet to be finalised but is likely to be about £7000. Orders are now being taken for delivery in the Autumn.

Pentacone
4 Cross Bank Road,
Bately,
W. Yorks WF17 8PJ
Tel: 01924 445039

LOST AND FOUND

Having had the misfortune to vanish completely for six months, the Auditorium hi-fi shop has resurfaced alive and well in the groovy world of the Beat Generation or, more prosaically, the New Kings Road. Well-wishers may enquire about the patient's health at:

Auditorium
112 New Kings Road,
London SW6 4LY
Tel: 0171 384 3030

INTO THE WOODS

Acoustic Energy are reclothing their 100 range of loudspeakers in wood veneer and rechristening them the SE series. The existing AE100i, AE109 and AE120 'speakers not only gain a new finish but also a new stablemate, the AE105, a budget floor stander hewn from 18mm MDF. Available from October, the SEs will set you back from £230 for the AE100iSE up to £600 for the AE120SE.

Acoustic Energy
16 Bridge Road,
Cirencester,
Glos. GL7 1NJ
Tel: 01285 654432



MAGNETIC ATTRACTION



TALL, DARK AND
SERIOUSLY
HANDSOME

For information on the most exciting range
of loudspeakers to hit these shores in recent
memory, call **HENLEY DESIGNS** now on 01491-834700



Magnat[®]
VECTOR SERIES

TWO NADS IN ONE

NAD have joined the steadily-expanding group of CD/receiver manufacturers with the launch of their L-40. This one-piece unit features an RDS tuner with 20 presets, a CD player (with separate regulators for both the analogue and digital sections) and a power amp rated at

20watts into 8ohms. The price of £399.95 includes the hand-held remote control.



NAD
Unit 15,
Faraday Road,
Bucks. HP19 3RY
Tel: 01296 482017

VIVA VIENNA

October 30th to November 1st are diary dates for the well-heeled audiophile as Vienna plays host to the High-End Vienna 98 show, an exhibition of audiophile equipment and accessories at the Vienna Plaza Hotel, Scottenring 11, A-1170 Vienna. For more information, contact Alexandre Etl at:

IG High End
Bergsteiggasse,
A-1170 Wien
Tel: 0043 1 405 11 56
Fax: 0043 1 405 11 57

GAMMA RADIATION

Cable-makers Ixos have now doubled-up their 6003 Gamma for bi-wire use. The £6.99/m 6002 Bi-wire consists of four PC-OFC conductors (two for high and two for low-frequency signals) and is encased in a blue, woven-nylon outer jacket.

Richard Allen Associates
117 Station Road,
Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 9ED
Tel: 01444 248873

TO INFINITY... AND BEYOND

Infinity have launched a new line-up of loudspeakers called the Deltas. Making up the numbers are a pair of two-ways (the Delta 30 and 40), two three-ways (the '50 and '60) and the four-way Delta 70. Common to all are the EMIT-R planar tweeter and separate internal chambers for the midrange and bass drivers.

The Deltas' reflex-loaded bass drivers incorporate Infinity's 'APG Plus' cone technology, otherwise known as Acrylic Polymer Graphite. Infinity say this material,



"permits faster response to transients for tight, clean, controlled bass". The EMIT-R (Electro-Magnetic Induction Tweeter) has a low-mass, circular, planar diaphragm claimed to possess an extremely broad horizontal and vertical dispersion.

Prices for the bi-wireable Deltas start at £399.95 for the '30s and run to £899.95 for the '70s.

Gamepath
25 Heathfields,
Stacey Bushes, Milton Keynes,
Bucks. MK12 6HR
Tel: 01908 317707

NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

In four weeks' time, we hope to bring you the following audiophile contenders:

BKS 107 MK2 LOUSPEAKERS

BKS marry a 7in. ribbon for midrange and treble to a 5in. woofer in these slim floor standers. And 18mm granite sidecheeks mean a heavyweight sound.

MYRYAD T-20 CD PLAYER

The T-20 is up against stiff competition

but has a Sony mechanism, 20-bit DAC and extensive regulation to raise its chances of sonic success.

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-A1 INTEGRATED

£480 will buy you MF's latest 50watt, line-level integrated, complete with beer-barrel styling and external power supply.

WILD WIRE

We test interconnects around £1000 with the Black Rhodium from Sonic Link as well as Kimber's Select.

PIONEER F-504 RDS PRECISION TUNER

Tweaked by Tom Evans, the £300 F-504 Precision opens up the airwaves.



If your amplifier budget bulges to the tune of £330-£450, join Jon Marks and Richard White in their quest for the best with five integrated hopefuls.

Upgraditis comes to us all at one time or another. This highly infectious virus has thus far eluded any of modern science's attempts at a cure. The disease is particularly prevalent amongst those new to hi-fi, where its symptoms become obvious once the joy of their first system has worn off. In the past, prescriptions to ease the pain have consisted mainly of pre/power combinations. These days, there's a growing trend towards quality integrations like the five from Audio Analogue, Pioneer, AMC, Myryad and Mission which are gathered here today.

UNDER THE BONNET

Apart from only having to accommodate a single box and less spaghetti, what makes these integrations a viable treatment next to two-box alternatives? Lift the lid on Audio Analogue's Puccini, Pioneer's A-300R Precision, AMC's 3150a, Myryad's T-40 and Mission's Straight Line and you'll see why.

Long gone are the times when capacitors, resistors and transformers were bought solely for their low cost. Now every designer realises each component has its own sound, and mixing them for sonic synergy is vital. So the Pioneer Precision, for

example, features exotic op amps and capacitors, while AMC acknowledge the importance of the power supply and fit the 3150a with an oversize toroidal transformer.

Putting everything into one box rather than two means less of your cash goes on casework. It also means no pre-to-power interconnects to influence the sound and clutter up rack space.

This month's amplification line-up also proves rumours of the death of the phono stage have been exaggerated. The Straight Line lives up to its minimalist billing with no vinyl provision, and the AMC goes similarly unequipped, but the Pioneer, Myryad and Audio Analogue all have MM stages (MC as well in the Puccini).

The five contenders in this race were backed up by a range of partnering equipment, with the Tannoy R1 and Neat Critique loudspeakers at one end of the scale, and the ever-present Jamo Concert 8s at the other. Loudspeaker cables were supplied by DNM (Reson), CableTalk (Talk 4.1 bi-wire) and van den Hul (Revelation Hybrid). Sources numbered Creek's CD43 CD player as well as Pink Triangle's Litaural, piping music down interconnects from Purist Audio Design (Elementa) and DNM (Reson once again).

AMC 3150A

£329.99

THE TECHNOLOGY

Well, well - tone controls and a balance pot, whatever next? AMC's 3150a staunchly refuses to conform to the 'less is more' cliché prevalent in hi-fi these days.

The AMC is probably not going to win any design prizes this year unless 'large black box with knobs on' becomes a major category. Mind you, if it does, Volume, Input and Record Select, Treble, Bass and Balance controls will see it sitting high on the podium.

At least you get a lot of mass for your money. Most of this is due to the very large toroidal mains transformer, barrel 22000uF Elna reservoir capacitors and bright aluminium heatsinks. Less promising are the cheap carbon pots for Volume, Balance and Tone (although a Direct button helps), and a captive mains lead means experimentation in this area is out.

Nevertheless, the back panel is neatly laid out and bears two tape loops and Pre Out/Power In sockets (for bi-amping) in addition to the four line-level inputs. The 'speaker terminals, like the line and headphone sockets, are attractively chunky, gold-plate items.

SOUND QUALITY

Trying the 3150a first with Creek's CD43 CD player and Jamo's Concert 8 loudspeakers, we gave the system something in a lighter orchestral vein to chew on. Strauss' Die Fledermaus overture has a plethora of string tuttis which quickly pinpoint any nasties in the treble. Some of the louder passages had a papery edge to them, and the middle range of the violins sounded a touch confused and fuzzy, but this amplifier was a long, long way from the boom 'n' tizz many feature-festooned amps suffer from.

The AMC continued its roll with the opening bars of the Firebird Suite, which caused it no distress at all. Down in the 40Hz region notes were felt rather than heard, but at least they were there. Out of curiosity I tried tweaking the bass and

discovered speed and control at the bottom end were in inverse proportion to the amount of boost applied, although the results remained surprisingly ear-friendly.

Purists take note: to the designer's credit, it was almost impossible to distinguish Treble and Bass set level from the Direct setting. What separated the two on a little chamber music from Schubert was a more forward presentation to the Direct signal.

With the thought 'this is what tone controls are for', we turned the treble down by about five degrees and the bass up by a similar amount. These very slight adjustments ironed out the 3150a's tonal wrinkles to yield a nicely-balanced performance that didn't suffer unduly from said tweaking.

Sustained mezzo-forte clarinet notes must have a harmonic signature which amplifiers find peculiarly irksome; very seldom do they reproduce it without some evidence of glassiness. The 3150a was having a hard time in this respect, although the 4ohm impedance of our resident Concert 8s didn't seem to be helping. With a pair of Neat Critiques connected up, the AMC settled down with a smoother midrange and generally easier, more fluid sound.

'Saucer And Cup' found Eric Bibb in fine voice and relaxed mood, the 3150a capturing this number's mellow mood, even if some of the low-level subtleties which bring music fully to life were just beyond its grasp. Still, partnered by the Neats, when Eric was joined by his pals on Rockier tracks, stereo imaging was creditably solid and bass weighty.

AMC's 3150a is not going to be everybody's cup of tea, but it could be exactly what the doctor ordered for some. The decision to buy or not to buy revolves around those tone controls. They won't strip music of bass or treble at the tiniest twist of a knob, nor do they turn listening into an exercise in endurance. However, every extra component in the signal path filters out delicate nuances and ambience. If you seek flexibility ahead of outright clarity, the AMC is one for the wish-list.



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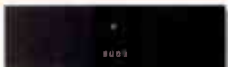
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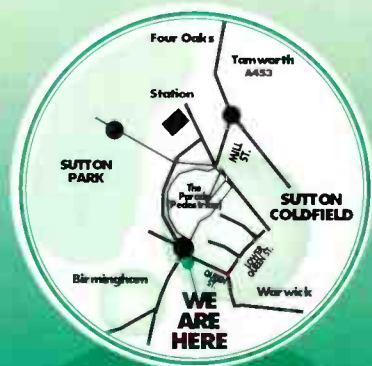
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AUDIO ANALOGUE PUCCINI

£450

THE TECHNOLOGY

If you're a regular reader of this magazine, you can't fail to have noticed that one of our favourite integrated amplifiers is the £600 Puccini Special Edition from Italian manufacturers Audio Analogue. If this SE tag stretches your finances too far, you can still get a taster of the Audio Analogue sound in the standard Puccini.

One thing you'll notice as soon as you heft the Puccini is that it weighs less than its SE partner. That's because, inside the case, a single 150VA toroidal transformer, rather than a pair, feeds both left and right channels. More differences occur in the output stage, where four rather than eight power transistors are bolted to the heatsink (which will raise output impedance and reduce current supply capability) and cheaper wire-wound resistors are fitted. Across the PCB, lower-grade bypass capacitors are dropped into place too.

Unchanged are the thick aluminium fascia, Alps Blue potentiometer and the IC phono stage which can be switched from MM to MC simply by swapping over a couple of jumpers under the lid.

SOUND QUALITY

Faced with Ice Cube's modest 'The World Is Mine', the Puccini opted to mix easy control and flow with a talent for modelling its output more closely on its input than your average sub-£600 amplifier. OTT Hip-Hop bass lines held no fear for the Audio Analogue, which pumped the track along in the required trouser-flapping manner. Mr Cube's vitriolic vocals were crystal clear too, if hindered by a lisp introduced in the studio which made him sound like a cross between Toyah Wilcox and Frank Bruno. That's what you get with the sort of clarity this amp enjoys, though - warts, regrettable tattoos, embarrassing haircuts and an inability to sing just come straight through.

Warts and all doesn't automatically equate to clinical, however. There was nothing cold, detached and surgical in the

way the AA dealt with music. White labcoats and gleaming instruments isn't its style at all; a friendly, relaxed bedside manner is more what it offers.

Shifting genre away from recordings designed to get the parcel shelves of Capris jumping and heading for the sound of a sax, the Puccini squared up to the challenge of Gene Ammons' Boss Tenor XRCD.

This album might have been laid down nigh on 40 years ago, but the freshness and swing of those sessions back in June 1960 was undiminished. The sweet overall tonality was also preserved, albeit in a less concentrated form as the AA's price constraints took their inevitable toll. The amp's innards laid a slight hardness across the midrange, nipped a fraction of a second from the delicious decay of struck cymbals and fattened up the double-bass a touch. But next to the accompanying rhythmic verve and involvement, these didn't amount to a hill of beans.

Staying with XRCD and title-hopping to the Steve Miller Band's *The Joker*, I checked out expression and articulation. 'Shu Ba Da Du Ma Ma Ma Ma' might be a bit of a mouthful, but the Puccini didn't merely try to mumble across this verbal obstacle course. Instead, it picked out the stream-of-consciousness chorus with a deft, unflappable touch. Frenzied fretwork on the part of the bass guitarist was handled in a similarly assured fashion, netting the amp a full score in the funky stakes. As with Gene Ammons, the only areas where the standard lost out to the SE were fine detailing, sound stage spaciousness and tonal neutrality.

The Puccini has its share of weaknesses, but they're cunningly balanced so that none of them sticks out enough to be annoying, even after long listening. And what it does well - pace, drive, control, vivacity and insight - it does very well indeed. Considering the £450 you'll need to hand over to take one home, the Puccini looks like another Audio Analogue success.



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CYRUS STRAIGHT LINE

£398

THE TECHNOLOGY

To begin with, this amplifier is an unconventional looker; in a world where the familiar 19in. rack dimensions proliferate, it's a refreshing change to see something that stands out. Finished in standard matt black, the Straight Line has compact, shoe-box dimensions which include the integral heat-sinks cast into the casework itself. Unhappily for vinylphiles, your £398 cannot provide a phono stage but all other sources are catered for, and there's a useful Pre-Amp Out socket for the keen bi-amp.

Controls have been kept commendably simple, not going further than a volume control, a tape monitor switch and a source selector knob.

Inside the case, the Cyrus tradition of low-impedance slit-foil reservoir capacitors (fed from a relatively large toroid) continues, although surface-mount parts have replaced the larger versions of old.

SOUND QUALITY

First CD on the platter was a Schubert clarinet quintet on the Naim label. This smooth recording is well able to show up any grain and harshness contributed by an amplifier. Despite feeding a 'difficult' 4ohm load in the Jamos, the Straight Line coped in a composed manner with no sign of excessive glassiness.

Sustained midrange notes on the clarinet could become a fraction gritty if the volume was advanced, but at normal listening levels this faded into the background.

The 'cello might not truly plumb the depths as far as bass goes, but it nevertheless stretches an amp in terms of grip and detail below 100Hz. The Cyrus had no difficulties in this respect, rolling off a smidge on more demanding passages but not objectionably so. Where it joined the Myriad and Puccini was in a musicality which cancelled out its minor presentational niggles.

One swallow does not make a summer, and one 'speaker does not make (or break) an amplifier. The Neat Critiques were

volunteered for service as a cross-check and the Straight Line immediately sounded more at home. This is not to imply that infidelities were glossed over, but the Critiques are a far easier load than the Jamos, and less ruthlessly revealing to boot.

Eric Bibb returned to the fray with some more informal acoustic music. 'Nothing Like You Used To Do', a driving Blues number, has a pleasing, understated bass-drum punctuation which the Straight Line got across in an accurate and realist way, despite earlier reservations about its bass power.

For the orchestral big guns, Scheherazade is a good all-rounder, Rimsky-Korsachov's masterly orchestration leaving no stone of instrumental colour unturned. As the piece progressed, a trait which had been thrown up by the Jamos re-surfaced: the amplifier displayed what could be described as 'flood-gate' dynamics. This is a condition where crescendi appear to be going nowhere until, all of a sudden, the 'loud' kicks in and swamps everything. It was tempting to edge up the volume on the quiet passages and by doing so get taken by surprise on sudden tuttis.

Stravinsky's well-known Firebird takes no prisoners in the deep-bass opening bars. Although only a huge loudspeaker with genuine full-range capability can extract the maximum from this passage, the Cyrus was apparently enjoying itself - there was little sign of that fatal flabbiness which can mar otherwise worthy budget amplifiers.

Hum and hiss are not big issues nowadays, but worth an earful all the same. A quick check with sources silent and lugs glued to the woofer demonstrated hum was scarcely detectable, while hiss was reminiscent of a valve amp, just a little, low pink noise.

The Straight Line is a good, honest bit of kit with a fine musical sound at the price and no glaring vices. Although there are inevitable compromises in any less-than-bank-breaking outfit, the Mission struck a delicate balance, like the Puccini, which will please many tastes.



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MYRYAD T-40

£399.99

THE TECHNOLOGY

"Nice binding posts!" was the consensus as we eyed up the Myryad at World Towers. The T-40's gold-plated, all-metal affairs had a feeling of classy solidity to them after the skimpier plastic affairs that usually decorate the majority of amplifiers' back panels.

Behind the brushed-aluminium fascia with its headphone socket, row of source buttons (there are six in all), balance and volume controls is a single Printed Circuit Board quite densely populated. Electrolytic capacitors are supplied by companies like Nichicon (the two main 10000uF reservoir caps) and Samsung, with Evox taking care of the many small polypropylene bypass caps.

£50 down from the Puccini means an inexpensive carbon-track volume potentiometer, albeit with remote control to save on carpet wear. Still, the toroidal transformer contributes most to the overall mass, and there's no loose wiring trailing around the PCB.

SOUND QUALITY

"Funky be thy name" (or should that be Naim?) sums up one of the most appealing aspects of the T-40's presentation once it has been given 20 minutes or half an hour to get into its stride. The Myryad was indeed cut from the same block as some of the 'N' company's more up-beat amps with its bright, toe-tapping and eminently listenable rendition of the Steve Miller Band's *The Joker* album.

'Sugar Baby' might not have had its namesake's sweetness - cymbals and vocals were quite dry tonally - but the end product of swift bass, fast dynamics and an ability to stress the musical over the cerebral had me air-guitaring merrily along to this XRCD.

Steve and co were EQ'd to the benefit of treble and the detriment of bass, and the T-40 has been tuned in that direction too, as Eric Bibb and the sumptuous *Good Stuff* proved. This

sonic trend dug out plenty of detail and gave an airiness to imaging beyond the price average, but also sucked the warmth out of the double-bass and Eric's vocals. This left bigger, more energetic numbers such as 'Nothing Like You Used To Do' and the title track a little anemic and lightweight.

Out of curiosity I twinned the Myryad with Neat's forward Critiques, some of The Chord Company's original Rumour bi-wire loudspeaker cable and Ice Cube's 'The World Is Mine'. In spite of the tunefulness inherent in this amp, the brash midrange and treble which emanated from this set-up reinforced the fact that the T-40 prefers the company of warmer equipment and cabling which will flatter its faults.

Back-tracking to Gene Ammons' *Boss Tenor*, I found the Myryad happier sinking its teeth into a recording redolent of the smooth richness of the valve amps and microphones in a studio of yesteryear, his sax seductively expressive. Double-bass remained rather thin, but the drummer amply demonstrated that a lack of earthquake-rumble bottom-end needn't lead to a sound devoid of punch, as his handiwork emerged with bite and impact.

This sparse XRCD gave the T-40 a chance to really show off its sound staging. It's not that this amp has trouble with denser passages, just that you get more of an opportunity to appreciate the breadth of the acoustic in which images are positioned when things aren't so busy. However, adhering to solid-state tradition, the Myryad came up a tad shorter with depth perspectives, which were gently compressed next to the left-right spread on offer.

The T-40 is an involving new recruit to the amplifier battlefield which will keep ears pinned to 'speakers with its musicality. Engineer a warm, smooth system around it and you can look forward to long listening sessions. Only on Reggae and Rap where bass is the most important ingredient does the Myryad fail to pull ahead of its peers, sounding a little too lightweight.



PIONEER A-300R PRECISION

£399.99

THE TECHNOLOGY

Where the other amps in this group test have a bomb-proof air about them, the most euphemistic comment you could make about the Pioneer is that most of the money has gone on its internals. The case is very flimsy, especially the back panel, and the controls (volume, selector and balance) have a cheap, plasticky quality to them.

Inside, the situation improves. Tom Evans, the designer responsible for the tweaks, has chosen hand-matched ICs in the gain stages of the pre-amp and the front end of the power amplifier. To protect their identity, the ID numbers of these chips have been scraped off. Military-spec non-electrolytics are also used alongside Elna's metallic-red Targets with their Oxygen-Free Copper leads.

Extra audiophile features include screws which are predominantly copper-plated and a screen around the mains transformer (which, unusually these days, is an E/I core, not a toroidal).

SOUND QUALITY

Hmmm, I thought, that tacky placque on the Pioneer's fascia looks like the work of the marketing department, as does the Precision tag bolted on to the A-300R's moniker. Well, the proof is in the pudding, and I still had fond memories of the first time World encountered this amp when Eric Braithwaite reviewed it back in August 1997. Finding out if time has been kind to the Pioneer and if it could live up to its suffix was DJ Cher with his International DJ Syndicate Mix 2 CD and his partner in crime, Ice Cube (who was presumably once known as MC Frozen Water).

Fed into a bright amp, either of these two electronic compositions tends to come out sounding the worse for wear, with treble scratchier than an annoyed cat, and over-blown bass. Through the Pioneer, both discs avoided negative feline comparisons, giving the impression Felix's bowl had been filled

with cream rather than sour milk - the midrange was smooth and detailed, bass tuneful and treble natural. And none of these chunks of the frequency spectrum showed signs of the confusion many amps surrender to in the face of this Electronica onslaught, drum machines not crossing into synth territory or riding roughshod over hi-hats.

Dance is great for testing a component's composure under high-volume stress, but it doesn't provide much of a tonal challenge. That came from Eric Bibb and Needed Time, who were ably assisted by Martin Souter and his organ compendium, Sounds Of Splendour. The Precision added another string to its bow by not coming a cropper and bleaching instrumental colours, although it was a touch dry on percussion and female vocals.

Where it pulled out all the stops was the natural cohesion of its presentation. Images were neatly located in the sound stage and could be eavesdropped on individually or listened to as a group. This stems from the A-300R Precision's graceful detailing, something you normally expect from higher-end, more expensive products, where atmosphere and delicacy are more common.

The specialist modifications to this amplifier's innards lift its entire performance, but some areas benefit more than others. For instance, on Eric Bibb and Martin Souter, it didn't manage to go as low as the Puccini (which, of course, carries a £50 premium), kick-drum and double-bass losing out on some of their smack and thrum. Musically as well, 95% of the foot-tapping was there, but that last 5% was tantalisingly unrealised.

The A-300R Precision hasn't been passed by newer amps in the year or so since our initial review. Its talent for wheedling out the emotional contents of recordings and slipping them into your subconscious in an unostentatious fashion keeps it ahead of the pack. It's not choosy about genre and will suit a wide range of ancillaries. That, the remote control and MM phono stage make a very persuasive package.



CONCLUSION



EVERYONE'S A WINNER

In a five-way group test, even taking into account the spread of prices, you normally get a split in ability between strong contenders and those which aren't so capable. This month's round-up turned out to be different - all of the integrateds here have a lot to offer. Less unusual was the fact that sonic prowess was closely related to expenditure, putting Audio Analogue's Puccini at the head of the group.

The standard Puccini shares as much of its sound with the SE version as it does parts, PCB and case. You can hear the family resemblance in the clarity and musicality both apply to the signals flowing from sources, regardless of whether those signals are Classical, Rap or Rock. These desirable qualities were complemented by a finely-balanced tonality and control, allowing the Puccini to get along with a range of loudspeakers (although, like the other amps in this test, tougher loads will cause a little strain). Excellent build, understated good looks and the bonus of a phono stage mean remote operation is the only missing ingredient.

Pioneer's A-400 fills this gap with its petite volume up/down control. And as Eric Braithwaite found, the A-300R Precision covers all the bases sonically too. Like the Puccini, it has an assured, natural presentation that will have you poring over your LP and CD collection as the midnight oil burns. Playing their parts here are a grace and subtlety rare amongst amplifiers at this price, and a taut, tuneful bass unspoiled by overhang.

Snapping at the Pioneer's heels are its direct price rivals, the Myryad T-40 and Mission Straight Line. The Myryad follows another path tonally from the A-300R Precision, with a drier, brighter bias that was less universally welcoming of recordings and ancillaries - hooked up to forward 'speakers relaying brasher albums, it could tip the final output towards the fatiguing. On the other hand, wire it into a synergetic system and you'll be rewarded with a crisp, fast and involving listening experience.

More in line with the Pioneer was Mission's Straight Line. Compared to the Puccini, the SL (like the Pioneer and Myryad) had a lean bass commendable for its lack of such nasties as looseness and blurring. Built on this firm foundation were a midrange and treble sweeter than the T-40's, although raising the volume could introduce a touch of grain. The Straight Line fulfils its brief as a no-frills all-rounder handsomely, and is classily constructed as well.

Judged purely on the basis of sound, AMC's 3150a is the weakest of this quintet. However, the moment you factor in its £330 cost, the remote control and its feature-list, the picture changes. The AMC might lack some of the finesse, insight and grip the others possess, but it isn't far off and costs considerably less. And the Pre Out/Power In sockets put it on an upgrade par with the Straight Line and Myryad, the Pioneer and Puccini missing out in this respect. If you're after a combination of relaxed sounds and flexibility, arrange a demo of the 3150a



AMC
(Tangent Acoustics)
115 New London Road,
Chelmsford,
Essex CM2 0QT
Tel: 0500 828620

Myryad Systems
2 Pipers Wood,
Watererry Drive,
Waterlooville,
Hants.
Tel: 01705 265508

Pioneer
Hollybush Hill,
Stoke poges,
Slough
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Tel: 01753 789789

Mission
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But now, weep no more: the Cartridge Man aims to wipe your tears away with the Digital Stylus Force Gauge (although ease of use will cost you £199). This handy gadget gives a reading between

0.2gm and 4.0gms, displayed in steps of 0.02gm. This should mean no more 'near enough' guess-work and diamonds damaged in set-up.

At the heart of the device is a strain-gauge which feeds sophisticated circuitry, automatically compensating for variables like battery-charge level and ambient temperature. This is a tall order when dealing with fiftieths of a gramme, especially as the design also obviates the need for tiresome 'zeroing' every time it's used.

Once the internal battery was topped up with the mains charger supplied, we gave the gauge a test run and found it impossible to fool under proper 'follow the instructions' conditions.

To forestall a wave of price-ist criticism, let's try a bit of arithmetic. To express the cost of a stylus gauge as a percentage of the price of the arm and cartridge, divide the first into the others and multiply the result by a hundred. If the answer is less than five percent, you might ask yourself whether your expensive and delicate pick-up arrangement is being as accurately set up as it should be for long life and sonic happiness.

The Cartridge Man
88 Southbridge Road,
Croydon,
Surrey CR0 1AF
Tel: 0181
688 6565

The lightness of the Black Boxes was reflected in a crisp, fast, presentation, one which avoided the usual low-mass penalty of curtailed bass. They weren't actually far off our trusted £1900 Elemental Audio back-breakers, which have the deepest, fastest bass we've yet come across in stands.

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Black Box (Acoustics And Architecture)
18-23 Greenwich Market, London SE10 9HZ
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BLACK BOX MONITOR STANDS

What do your average hi-fi loudspeaker stands and a Bristol Trip-Hop band have in common?

Well, the name Massive Attack is as apt for the one as it is for the other. You might have noticed from catalogues, brochures and a strained back that most 'speaker stands attempt to maximise rigidity by throwing plenty of metal and sand at the problem. There's more than one solution to this perennial poser, though, as Black Box prove with their £697.95 Monitor Stands.

In common with most supports, the Monitor Stands' main ingredient is box-section steel. Unlike what has gone before, the metal members are empty - there's no need for sand or lead shot here. Instead, a long footprint front-to-rear prevents any movement as the loudspeakers' diaphragms rocket in and out under the amplifier's drive.

Steel tubing has an annoying tendency to ring, so damping is taken care of with MDF, in the round top-plate and the height-adjustable 'saddle' below it.

The three circles of rubber

which grip the bottom of the cabinets might draw a raised eyebrow from audiophiles used to spikes, spikes and more spikes. However,

under the Jamo Concert 8s, Neat Critiques, Tannoy Revelation R1s and Mercury m2s there wasn't the slightest dynamic slurring or bass looseness. Still, if you prefer a closer connection, there's provision for bolting on the enclosures through the top-plates.

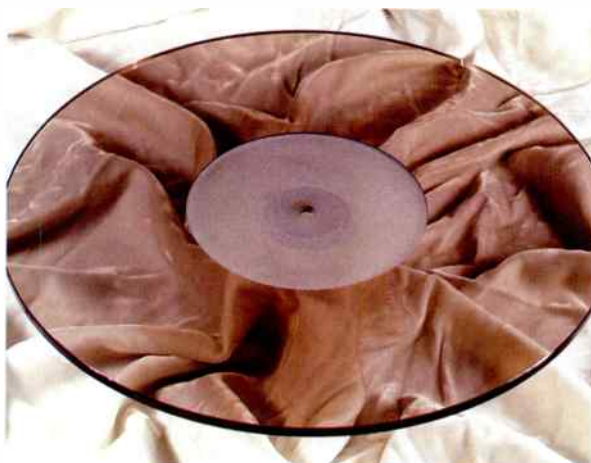


A TOUCH OF GLASS

Can a slab of glass turn the tables? Richard White wonders.

Slate Audio's Glassmat (£85) is a flat, 11.5in. disc of bronze-coloured glass. One cunning part of the design lies in the centre, which is rebated to avoid touching the record's label area, thus providing a more sporting chance of the record lying flat over the whole of its playing surface. The circumference is also bevelled away from the record's rim, and so avoids lifting the edge. Admittedly, the Glassmat cannot do much about a warped record but it does at least ensure that those parts of the proverbial potato-crisp disc which deign to touch the platter are grounded!

A quick spin showed that the Glassmat tackles a great many problems that turntables are heir to: it helps to damp rumble; adds 2lbs extra mass to iron out wow; provides an unyielding surface, preventing the vinyl from 'getting away' from the needle with the accompanying tracing distortion and by the same process, assists stereo resolution where most of the problems start - at the pick-up.



Having myself tried out ever so many materials over the years (including highlights such as short-pile velvet, multiple rubber mats, 12in. 78s and leather tap washers), I am sure that the Glassmat is beyond the tool resources of most DIY fabricators - putting rebates into glass is not for the amateur! Judging by the audible improvements the Glassmat brought, Slate have cracked so many nuts in one go that the home experimenter will find most of his work has already been done for him.

Slate Audio's Glassmat is the item of choice if you prefer to spend your time listening to the sound of your records rather than your turntable.

Slate Audio
47 Gemini Close,
Leighton Buzzard,
Beds. LU7 8UD
Tel: 01525 384174

JVC XRCD2 £19.95

We first looked at JVC's XRCDs (Extended Resolution Compact Discs) in July 1998's edition, and were impressed by the results JVC had obtained by optimising the mastering and manufacturing

processes. They realised that getting music out of the studio and onto discs was a matter of more than transferring immutable digits from one end of the production chain to the other. By careful choice of cabling and storage format, as

well as minimising jitter and running all the electronics concerned from mains regulators, they came up with a range of audiophile CDs which, given a good original recording, could sound far better than your average silver beer mat.

With the release of the next batch of titles, XRCD has moved on to become XRCD2. Little has changed technically to distinguish the first generation from the second (although soft sleeves which don't scratch their contents are a welcome addition), and the same goes for the sound. John Coltrane's *Settin' The Pace* had a beautifully rounded, smoky sax tone and powerful percussion, his lightning-fast fingerwork on 'Rise 'n'



Shine' steering well clear of any blurring or confusion. He was unhindered dynamically and rhythmically as well, each of the four tracks (which unfortunately run to little more than 40

minutes) enjoying a natural openness, pace and speed absent from less specialist pressings.

Joining Coltrane on the JVC roster is the Modern Jazz Quartet with *Concorde*. Again, natural and organic are the watchwords, in spite of the original

master sounding a touch wooden on piano at times and Milt Jackson's close-mic'd vibes dominating the proceedings.

If you're a digiphile fan of older Jazz numbers, have a listen to the XRCD2s (and try our competition, where 30 winners can each choose an album from the growing catalogue).

Vivante
60 High Street,
Hampton Wick,
Surrey KT1 4DB
Tel: 0181 977 6600

IS MD AWOL?

Hi-fi sleuth Richard White tracks down those rare suppliers of pre-recorded MiniDiscs.

When MiniDisc was first introduced about six years ago some people were a little puzzled by the sort of remarks ("DAT all over again. . .") overheard and read at the time. It was as if the format was supposed to hit the ground running and become an instant success. Unfortunately, what actually happened was pre-recorded MD sales in this country rose like the proverbial lead zeppelin.

There are reasons for this. Buyers' palettes had become jaded by the endless war of words waged over 'the next big thing' and initial disc prices were high. It is also undeniable that the first pre-recorded MiniDiscs to reach the shelves did not exactly shine sonically; we still have one or two knocking about the office which we find handy for drum practise plates and spare shaving mirrors, but little else.

From such a sonically shaky start MiniDisc either had to improve dramatically or else disappear in double-quick time. Happily, more recent examples we have listened to have shown a marked advance in sound to say the least. Most importantly, the catalogue has expanded and, if the choice is not what you might call eclectic, there are enough 'standards' available to keep the format on the go - for the moment.

One stockist is the Dixons Group (tel: 0990 500049) whose catalogue, while not the largest, is at least generally available through most of their stores. The stock ranges from Massive Attack to Simon And Garfunkel, taking in Janis Joplin and the Stones on the way. Filling out the easier listening are Neil Diamond's Jazz Singer soundtrack and Barbra Streisand's second volume of greatest hits. Omitted from the list is any Classical music; the closest it gets to real old stuff seems to be The Best Of Bob Dylan, but then again you can't have everything.

Unsurprisingly, one of the largest catalogues comes from MD's inventor, Sony (tel: 0171 911 8665). In Sony Music's own 200-strong MiniDisc line-up Rock, Pop and Middle-of-the-Road are well catered for. Classical titles include an interesting mix: John



Williams plays Spielberg Scores and Classical Barbra (Streisand) sit somewhat bizarrely alongside Yo Yo Ma's terrific interpretation of the Dvorak 'cello concerto. Handel's Water Music also battles for place with Placido Domingo's Under A Spanish Sky collection. The Jazz selection is a little lean too, with four of the eight albums recordings of Miles Davis.

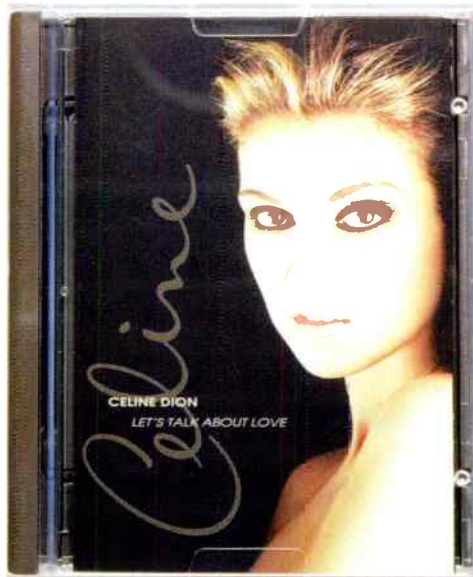
Virgin (tel: 0181 400 4000) told us that they had only begun stocking MiniDisc due to public demand in the first place, and that from the original modest list of 30-odd titles, response has grown to the point where the major-city Megastores are stocking up to 200. Most of these are drawn from the Sony catalogue but there is some additional material. We should stress that as yet, smaller Virgin and Our

Price shops are not involved along with the Megastores. However, Virgin say that demand is healthy and growing, and with an expanded catalogue pre-recorded MDs may yet give the doom-merchants a run for their money.

There is a down-side, of course. For reasons we cannot fathom, many pre-recorded MiniDiscs are more expensive than CDs, costing generally between four or five pounds more for the same recording. This doesn't really boost pre-recorded MD's chances - it's not often that you hear of high prices creating a

demand, particularly when the public perception of MiniDisc is that it doesn't offer sound quality as good as that of CD. This could scotch things because, unless prices come down or perceived quality hits the stratosphere, the general public's view of pre-recorded MDs will remain jaundiced.

On the point of price, retail groups say that they have had no particular gripes over this; MiniDisc punters seem to expect a premium price to prevail, at least until the format has gained a wider toe-hold in the marketplace. With these major retailers looking set to increase their stocks though, let's hope that a more catholic catalogue can make the quality and convenience of MiniDisc available to a wider audience. ●



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PASSIVE NO MORE

Want to go active but your budget is limited? Jon Marks gets connected with Maplin's DR66 active crossover.



KNOW LIMITS

Whether the DR66 sets your pulse racing or not will depend on the loudspeakers you're attempting to activate, as this crossover will work well with a lot of two-way loudspeakers, but not all. For example, if yours have crossover slopes other than 12dB/octave, the drivers are unlikely to knit together seamlessly. And if the passive crossover corrects for a rising response from the mid/bass unit, say, the DR66 won't be able to mimic this. It may also be worth experimenting with port length to optimise the tuning of the mid/bass.

So before walking into your local Maplin and handing over your readies, check your loudspeakers' specifications - most will list crossover frequency and roll-off in the manual.

GUINEA PIGS

Since the DR66 won't leave a large dent in the wallet, we assembled a low-cost system around it to see how inexpensive the benefits of active could be. The source was a Philips CD-721 (£130) as well as a Goodmans portable CD player, the amps a Creek OBH-12 passive pre-amp (£120) feeding a pair of Cambridge's A1mk3 integrators (£100 each) via their Tape In sockets. The loudspeakers were Gale's £70 Mini Monitors, wired up with 79-strand cable (which normally sells for around 50p/m) and the interconnects those supplied with new components. We used a lead/acid battery as a power supply for the DR66, although a mains PSU would do (Maplin VN10L at £14 is suitable).

September was the month Hi-Fi World went active. Through World Towers' hallowed portals trundled four sets of active loudspeakers from Harbeth, Soundcraft, Event and KRK. Matched with a transparent pre-amp, interconnects and source, they proved beyond any doubt that a system built around a competent active loudspeaker will leave passive set-ups at the same price for dead. The only sticking point centres around that word 'price'; £800 for an amplifier/speaker puts them out of the reach of many budding audiophiles. Help is at hand, if you don't mind a little soldering, in an external active crossover from Maplin, the DR66.

A mere £33 will enable you to

snap up one of these handy devices. What you get for your money is a two-way active crossover which operates over a very broad band of frequencies - 50Hz to 5kHz, to be precise. The crossover (with its 12dB/octave roll-offs) can be chosen anywhere between these two points, although 2kHz to 3kHz will be the most selected as that's where 99% of modern two-way loudspeakers blend their drivers together.

Spreading the net of compatibility wider are the level controls (one for high-pass filters and one for low), so tweeter and mid/bass operate on an even footing. Add to that Mono/Stereo and In/Out Phase switches, and the 'Bargain' sign should hopefully start flashing.

ALL FIRED UP

We knew from our measurements of the Gales roughly where the crossover point was, but rather than setting up our test equipment and using it to tune the DR66, we decided to see how close we could get to the best response by ear. Having desoldered the loudspeakers' passive crossovers and fed the drivers' hook-up cables out through the reflex ports, we connected the mid/bass units to one Cambridge amp and the tweeters to the other. The Creek was linked to the Tape In sockets on the amps with a Y-interconnect (thus bypassing their volume pots). We dialled in a crossover at 2.5kHz and set both level controls to max, and began listening.

LEVEL CROSSING

Immediately obvious was the higher sensitivity of the mid/bass, which was hogging the limelight and forcing the treble to take a back seat. A quick turn of the appropriate level control on the DR66 produced a much more even balance.

Not all CDs in a collection as sonic gems, but every audiophile has a number of decent discs which they can use to track down the best level match between the two drivers. And remember, hi-fi is a matter of taste; if it sounds right to your ears, then stick with it.

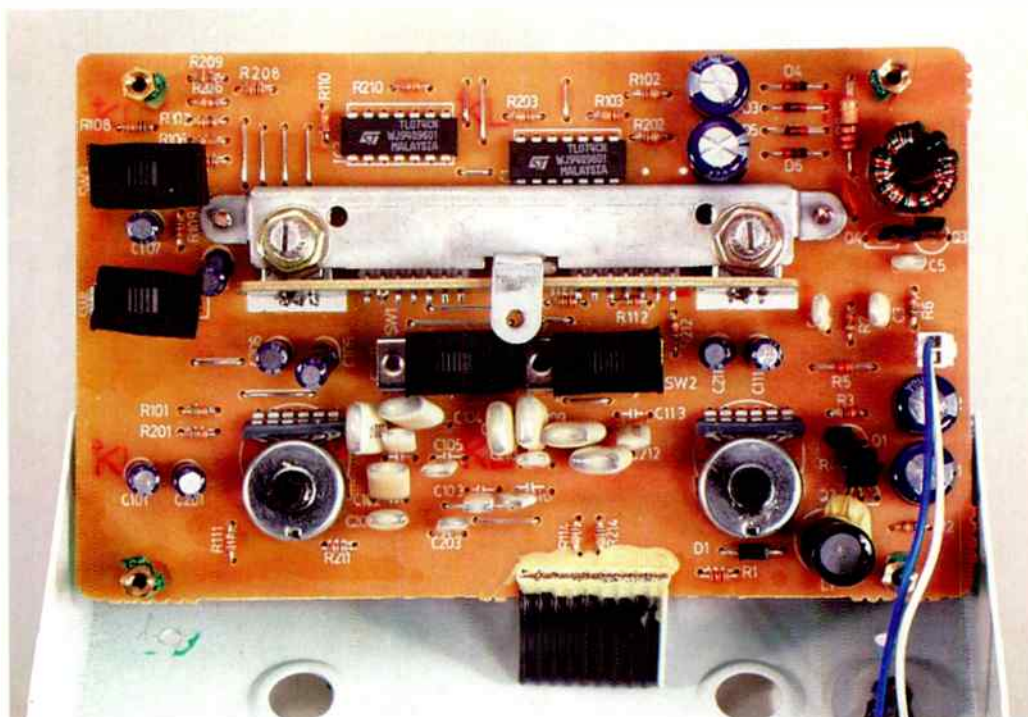
Although 2.5kHz is a good general guide as to where the tweeter and mid/bass should meet, in the Gales' case it wasn't the be all and end all. A roughness across the midrange suggested some cone break-up was slipping past the DR66, so the low-pass filter was rolled off a touch earlier. This smoothed out the midrange without putting in an audible dip, as recordings of female vocalists swiftly testified.

Similar treatment worked well for the tweeter, the last hint of harshness to the midrange eliminated by taking the high-pass crossover up a fraction on the DR66.

TUNED IN

Once the tweaking was finished, it was time to sit back and find out just what the Maplin could do for music. The answer was, a lot.

One Best Of compilation which



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MINI MARVEL

Jon Marks goes walkabout with Panasonic's amazing shrinking DVD/CD player, the DVD-L10 portable.

No doubt about it, the world we live in is getting smaller by the day. Jets span the oceans, and Australia is less than a day away; e-mail makes communicating anywhere on the face of the planet cheap and fast (well, with a following wind). But sitting on a plane for long, desiccating hours staring at the back of the seat in front of you isn't a hell of a lot of fun, unless your wallet can take the strain of a first-class ticket and some decent audio and video entertainment. If it can't, then Panasonic might be able to help with the £1000 DVD-L10, a masterpiece of techno-miniaturisation which will cost you considerably less than a swanky airline seat to Oz.

Measuring just 160mm wide by 215mm deep (with the rechargeable battery fitted) by 43mm high and weighing less than 1kg, the DVD-L10 might be more brick-like than your average portable, but then this is no average portable.

A choice of CD and DVD replay for video as well as audio leaves more conventional machinery for dead. Lift the lid and what will draw your gaze fastest is the 14.5cm LCD screen. Below this sit a pair of tiny loudspeakers for those occasions when you don't have a pair of headphones handy (although you'll curse your luck, as the on-board transducers are better at bringing on a headache than bringing your favourite music or film to life).

DOWNSIZING

In the main body of the player, under a lightweight plastic lid, is the transport. Panasonic's shrinking raygun was aimed primarily in this direction, the result a mechanism almost two-thirds smaller than that used in the redoubtable DVD-A350 reviewed back in July this year). The transverse dual-focus optical pick-up which scans the discs slides along a pair of rails either side of the newly-developed brushless spindle motor. This too has come for some enhancement - the engineering tolerances in the motor are higher than

usual, and the bearing is a fluid type, claimed to reduce vibration.

CONTROL FREAK

In addition to the Play, Stop, Pause and Skip/Search buttons you'd expect to see on any normal CD player, the DVD-L10 has a couple of controls less familiar to the audio fraternity; a stubby joystick enables navigation around on-screen menus, which can be accessed through Menu, Return and Title.

Look to the left-hand side of the casework and you'll see the headphone socket and its volume control beside the Power switch and the co-axial power-supply input. This takes 9V DC from either the battery pack (whose current capacity is a whopping 4500mAh thanks to Nickel-Metal Hydride batteries) or the in-line switch-mode PSU, which will work on anything between 110V and 240V at 50Hz or 60Hz.

Round the back (yes, there's more) are an S-Video as well as audio and composite video sockets which can be switched to operate as inputs or outputs. Particularly cunning is the audio one, which will accept a 3.5mm stereo plug and a digital optical interconnect, the machine automatically detecting which one is in use and selecting the appropriate signal.

One last point worthy of mention is the



remote control, a fully-specified unit which bears more than a passing resemblance to the device boxed with Denon's DVD-3000 DVD player. Great news if you can't be bothered to roll over and stretch out an arm when listening in bed.

DOING THE CAN-CAN

Armed with Grado's cheap SR40s and Sennheiser's more up-market HD 580 Precisions at £200, I plugged into the DVD-L10 with a slice of a reviewing stalwart, Stravinsky's Firebird. Even via the humble Grados and built-in headphone stage, the Panasonic was up to something special. Strings had a smooth sweetness and natural timbre conspicuously absent from most CD players, portable or not. Sound staging was beyond the norm too,

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the tiny transport doing a sterling job of relaying the space of the acoustic around and between instruments.

Slipping on the Sennheisers showed how revealing the DVD-L10 could be, with a beguiling musicality and plentiful detailing that will keep cans on ears for hour after hour. That's assuming what you happen to be listening to hasn't been recorded in glorious lo-fi of course, since this player takes no prisoners - if the disc is duff, it will let you know.

John Lee Hooker's Boom Boom can disappoint on below-par machinery with slow, sludgy bass and dull vocals. The Panasonic gave him the grunt and grit which make him a man you wouldn't want to meet in a dark alley on 'I'm Bad Like Jesse James', and spiced 'Trick Bag' with a bourbon growl.

With 44.1/16-bit this tempting, 24/96 was unlikely to be lacklustre. On Red Rodney's 1957, the bright cymbalwork was powerful and incisive without becoming brash, double-bass taut and fast. Above all, though, chewing more digits, the DVD-L10 blossomed into a deeply involving, musical performer, easily capturing the nuances and dynamic contrasts which set feet a-tapping.

Rachmaninov's Symphonic Dances went the same way, tonally-rich instrumental images studding an acoustic which gave a real out-of-the-head sensation through the Sennheisers. The only mild blot on the score was what sounded like very soft servo whine in the background every once in a while.

Unfortunately, a lot of supposedly



mobile digital equipment is hampered by the fact that the moment you walk off with it, it starts skipping. Next to these feeble no-hopers, the DVD-L10 is virtually bomb-proof. Holding it vertically in one hand and running up and down four flights of stairs caused not a single skip. Only if you jar it in a major way or shake it hard will it lose its grip on the disc - walking certainly isn't a problem.

NO HOLDS BARRED

The true test of a top portable is the way it sounds connected to a decent system. Summoned up for the Panasonic's initiation were an Audio Analogue Puccini SE, van den Hul Revelation Hybrid loudspeaker cable and Jamo's Concert 8s. Also present were a Cyrus Straightline, Tannoy's Mercury m2s and Cable Talk's Talk 4.1 cable in a more modest set-up.

Given 20 or 30 minutes to warm up on a freshly-charged battery, even the bog-standard audio/video cable fresh from the packing couldn't stop this little silver box putting out some very attractive sounds. It helps to employ a solid rack as support; normal domestic levels of vibration won't floor the Panasonic, but they will coarsen the midrange and loosen the bass. I tried it on my desk next to a computer, whose fan

pumps out a lot of noise, and a simple foam mouse-mat under the player sweetened its output no end.

Retracing my steps I sampled John Lee Hooker, Rachmaninov, Eric Bibb and The Chemical Brothers. Puzzlingly, the Panasonic wasn't as involving interfacing with the outside world as it had been partnering headphones.

Upgrading the interconnect to Kimber PBJ terminated with a 3.5mm jack, switching the LCD screen off

The audio and video outputs on the rear panel are hidden behind the battery when the player is used on the move.



The expensive Nickel-Metal Hydride battery will keep films showing for up to two hours.

and levelling the machine all edged it closer to the musical heights it had previously hit. Going for the headphone socket rather than the Audio Out brought rewards too, increasing vitality and punch, and 24-bits at 96kHz were fast, crisp and spacious. But the Panasonic couldn't quite equal its headphone best.

Powered by the battery (which charges fully in only two hours) and warmed up for 30 minutes, the DVD-L10 is on a par with better static CD players at around £500. This is a major accolade for a portable, even one which costs £1000 when you bear in mind it was brought into this world to play video discs more than audio. Driving headphones with its on-board stage, the Panasonic pulls up its socks and goes for the rhythmic jugular in the same way as its bigger brother, the DVD-A350, and Denon's DVD-3000. For music (and video) on the move, the Panasonic is the business.

Panasonic DVD-L10
£999.95

Panasonic
Willoughby Road,
Bracknell,
Berks. RG12 4PF
Tel: 01344 862444



The spindle motor is a cut above the rest in terms of engineering. Here, it is allied to a robust dual-focus optical pick-up which slides along twin steel rails.

WORLD VERDICT



The DVD-L10 isn't cheap, but it's an outstanding portable and a capable domestic device.

WIN SPEAKER STANDS, SOURCES AND SOFTWARE WORTH OVER £3500



This month's competition goodies are a pair of £1900 Reference Precision Speaker Supports from Elemental Audio, the stylish Micromega Tuner (priced at £750), and the £300 TD-V662 cassette deck from JVC. In addition to this bag of treats, 30 audiophile XRCDs, also from JVC, are being supplied by Vivante.

The Elemental Audio Speaker Supports, which we use here at Hi-Fi World, are some of the very best stands we've come across, as you might reasonably expect given their price! Justifying the cost is a space-age design which shuns top and bottom-plates to eliminate sound-reflecting surfaces. Where many stands are simple columns, the Elementals are constructed from thick-walled tubular steel filled with a mixture of lead shot and fine

casting sand (which is high-frequency agitated to eliminate air pockets and lower the centre of gravity). A central 'canister' adds further stability and brings the total mass of this pair to 66kgs.

The plain steel spikes or aluminium cones that anchor many stands would wilt under this pressure, so Elemental Audio fit their upper and lower spikes with hardened tips.

Easier on the floorboards is Micromega's Tuner. As you would



expect from: a French manufacturer, this a stylish design inside and out. Uniquely, this FM-only component incorporates technology which converts the incoming audio signal into a digital format, so spurious above 15kHz can be more effectively removed. This means there's an option of either an analogue output (where the on-board converter comes into play) or a digital one, which allows the use of an external DAC.

If you want to capture the airwaves for posterity, a tape deck is called for. JVC's smart TD-V662 cassette deck was reviewed in September's issue by Richard White, who gave it a resounding thumbs up.

Putting the JVC ahead of its rivals are the direct-drive motors for both capstans, separate record/replay heads, automatic tape type selection and a direct input capability from JVC CD players. Dolby noise reduction is present in Dolby B and C forms.

These mechanical investments pay off handsomely in the deck's sound. Richard White noted that on playback the TD-V662, "could dig deep into recordings and pull out subtleties often buried by the medium". Recording performance also impressed with a "rich, taut bass and clear, crisp treble". Our test measurements backed up these findings, as the JVC produced a fine set of figures.

Software of the digital rather than analogue variety comes courtesy of Vivante. 30 runners-up in this month's competition will each be able to choose a disc from the growing XRCD catalogue and discover what makes these audiophile releases sonically special.

Jon Marks investigated what goes into an XRCD back in July 1998. While much of the recording industry clings to the tenet that "bits are bits" and digital can be transmitted and received without degradation, JVC followed their ears in the search for something superior. Extensive use of the company's K2 ADC and DAC, jitter-reducing interfaces and specialist cabling gives the £20 XRCDs a quality well ahead of the bulk of CDs.

If you'd like the chance to win one of these prizes, just answer the questions opposite and complete the tie-breaker. These can be sent in on the entry form (which may be photocopied) or simply written on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope. Please make sure your entry reaches the address below no later than November 4th.

Stands, Sources And Software Competition

Hi-Fi World Magazine,
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London W9 1EX

Don't forget to include your name, address and telephone number so that we can contact the winner promptly.

COMPETITION ENTRY QUESTIONS

1) What do Elemental Audio fill their Reference loudspeaker stands with?

- A. Recycled drinks cans C. Sand and lead shot
B. Concrete D. Scrambled egg

2) How much does Micromega's Tuner cost?

- A. £1001 B. £499 C. £750 D. £1999

3) How many heads does JVC's TD-V662 have?

- A. Two B. One C. Seven D. Three

4) What kind of motor drives the JVC's capstans?

- A. Direct drive B. Linear C. AC synchronous D. Stepper

5) Which DACs do JVC use to produce their XRCDs?

- A. The Number Cruncher B. K2 C. HFW-1 D. SP-10

TIE-BREAKER (obligatory)

Complete the following in fewer than 30 words

If you're hot for Micromega; if you flip for JVC;

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COMPETITION WINNERS

In September, we had Assemblage's L-1 pre and S7-40 valve power amplifiers up for grabs. Taking home the former is Mike West of High Wycombe, while W. Mattison of Leeds wins the latter.

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LEAN MACHINES

You can recycle household waste and run your car on unleaded petrol, but is there such a thing as environmentally-friendly hi-fi? Jon Marks investigates.

Once, green was the colour of envy. Now, in this overcrowded, polluted world we inhabit its role has changed. These days green is the colour of re-use and recycling, the colour of pine furniture which can trace its roots (sorry) back to sustainably-managed forests in progressive Scandinavian countries. One such is Denmark, famous to the hi-fi fraternity in the UK through companies like Jamo.

SEEING THE WOOD FOR THE TREES

One argument business has used in the past against lowering production pollution is cost. Jamo has shown how going green in the factory can help fill the coffers rather than empty them though. Their site in Denmark is heated by a high-efficiency burner run on the saw-dust and off-cuts left over as waste from cabinet construction. This paid for itself within the first year of operation.

Jamo put into practice a variety of other money-saving techniques which have beneficial side-effects for the environment. For instance, they buy the largest sheets of MDF or chipboard to reduce off-cuts. The cutter itself is controlled by a computer too, which calculates the most efficient distribution of panel shapes and sizes to be sawn from these sheets.

WATER WORKS

Water, which industry uses in vast amounts, is another prime candidate for recycling and re-use chez Jamo. 98% of all the paints in the factory are water-based. Any surplus is collected so that its water content can be purified before it flows to, say, the damping department. Here, the foam blocks which line the inner walls of cabinets are cut with water jets, which not only produces less dust, but allows the water to be fed back into the system yet again.

Jamo aren't the sole Danish hi-fi company pushing down their pollution output. In line with Danish and German laws, cartridge company Ortofon make sure that all their packaging is fully recyclable. This is a route followed by many, where wholly or predominantly recycled and unbleached cardboard is becoming the norm.

ELECTRIFIED

Closer to home, and REL's subwoofers show that reducing waste can extend to electronics as well as wood and paper. Should you wish to upgrade from an early Q-Base to the Q50, the back panel which carries the power amp and response-tailoring filters can be re-used once it has passed a full electrical health check.

GOING ALL THE WAY

Taking the ideas of re-use and recycling about as far as they can currently go are Sony with their SS-BG30 loudspeakers. These small, reflex-loaded two-ways are built into a cabinet of 80% recycled material. This 'TECTAN' is made from processed drinks cartons collected under the German Greune Punkt recycling scheme. After cleaning and shredding, the cartons are heated to 180degrees Celsius and then pressed into boards without the need for adhesive. As you can see from the picture, the end result (5% aluminium, 20% polyethylene foil and 75% paper) is interesting to say the least.

TECTAN goes into five of the enclosure's six surfaces, leaving the front baffle to a



more traditional plywood. This doesn't derail the green train, as the eight screws which hold it in place can be removed before the board is recycled into MDF. And that's not all. The cardboard reflex tubes, as well as being recyclable, are located in the bottom corners of the front baffle to raise the SS-BG30s' efficiency.

FOUR CAREFUL DRIVERS

The Sonys' mid/bass and tweeter units are constructed in, surprise, surprise, Denmark. The former possesses a plastic basket in lieu of a metal one. This, along with the magnet, are destined for reincarnation in another set of 'speakers. At the moment, the crossover linking cone to dome is soldered onto a standard PCB, but apparently Sony are looking for a bromine-free alternative.

Very, very few of the parts which go into the SS-BG30s don't get another turn on the wheel of life, among them the lambswool stuffing which biodegrades harmlessly in a landfill site.

Making a loudspeaker this environmentally friendly doesn't come cheap at present, and these psychedelic Sonys sell for around 40% more than their non-green counterparts. But they, and names like Jamo and REL, are demonstrating that hi-fi components have a part to play in the green scheme of things.

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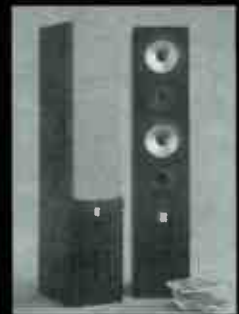


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MELLOW MACHINERY



Can Denon's DCD-835 CD player knock out rivals from Rotel and Marantz? Your referee is Dominic Todd.

Denon isn't always the first name that springs to mind when you're pondering purchasing a serious budget or mid-price CD player. The company may have a formidable reputation for their amps, cassette decks and tuners, but their CD players have never quite made the same grade. Not, at least, when compared with the likes of Marantz's SE editions and models from Arcam and Rotel.

Hoping to change this is Denon's latest offering, the DCD-835. An impressive technical specification comes with a keen price of £280, undercutting most rivals which range between £300 and £350, with the Arcam Alpha 7, Cambridge CD6 and ubiquitous Marantz CD-67SE offering the greatest challenges.

Almost alone at this price, Denon have persisted with their favourite multi-bit Burr-Brown DAC in preference to a 1-bit device. This is powered from a separate supply containing expensive SILMIC (silk and paper) capacitors from Elna. Also worthy of note is the star-earthing on the circuit board and the direct-coupled output stage which should, in theory at least, provide greater transparency than capacitor-coupled alternatives. Build quality and finish are to Denon's usual high standards.

Grilling the DCD-835 with 'Ned's Big Dutch Wife' from Dave's True

Story, the term that immediately sprang to mind was 'smooth' - both guitar and vocals had a warm, grain-free feel to them. This extended to percussion as well, where there was plenty of detail but none of the cymbal splash that occasionally catches rivals out. When it came to bass, though, the Denon lost pole position to the Marantz CD-67SE, which ultimately had greater depth and more body to its reproduction of saxophone. Overall the '835 was a controlled, cohesive performer with decent transparency, despite having lost a little of the DCD-825's verve in the quest for refinement.

Sara K's version of 'Brick House' continued the unflustered and mellow theme, the Denon only losing out rhythmically - it could drag its feet at times compared to its predecessor. Basically, the dynamics of this track weren't as crisp or incisive as they were through some rivals, which is fine for easy listening but not so good when you want your favourite thriller CDs to raise the hairs on the back of your neck. On the credit side, vocals were well projected and unerringly stable within the sound stage. The double-bass's timbre was rich and realistic too.

The same mix of sonic traits turned up on Divine Comedy's 'Bernice Bobs Her Hair'. Excellent clarity through the midrange and

lower treble meant detail was always in abundant supply. Instrumental separation never wavered on fiendishly complex passages either, thanks partly to a generous sound stage width and depth that gave images plenty of room to breathe. The grey cloud to this silver lining was once again the lowest octaves; bass guitar lacked weight and solidity and the drums could have done with more flesh on their musical bones.

With Corelli's Concerti Grossi Op6 the DCD-835 rustled up convincing string timbre but fell between the same two stools. It avoided the harshness (and vitality) of certain competitors without being able to equal the easy ebb and flow of a Rotel, for example.

You've probably guessed by now that Denon haven't quite cracked the CD-player market in the way that they have others. Don't get me wrong, the DCD-835 is a fine machine with much to offer - the build quality is impossible to fault and the price, as they say, is right. But biasing it towards finesse and clarity has cost in the aspects like timing, dynamic clout and bass depth that make the Marantz CD-67SE exceptional rather than merely good. If you prefer a more laid-back sound, or need a source to tame a lively amp and 'speaker combo, the Denon could just fit the bill.

Denon DCD-835
£279.90

Hayden Laboratories
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WORLD VERDICT



Warm and smooth, the Denon leans to the relaxed rather than the adrenal.

Measured Performance
see p111

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PLAYING TAG

Fresh face to the hi-fi industry, TAG McLaren Audio debut with their PA10 pre and 60P power amplifiers.

The TAG McLaren Audio story started back in November 1997. That month saw well-known British hi-fi company Audiolab bought up by those three initials familiar to any fan of Formula One racing. What puzzled many in the hi-fi industry was why a group deeply involved in automotive technology would want to step so boldly into the audio world.

The answer came in the head of Techniques d'Avant Garde's electronics wing, TAG Electronic Systems. For Dr Udo Zucker marries his physics and electronics background with a love of music and hi-fi. As an ex-Audiolab owner himself, he was the prime mover behind the decision to buy.

Production deadlines for a lot of hi-fi companies have a curious elasticity, yet it was TAG McLaren Audio's intent to have a range of components, the F3 series, ready for launch at the Renaissance Show to be held at Heathrow in September 1998. That sort of time span would normally cover only one or two amps or CD players, so developing a whole 12-model line-up looked like an extremely tall order. Tall it may have been, but the equipment is here, so we decided to investigate the £850 PA10 pre-amp and 60P power amp.

If you're getting a feeling of déjà vu from the styling, that's because TAG McLaren Audio didn't want to break radically from its new acquisition's past and many happy customers. There has been more of a metamorphosis inside the PA10, where Elna Starjet capacitors are much more widely used, and a pair of Cerafines crops up too. The 60P retains its twin 10000uF Elna reservoir caps and large toroidal transformer. So much for what has

gone into this pre and power, but what comes out of them?

Eiji Oue at the helm of the Minnesota orchestra playing Stravinsky is one HDCD which gets more exposure than just about any other disc in the Hi-Fi World arsenal. Not only is it a very enjoyable piece of music, this recording has a natural clarity which makes it a handy

Musically and dynamically, the plaudits continued, this pair, like Musical Fidelity's Nu-Vista pre-amp, gifted with that rare talent to disappear behind the music. Another area where these TAGs bring to mind the Nu-Vista and X-A200 monoblocs is in their massive bass grip - timpani came close to shaking our room with their smack and extension.



addition to a hi-fi reviewer's tool box. The same is true of Jamo's Concert 8s - oft used, and for identical reasons.

The PA10 and 60P demonstrated they followed suit. The Song Of The Nightingale, for instance, opens with what you might call a little energetic playing on the triangle. Actually, if the percussionist had been in a Rock group rather than an orchestra, it would have been fair to say he was 'larging it'. There's considerably more to reproducing this instrument than hitting the 'triangle' and 'loud' controls, even though the bulk of amps would have you believe otherwise, with their monotonal, clangorous versions of the real thing. After bringing the Repeat button to bear a good few times, it was obvious these TAGs were a cut above the transistor crowd. Cymbal crashes, like triangles, were tonally superior to the norm, strings smoother, and sound staging and imaging more precise.

If you're a fan of Dance and adrenaline, you'll grin when you hear your favourite tracks at high volume; production quality rougher than the morning after 10 pints and a curry couldn't trip the PA10 and 60P up, as they carried on doling out funky beats with a lack of stress. Likewise, if you've never understood the musical logic behind Reggae or Ragga, you will after having your head crushed by Sly and Robbie through the TAGs.

With an accompanying price tag of £850 a piece, it is almost churlish to whinge as this combo outstrips the competition quite easily, but... A touch more warmth and body to the upper bass wouldn't go amiss, nor would a reduction in midrange brightness, which compounds the dry bass. Correct cable choice will largely alleviate this imbalance, though, and allow the true colours of this impressive amplification to shine through.

TAG McLaren Audio
PA10 £849.60
TAG McLaren Audio
60P £849.60

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WORLD VERDICT



Both the PA10 and 60P fully justify their cost with very musical and revealing performances.

Measured Performance
see p111

Letter of the Month

The writer of the 'Letter of the Month' wins a free subscription to Hi-Fi World as well as a Top Prize every other month

UNDER COVER

Do you know of any insurance companies, etc that will insure hi-fi equipment properly? I am sure this is something that a lot of people do not do correctly and find out when it is too late that they are either not covered at all or under-insured. I hope you can point me in the right direction.

Andy Robertson
andy.robertson@onyxnet.co.uk

We contacted a number of insurance companies with requests for cover on hi-fi equipment and

received a variety of answers. The larger companies, such as Lloyds Bank Direct, said that they would cover a system as an addition to a new or existing household contents policy, but not as a separate item on a dedicated policy.

Smaller high-street brokers were mixed in their response. Some said the hi-fi, regardless of price, would be covered under general household insurance: others claimed they could it make a special addition to an existing policy.

A little more legwork led to a firm named Entertainment And Leisure Insurance Services (tel: 0700 0800 800), who specialise in recording equipment, sound systems and hi-fi as well as musical instruments. They have two premiums for hi-fi equipment: rate A is for anywhere in the UK and includes transit cover (only really necessary if you are either a DJ or changing address). Rate B is restricted to "a specified building" - your home or a studio.

If your system cost

you £2500, the premium would be £130 per year (or £13 per month) at rate B and £160 (£16 per month) at rate A. If you're lucky enough to own a set-up worth £7500, these rise to £240 (£24 per month) and £370 (£37 per month) respectively. The cover is for accidental loss, damage and theft. SP



Not checking that your hi-fi is properly insured can be a very expensive mistake.

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ROUND AND ROUND

Since acquiring a CD player several years ago, my vinyl collection (Joni to Zep) has been largely forgotten about. I recently listened to a friend's 'mid-priced' Linn turntable and am now quite keen to get my records out again. Most of my albums were put straight on to tape and rarely, if ever played again, so I am hoping that they should be in good condition.

I have an Audiolab 8000A amplifier and TDL RTL2 'speakers and, although these may later be upgraded or replaced, I am quite keen to get a turntable which will serve me (short of a lottery windfall) for the foreseeable future.

Price-wise I would be prepared to go into LP12 territory, but I am a couple of years short of affording it. However, I want to play my records as soon as possible. This is why I am writing to you.

Your August issue started a painful process - ie, me thinking. The review of the Project Perspective, Mr Reece's letter and a couple of adverts have brought me to the point of asking these questions:

- 1) Should I go for a turntable cheaper than the Linn, such as the VPI Junior?
- 2) Should I buy a kit to which I could add a decent arm that could later be transferred to a better deck?



Older semi-automatic turntables suffered from budgets wasted on features instead of engineering.

3) I have a very old (but well mothballed) Sansui SR12. Would it be worth putting on it a good cartridge?

4) Other than the element of compromise in terms of money spent on gadgets that did not add to the sound quality, why

a plinth to it. A sprightly 401 motor unit will cost around £100-£150, an Octavia plinth from Classique Sounds (reviewed last month) £200 (plain MDF) or £300 (veneered), and a used Rega RB300 roughly £100.

Both Origin Live (tel: 01703 578877) and Black Plastic (tel: 01902 751861) do tone-ups for the Rega arms which enable these budget worthies to fulfil a good deal of their potential. Matched with a cartridge like a Reson Mica MM or an Ortofon MC 15 Super II, the results would give a much dearer outfit a good run for

were semi-automatic turntables given such bad press?

I confess to being an occasional reader of your magazine, principally when I am thinking of buying, but it is always an excellent read.

**R.A. Cotton
Canterbury.**

Although the buy-a-kit route may have much to offer, I think you'd be better off choosing something ready-made. You could go for the VPI (£600 with Rega RB300) or pick up a retro bargain like a Garrard 401 and add

its money.

I'd give the Sansui a miss, unless you want a spare deck handy in case your number-one deck goes belly-up for some reason.

Semi-automatics were generally rubbished by the press because that was how most of them sounded - rubbish. All those extra bells and whistles took a huge bite out of the construction budget, leaving precious little for a quality main bearing and proper arm. RMW

DNM's Licon contact enhancer will ensure your TDLs get the cleanest possible signal.

SOFT-CENTRED

System! Mission dAD7 with PSX, Roksan Caspian (used only as a power amp), Creek passive pre, NAD phono stage, Rega Planar 2 and Castle Harlech loudspeakers. Cables come from Audioquest and CableTalk.

Problem! Both the Castles and Caspian are slightly soft in nature, so I'm looking for an amp with more detail, a more forward balance and a lot more power. My budget is £1000-£1300 and I was thinking primarily of the Musical Fidelity X-A200.

**Colin Orr
Belfast.**

I'm surprised to hear you're after a lot more power - the Caspian certainly doesn't fall short when it comes to output.



Musical Fidelity's X-A50 power amps have the muscle to fill out a bi-amp system.

When we measured it back in June 1997, we squeezed 78watts into an 8ohm load and no less than 120watts into 4ohms. It has quite

a warm character, though, so a change of power amps would, as you say, be a good idea.

The Musical Fidelity X-A200 is one possible answer. Another is two pairs of X-A50s for bi-amping. Ideally, you need to arrange a home demo and find out which option best suits your system.

A less orthodox solution would be to bi-amp with the Caspian (tweeters) and a pair of X-A50s (woofers), spending the remainder of your cash on an active pre-amp like Audio Analogue's Bellini, as part of the softness you're hearing is down to the Creek. JM

Knock the rough edges off your CDs with a Statmat from Ringmat.

Russ
Andrews

HI-FI LIFESTYLE DIRECT

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TRANSFORMATION

I am using an Ortofon MC 30 Supreme cartridge feeding a World Audio KLPP1 valve phono pre-amp and 300B power amp. I would like more gain. I was wondering if you have any suggestions as to how this might be accomplished. I would like a gain of at least 6dB - would an Ortofon MC step-up transformer be suitable?

D.M. Albison
Ireland.

A step-up transformer is a beastie of myth and fable which was often glimpsed being given a hard time in the pages of Seventies hi-fi magazines.

Times move on and so do cartridge transformers. The point has been reached where I would have no hesitation in using one in a situation where modification of pre-amp circuitry is either difficult or impossible, and an equalized MC phono stage does not fit the bill.

The advantages of high-grade passive components are acknowledged almost everywhere, yet still some designers will plump for no end of circuitous complexity between cartridge and pre-amp in order to avoid using a transformer!

For non-vinyl readers let's be

NAIM THAT TUNE

I would like some advice on my next up-grade path. My equipment consists of Naim 72, 140, Hi Cap and Intros (which will eventually metamorphose into an 82, 135s and SBLs).

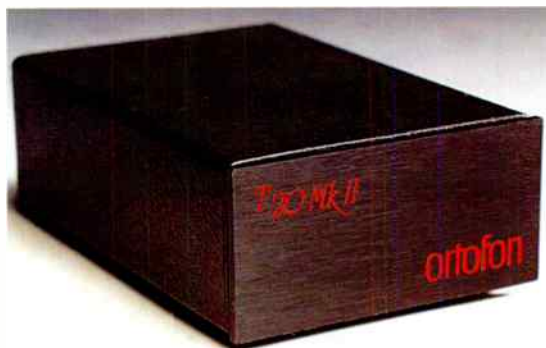
I need a top arm for either of my two turntables (Linn LP12, Basik K9, Armageddon and a Gyrodec, QC, RB300, Goldring). Arms that I have been looking at are SME IV, SME V, Naim Aro and Wilson Benesch. One of the turntables has to go to fund the arm purchase.

I have been to see a few dealers for suggestions but unfortunately can't get unbiased advice from them because none stock both the turntables and all three arms.

The Naim dealers always recommend the LP12 and say the Gyrodec is not a patch on the Linn and would sound very

clear about this: a cartridge transformer is no earthly use for feeding a line-level input such as CD, Aux, Tuner, etc. It can only be used into a Moving Magnet stage.

Ortofon do a couple of models, of which the T20 MkII (£249.95) is the correct one for your cartridge. Although the transformer is a bit bulky (1.5in. by 3in. by 5in.), it is

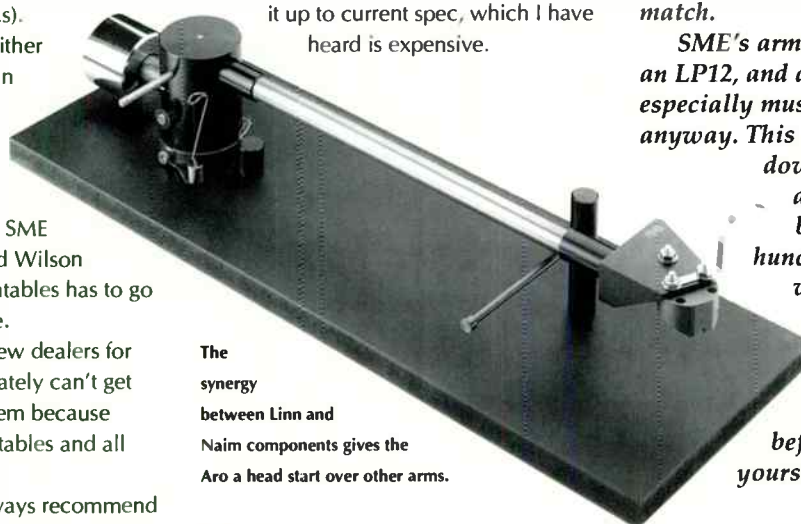


Step-up transformers such as Ortofon's T20 MkII used to be viewed as a necessary evil, but they can sound very good.

neat, and you're free to make your own choice of interconnects.

If you don't mind a bit of soldering, Sowter Transformers make a range of transformers 'in the raw' at prices ranging between £21 and £57 per channel. You can either solder leads to the connections direct or resort to a couple of pairs of phono sockets.

light with the Naim equipment. The problem is that I lean towards the Gyrodec as it looks and feels more sturdy than the Linn and I gather that I will have to spend money on the LP12 to bring it up to current spec, which I have heard is expensive.



The synergy between Linn and Naim components gives the Aro a head start over other arms.

J. Spence
Manchester.

We tried out a pair of Sowter's mid-price models and found them very satisfactory once we'd got the whole caboodle (including the tone-arm) properly earthed. It is true there's more fuss and fiddle here than with the T20, but the Sowter units do tip the scales at a much lower price.

Both transformer units give a good account of themselves sonically. The Ortofon is brighter than the Sowter. Or is it that the Sowter is warmer than the Ortofon? So much depends on the cartridge, pre-amplifier and interconnects that personal taste, as always, must be the final arbiter.

If you choose to use either unit ahead of our KLPP1 pre-amplifier, it is necessary to reduce the sensitivity of the phono stage otherwise you will overdrive it. Our technician recommends inserting, say, 100ohms between the phono socket and the grid of the first valve. This will trim the response by about the right amount although you may care to try other values - the KLPP1 has a forgiving phono stage. RMW

A pair of The Chord Company's Siren interconnects should work well between your new transformers and KLPP1's input.

The dealer who told you the Michell Gyrodec would probably sound light with Naim equipment was right - the warmer, rounder bass of the LP12 would be a better match.

SME's arms are too heavy for an LP12, and don't make for an especially musical presentation anyway. This narrows things down to the Naim Aro and Wilson Benesch, both unipivots. My hunch is that the Aro will come out ahead at the end of the day, but you should organise a side-by-side demo before committing yourself. JM

Get under hi-fi's black, metal skin with John Linsley Hood and Audio Electronics.

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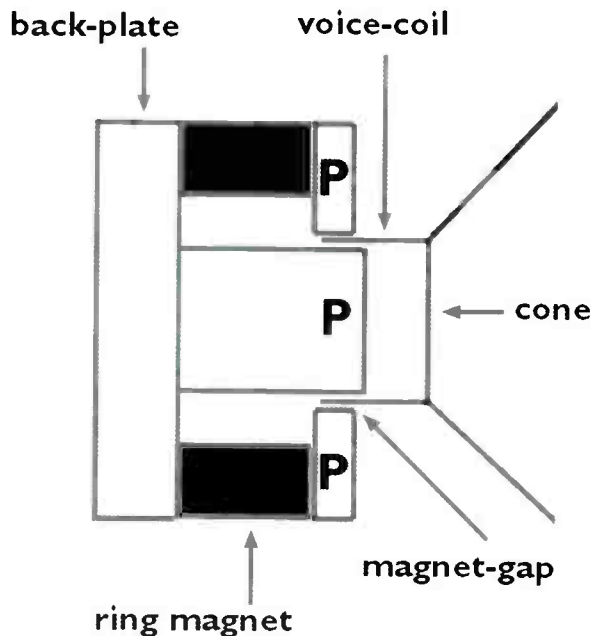
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S AND M

Thanks for a brilliant magazine - for DIYers it really is a must. I have a question, though: what happens to the S/M parameters, if you add another magnet to the back of a driver?

Georg Moldskred
mcyiggm2@fs1.ma.umist.ac.uk

Assuming that by S/M you mean Sensitivity and Magnetic parameters (well, what else could it be?) the answer would be not a lot. The strength of a loudspeaker magnet lies not only with its magnetized material (ie, Columax, Alnico, etc) but also with the design of the soft-iron components, since these ensure that the magnetic flux is concentrated where it's needed rather than leaking away uselessly.



A driver's pole pieces (marked 'P' in the diagram above), if properly designed, should be very close to magnetic saturation. Adding another magnet to the existing one will make little difference.

Any magnet designer worth his salt would arrange for the pole pieces to be as near magnetic saturation as possible in order to obtain maximum efficiency. Trying to add more strength to a pole piece which is already close to saturation is a thankless task as each increment of flux becomes more difficult to achieve by a geometric progression - a bit like doubling the speed of a car requiring four times as much effort. The input of magnetizing energy necessary for the extra couple of Teslas is huge - certainly not to be accomplished by bolting another magnet on the back!
 RMW

Learn about loudspeakers with John Linsley
 Hood's Audio Electronics.

ROOM RE-SIZE

I am in need of some assistance. I recently moved from a town house with large, solidly-built rooms to a modern suburban rabbit hutch. As a result, I find that I can no longer (or need to) have the volume on my amplifier so high. The problem I have because of this is reduced bass.

My system at the moment is: Audiolab 8000A amplifier; Meridian 206 CD player; Rega Planar 2 record deck; Sony MZS-R5ST MiniDisc (recently purchased in Japan); Audioquest Type 4 bi-wire 'speaker cables; Mission 753 'speakers.

My initial thought is to buy a second-hand amplifier to bi-amp the system, and naturally another Audiolab would be superb. This is beyond my budget, though.

Adrian May
[Sintecuk@aol.com](mailto: Sintecuk@aol.com)



If you want taut bass and power without breaking the bank, Rotel's RA-970BX integrated is a fine second-hand buy.

than another 8000A is a Pioneer A-400, which can be picked up for as little as £120. This should have no difficulties driving the bass units on your 753s. Then again, don't rule out a Mission Cyrus II (priced at around £130) or the 100watt Rotel RA-970BX (circa £175).

These amps are bound to have differing input sensitivities, so you'll have to feed the source signal in through one of the standard inputs (CD, Aux, etc) so you can use the second amp's volume control to balance the levels between the two crossover halves. The free lunch in this case is that you can use this to boost the bass a little to fill out the sound. JM

One used bi-amp choice which would be considerably cheaper

One of Ringmat's Statmats will further lift your system's sound.

If you do not want your e-mail address published, please let us know.

TWO AMPS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

I recently purchased a pair of used Celestion A3 floor standers. I also have an Arcam Alpha 7 CD player (later to be upgraded to 8 or 9 status) and an old Yamaha amplifier that needs replacing. Would an Arcam Alpha 10 and 10P bi-amping go well with the Celestions? The duo just fits my budget and I loved their sound in the store, but no dealer here has both the Alpha 10 and the Celestions, so I can't hear how they will sound together. Also, what 'speaker cables would you recommend to go with the Alpha 10s and Celestion A3s?

Martin Bruczowski
bruczko@pacific.net.sg

When he reviewed the Arcam

Alpha 10/10P combo back in July this year, Dominic Todd found they had a slight sibilance and brightness in



At £475, competitors for Audio Analogue's Bellini pre-amp are few and far between.

the treble. This wouldn't really gel with the A3s' metal-dome tweeters, which suffer the same drawbacks.

If £1400 is ready and waiting to be spent, I'd be tempted more by a

pair of Crimson Electric CS620C stereo power amps (£400 each) and an Audio Analogue Bellini pre-amp (£475). The slightly warm sound of the Crimsons should balance out the

Celestions' 'cool' character, while the Bellini's great transparency would ensure the A3s never sound boxy.

You're now left with £125 for cabling. If you can, you should keep the power amps as close to the loudspeakers as possible and go for longer interconnects. DNM's loudspeaker cable suits the Crimsons and costs £6.95/m. Meanwhile, two meters of D102III interconnect from van den Hul would finalise the wiring. JM

A free set of DNM Reson loudspeaker cables terminated for bi-amping means only interconnects remain to be bought.

SPEAKER SEEKER

After four years enjoying my present system, I've decided to upgrade my 'speakers. I'm still happy with the sound from my Arcam Alpha 5+ CD player and Naim Nait 2 amp. Even my Ruark Sabres sound wonderful, but miss whole octaves of bass. I've tried various alternatives such as Castle Severns, Rega Elas, B&W P4s and Ruark Sceptres.

Since I like my Ruarks, it's no surprise I love the Sceptres. However, the increase in bass does appear to give a slight loss of treble detail compared to the Sabres. This appears to be a common problem - the 'speakers I tried were either too bass light or gained bass at the expense of treble detail. Is there any way round this problem at £500-£600? Could the low power of the Nait be a contributing factor? At a push I would try something like the Triangle Zephyre 2s (£700).

Mike Lowndes
mikel@nhm.ac.uk

The one obvious solution which you haven't mentioned is a subwoofer. As you don't specifically say a sub is domestically unacceptable, sampling one of REL's might be a good idea.



If your bottom-end needs bolstering, a subwoofer like REL's Strata II could be the answer.

There's the Q100e at £495 and the Strata II at £575. Personally, I'd be tempted by the latter as the range of adjustment on the Q100e (which was reviewed in April 1998) is limited, which restricts the main

loudspeakers it will work with effectively. This would allow you to keep the amp and 'speakers you like so much and just fill in the bass shortfalls.

The key to getting the most from a subwoofer is careful tuning and placement on a solid foundation - ie, preferably not in the middle of a bouncy, suspended wooden floor. Try to arrange a longish (one week) home demo of the REL or any other candidate, as it will most likely take this long to tune it seamlessly into your system. JM

Hook up your new subwoofer with a set of The Chord Company's Siren interconnects.

If there's something truly special about a loudspeaker - the chances are you'll find it at KJ West One.

The beautiful Sonus Faber Guaneri is a perfect example.

On first hearing this remarkable speaker, we were tempted to 'rediscover' some of our favourite or special recordings. For the sheer fun of it,



Guarneri by Guarneri was a temptation we simply couldn't resist, and a 1973 recording (Decca PFS 4265) by Josef Sakonov playing

one of these precious instruments on pieces by Godard, Sternhold, Massenet, Korngold and others, recreates an ethereal delicacy

from this old vinyl disc that is chilling to experience.

Joseph Guarneri del Gesu was both an

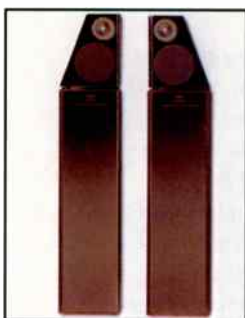
innovator and master of his craft. Attention was drawn to his instruments by Nicolo Paganini whose own "Red Cannon" can be seen in the town hall at Genoa.

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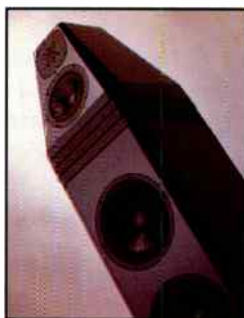
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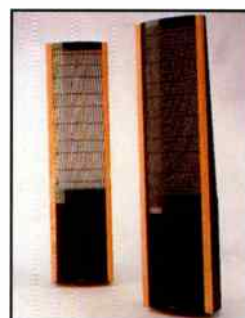
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BACK TO FRONT

Some six months ago I bought an Anthem Integrated 1 tube amplifier, which was recently rated highly by your journal. Indeed, it is a fine amplifier.

However, I am becoming increasingly unhappy at the fact that the absolute phase is inverted by this amplifier, a characteristic caused by the design of the pre-amp stage. Although the amp's sound staging is first-rate, due to the inverted phase the music is projected 'behind' the loudspeakers. Since my CD player does not feature a phase-inversion mode, I would like to ask you if there is a way to correct the absolute phase. For instance, is it OK to swap over the loudspeaker cable at the amplifier's terminals?

E. van Garderen
e.vangarderen@pobox.ruu.nl

You seem to be labouring under a misconception. Whether a signal is in or out of absolute phase will not change where a sound stage is positioned by a pair of



Anthem's Integrated 1 valve amp is capable of very natural sound staging.

loudspeakers. Sound staging in a tonally-balanced system is pretty much invariably from the front plane of the cabinets backwards.

price differences are negligible as my budget is slightly flexible.

Mario Parcesepe
lnauhold.mparcesepe@gmeds.com

Don't worry about Technics-related sniggers - we're already direct-drive converts here. Providing you're handy with a screwdriver and drill, the SL-1200II would be the best choice, I suspect.



With a change of arm, Technics' SL-1200II direct drive has the potential for audiophile sound quality.

With the Technics, it's really a question of great deck, shame about

Only through loudspeakers which have a lift in their midrange and treble responses (or on recordings with the same characteristics) do images move forward of this line.

The effect is artificial, though, and can be wearing over long listening sessions because of its up-front and bright presentation.

Changing absolute phase can make a small difference on CDs where the original recording was made in absolute phase through a simple stereo pair of mics. Switching out of phase, images seem to lose some of their precision, and their layering within the sound stage becomes less natural, but the effect is very subtle. JM

Uncover the mysteries of hi-fi with some help from **John Linsley Hood and Audio Electronics.**

the arm. However, Technics stock blank replacement armboards which can be drilled to take an RB300, for example (according to Dominic Baker, our ex-editor, who carried out these mods on a pair of SL-1210IIs). Call your local Technics dealer - they should be able to give you a number for spares.

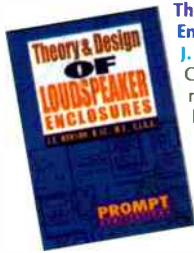
If you do decide on the tweaky route, you'll have to drill a 24mm-diameter hole whose centre is 221mm from the centre of the platter's spindle for correct arm positioning. If you don't feel inclined to reach for the toolbox, then the Linn comes out ahead of the others. And cartridges? Try stretching your budget to £135 for DNM's Mica MM which should work on the Technics or the Linn. JM

Whichever turntable you settle on, a bottle of DNM's Licon contact enhancer will bring out its best.

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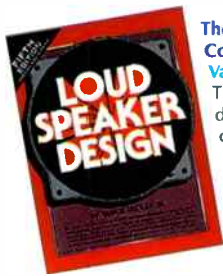


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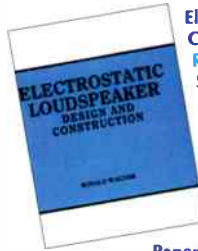


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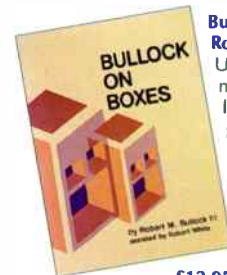
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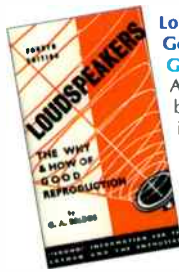
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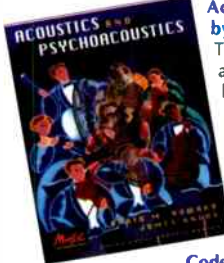
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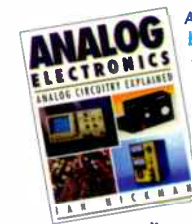
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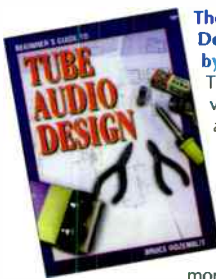
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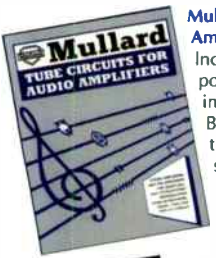
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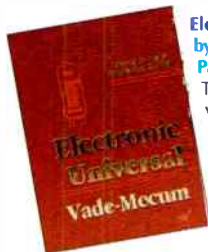
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BIRD OF PARADISE

Timothy Liu falls for the charms of Canary Audio's valve song bird, their 301 power amplifier.

To see valves used in electronics today is still rare; you're only really going to be able to track them down in the radio room on a Chinese trawler or on the inside of high-end audio equipment. The latter is where Canary Audio, an American company with Japanese ownership, come in. They have built up a large following in Asia where most of their production is exported, including the £3055 301 power amp.

Unpacking the Canary will leave you red in the face due to the 65lbs of transformers and steel chassis. The thick front panel (finished in the Orient's favourite champagne gold) hides the two oversized output transformers and the valves. The 301's roster contains a single 12AX7WA, two 6SN7GTBs and four 300Bs operated in class A, push-pull mode to deliver 22watts per channel. Valve life is three to five years and Audio Connoisseurs, Canary's UK importers, offer a re-valving service plus the chance of upgrading to Western Electric valves for an additional £1000.

Removing the base-plate for a quick look inside revealed flawless, tear-drop solder joints and neatly-routed Teflon-insulated wiring. Metal film resistors and MIT capacitors add to the quality feel of the Canary. Valve biasing is carried out from underneath via four small, blue potentiometers.

I spent almost four weeks with the Canary 301 in a system where it was partnered with a Jeff Rowland Coherence pre-amp. These were headed up by a Basis turntable (with Roksan Shiraz cartridge) and a Wadia 6 CD player. Sonus Faber Electa Amator 2 stand mounters and BKS ribbon-hybrid floor standers formed the last links in the chain.



The first week spent with the Canary was disappointing - it was restrained, lifeless and had almost non-existent bass. However, as the juice continued to flow, so the Canary spread its musical wings. The Art Pepper track 'The Autumn Leaves' gave a good insight into the magic that valves, and above all the 300B, are renowned for. The midrange had a natural liquidity which picked out subtle details (like clicking saxophone valves and fingers sliding on the neck of a double-bass) and displayed them in an airy, uncramped sound stage.

The bass, despite having filled out and put on weight, still wasn't in the same league as the rest of the 301's output. I attributed this to the power-sapping Sonus Fabers, which were duly substituted for the BKS hybrids, which in turn addressed the bass deficiency - now drums were meaty and solid with good extension. The lush, sweet sound of the Canary went hand-in-glove with the clarity of the BKS ribbon units too.

Art Pepper through 300Bs was a

tasty dish; heavy, electronic Dance wasn't such a success. This became apparent on Kraftwerk's 'Tour De France'. Here, the Canary slowed the rapid bass beat, diluting the drive and rhythm this track is famous for.

When Kate Bush had her say, 'Sensual World' highlighted the Canary's strengths once more. Vocals had a warmth and sensuality which solid-state couldn't capture, and the 301 unravelled the extra detail and complex rhythms of the Celtic instruments which had floored silicon.

To gain the full sonic benefits of Canary's 301, you need to seek out 'speakers with a crisp, controlled character. Those worth considering are the BKS ribbon hybrids or the smaller Sonus Fabers, which should be ideally suited to the Canary's richness and warmth.

Despite the high asking price of £3055, the 301 possesses that magical valve sound and heavyweight construction. Combined with the ability to drive most normal loudspeaker loads, this will surely guarantee it many admirers.

Canary 301 £3055

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WORLD VERDICT



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Noel Keywood

I was biking up the A285 the other day, through Britain's wonderful Sussex countryside. Coming toward me on a long, straight and empty piece of road were the massive chrome radiator and huge goldfish-bowl headlights of an old pre-war Rolls Royce. It was in immaculate condition. I suppose I noticed it all the more for the way it stood out against the dark tarmac and a line of trees behind; this Rolls was cream coloured, and against such a rural backdrop it was a lovely sight. A few minutes later another swept gracefully past.

Our villages and towns are even older and as well preserved, as Petworth on the A285 reminded me as I crept through its narrow, winding streets. Is there no village in Britain that doesn't have a cluster of timber-framed, wattle-covered houses at its centre, leaning at crazy angles but immaculately preserved and still inhabited after 400 years?

Pity that with hi-fi so much has escaped us. I suspect the Italians, Germans and Japanese are more aware of

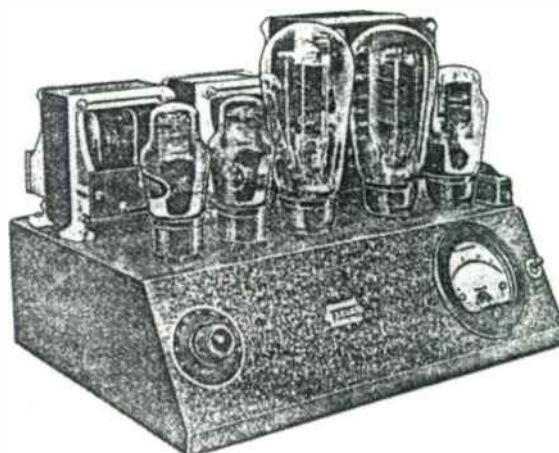
old British kit than most Britons. For some reason we just do not seem to value electronics very much and, until recently, more was known about our hi-fi history outside Britain than in it. That we even build hi-fi in this country seems to take most people by surprise. That we export it too comes as a shock. We still have a 'cottage' industry comprising about 150 manufacturers, mostly small, but many with a turnover of around £3m and

50 employees. The rarities are companies like B&W, for example, with a turnover roughly ten times greater. There is little recognition of this in the UK, however.

Quite how and why Britain should have become like this, when a once-healthy electronics industry powered by effective research existed, I do not know. Perhaps we just withdrew into our shell when those industrious and ever-inventive Japanese arrived with transistor amplifiers that didn't blow up, unlike British designs that did. We seemed to flunk it with the transistor and have never recovered.

There's a debate going on about who built the first computer - was America's ENIAC the first, or was it Britain's Colossus? The UK was in contention at this stage - circa 1947 - so far as cutting-edge electronic research was concerned. Radar is a feat of analogue electrical engineering, and again Britain was active in electronic research before and after the war. So where did it all go wrong and where did we lose the plot?

It was when Shockley and Bardeen,

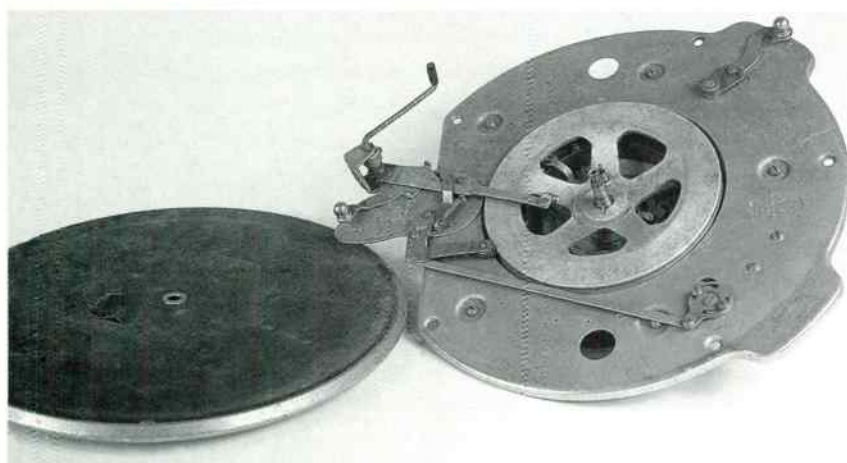


A rare picture of Leak's pre-war amplifier.

working in the Bell Laboratories, came up with the transistor that Britain went off in a sulk it seems. When I wanted to learn about electronics at school in the 1960s, it wasn't on the curriculum. I don't know whether this was common to the UK educational system or not, because I was in an isolated Devonian grammar school with an outlook that reached not much further than a few fields away. But the total absence of electronics did seem bizarre since both physics and chemistry, subjects with fewer vocational prospects, were taught.

By the end of the 1960s, and certainly by 1970, the Japanese were producing serious solid-state amplifiers with a performance and reliability we were unable to match. They pitched into consumer electronics in a voracious manner, decimating our home industry. Television, which was bigger than audio, was swamped completely. The Japanese really went for every sector of the mass-market with products that were better engineered and more reliable than those built in Britain.

To this day most Britons believe hi-fi comes from Japan. It costs £600 and can be bought from Currys or Dixons. That it is described as hi-fi but sounds nothing like it and really makes little pretence at real audio quality is not an issue. Our lack of appreciation of our audio heritage is reflected in the fact that you won't find a museum possessing a pre-war Garrard direct-drive turntable (invented by the Japanese, old boy), a pre-war Leak hi-fi amplifier for which 0.1% distortion was claimed, a Quad ESL 57 or a Leak Sandwich loudspeaker. The UK hi-fi museum has plenty of space in it; most exhibits are now abroad where they better appreciate electronics●



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TICKLED CRIMSON

**Dominic Todd does the splits with
Crimson Electric's CS610C pre-amp and CS630C monoblocs.**

Hi-fi's rule number one is never judge a component by its looks. Crimson Electric's amplifiers are a fine case in point. For in this year's April issue, the visually-unprepossessing CS610C pre and CS620 power combination trounced all their rivals save the formidable (and £175 more expensive) Bellini and Donizetti from Audio Analogue. Now, Crimson are getting really serious with the introduction of the CS630C monoblocs.

One of Crimson's persuasive trio this month is the same line and phono CS610C which figured prominently back in April. The fully-discrete implementation with its plug-mounted transformer lists amongst its parts an Alps volume pot and Aerovox slit-foil capacitors. But the real stars here are the new CS630C monoblocs. Each pumps out an easy 100watts, the power coming from a vertically-mounted toroidal transformer and Aerovox 10000uF capacitors identical to those in the pre-amp.

Joy of joys, inside the case on both inputs and outputs, instead of the cheap electric spaghetti too many manufacturers fit, is DNM's own Reson wiring. This is one of my favourite budget/mid-price cables, and the one I use to link 'speakers to amp in my own system. Unusually Crimson's distributors, Virtual Reality Audio Systems, also supply the CS610C and CS630s with DNM interconnects and mains leads, leaving nothing to chance. The only quirk to be aware of with the monoblocs is that they don't accept



traditional 4mm banana plugs - 2mm is the order of the day.

The Crimson may do an excellent impression of a fan heater circa 1965 aesthetically, but technically they more than pass muster. Anyone expecting them to sound as Heath Robinson as they look is in for a surprise.

With both pre and monoblocs thoroughly burned in and warmed up, 'Daddy-O' by Dave's True Story flowed along the solid-core interconnects. The ecclesiastical setting of this number had no difficulties reaching those 2mm sockets on the rear of the CS630s - the acoustics were crystal clear and blessed

Small wonders.



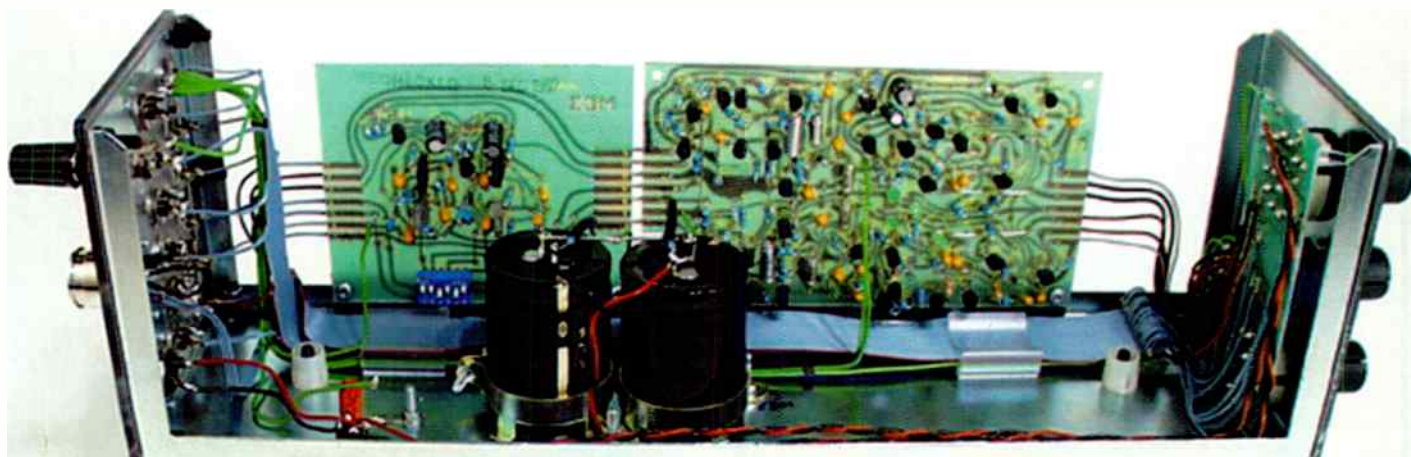
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Inside the CS610C, ribbon cable connects the inputs and outputs to the front-panel switches. Tantalum capacitors, a favoured inexpensive audiophile capacitor type, are widely used.

with exactly the right degree of echo. Just as a subwoofer worth its salt fills out a sound stage, so did the Crimson bottom end, with the power and depth available only from the best of the monobloc breed.

The happy by-product of this controlled bass was an addictive rhythm section that set any feet within hearing distance a-tapping. The immediacy of the saxophone was startling too, because of the tonal richness and instrumental texture with which the Crimsons imbued it. Likewise vocals, where focus met power without any of the hardness or sibilance which can blight many a 50watt-plus transistor amplifier.

Echobelly's 'Great Things' isn't nearly as well produced as 'Daddy-O', yet the 610/630 managed a balanced and engrossing version of what can, at best, be described as a 'lightweight' recording. The song ripped along at the hands of precise timing and clear separation, although more complex sections caused a hint of confusion to appear. Freedom from grain didn't have these amps overstepping the smoothness line either, as a suitably raucous guitar proved. Overall, the Crimsons may not have had the insight of some, but there was musical character and listener involvement by the bucket load.

With this type of balance you might expect the 600s not to be totally content with Classical music,

and you'd be pretty much right. Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No3 had realistic piano timbre but the performance was strangely lacking in immediacy. Strings also sounded a little dull and homogenised most of the time, switching to a slight raggedness on crescendos. The composition as a whole was still pleasant - the timing was once again impeccable, and the overall sound cohesive yet dynamic - but I couldn't shake off the feeling that the Crimsons' rendition was weighted in favour of lounge Jazz and Indy thrash.

After the sheer exuberance shown by the line stages, the phono stage came as a bit of a let-down. The output of Moving-Coils was set against relatively large amounts of background noise, and The James Taylor Quartet's 'Whole Lotta Love' missed out on the necessary vibrancy; guitar, for instance, didn't have the incisive 'bite' that it had had on CD. Where the Crimsons pulled up their vinyl socks was in sound staging and imaging.

Returning to CD (Danny Thompson's 'A Full English Breakfast') brought about a welcome return to transparency and intimacy, not comments I'd normally make with respect to CD! The portrayal of soprano saxophone and double-bass was as good as you can get for the money, the musicians' every last breath and movement clearly relayed. And the synergy between

the players was captured complete, making the piece compulsive listening.

With rivals from Linn and Arcam to name but two, Crimson Electric face an uphill struggle convincing punters to look their way. But anyone with £1400 to spend on amplification who ignores the CS610C and CS630Cs will be passing up one of the most involving combos under £1500. The styling may not win any awards, but at least the Crimsons are unobtrusive. Similarly, those after plenty of features should check out Arcam's 10/10P.

When sound is the main criterion, this pre and monoblocs come into their own. Classical music would benefit from a little more transparency, but rival amps which offer this couldn't hope to get close to the sheer grunt of the Crimsons. Those using vinyl as a primary source would do well to look at a separate phono stage too. But most people who are serious about vinyl and have this much money to spend on amplification would probably consider an external phono stage as a matter of course anyway.

At worst the Crimsons are par for the course, at best they're sensational. The fact that they have no real sonic flaws and come complete with a generous package of leads makes them something of an audiophile bargain.

Crimson Electric CS610C
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WORLD VERDICT



CS610C
The phono stage is the CS610C's main area of weakness. Can sound a touch muddled at times as well.



CS630C
These monoblocs have a tonal richness and bass speed rare amongst powerful amps.

Measured Performance
see p111

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David Price

Geoff Boycott once said of the English cricket team, "It's not that they're bad players, they just play badly". These typically Yorkshire words of wisdom also happen to describe perfectly my experience with Britain's hi-fi dealers. Most, by my reckoning, are decent enough types making an honest living, but I'm not convinced the advice they give or the components they sell are always right.

Where I would agree with them is in the recognition of their importance - the service they give is crucial to the health of hi-fi as a whole. It might be stating the bleeding obvious (if you'll excuse another pithy Geoffreyism), but they're the front line, the meeting point between the buyers and the expert, specialised knowledge of a passion which can compete with the very best of them. After all, listening to good music on a well-honed system is a moving experience, as I'm sure we'd all agree.

Some magazine publishers might argue otherwise. They'd talk about the power of the press, the direct link that exists between the writer and the reader, and the objectivity of journalists. However, methinks dealers are ultimately more influential, providing (and this can be a bit of a sticking point) they really know their stuff and can actually communicate with, rather than merely talk at, their customers.

A dealer worth his salt can show that, no, product A isn't better than product B, even though A got five stars and B only four. They can show why B can be as good as or better than the Best Buy in the customer's system, given his or her choice of interconnects, equipment stands or even furnishings. They can contextualise,

explain, deconstruct even, the thinking that goes into those all-important magazine reviews and recommendations. If they're half decent, that is.

My passion for hi-fi wasn't sparked by a nifty bit of writing in the first hi-fi magazine I came across, but rather a visit to a certain dealership in my nearest town. Tragically, they've closed down now - they fell victim to the last recession - but they had been going for yonks, giving a level of service little short of breathtaking. They got me into vinyl, into Duals, Denons, Regas, Creeks, Nytechs, Nakamichis, Linns, Naims, Syrinxes and Supexes when all the other local operations could muster was Nikko and Audiotronic. Moreover, they managed to instil in me the idea that hi-fi was a pretty cool pursuit.

"My passion for hi-fi wasn't sparked by a nifty bit of writing in the first hi-fi mag I came across, but rather a visit to a certain dealership in my nearest town".

The two guys running the operation were funny, erudite, talented people who would have done well in any vocation, but decided on hi-fi out of love. Hanging around chatting in their shop was the highlight of the month (mine was an exciting childhood). I didn't always agree with what they said, but the way they said it was a scream.

Back in the early Eighties, Mel Smith and Griff Rhys-Jones did a Not The Nine O'clock News skit on 'pile 'em high, sell em cheap' hi-fi dealers. If you enjoyed that, you'd have died at the sight of these guys having a go at the feeble local competition. The point is, they didn't just sell me my Dual CS505, Rega 3/R100 or Linn LP12/litok turntables, but also gave me a taste for something I hadn't previously experienced. Hours spent in the shop engaged in stupid hi-fi chat (like how to squeeze a Sondek into a Fiat X/19 sports car or onto a Honda CB750 bike) did zilch for their bottom line, but it helped yours truly realise that hi-fi was another one of life's higher pleasures (that

and Space Invaders).

Equally impressive was the way they tried not to sell me things. Shortly after CD appeared, I swaggered in with money burning a hole in my pocket, desperate for the digital dynamics that my Rega Planar 3 just couldn't provide. I had the hard-earned ready, but they just weren't having it. Rather, I was escorted to the demonstration room and left alone with a Yamaha CDX-1 for half an hour. When I reappeared looking pale and confused, they knew I had reached the same conclusion as them, saying nothing except, "but it is quite good for doing the Hoovering - you can just leave it on repeat in the background".

Such Zen-like denial of worldly temptations (ie, my money) taught me to trust them. It made me come back and

eventually spend even more without prompting. A clever trick, you may say, but I ended up with a superb system rather than a lemon. This is how all dealers should be.

Sadly, I subsequently discovered otherwise. Moving away to university I encountered an altogether different breed. My grant cheque (remember them?) was frittered away even less fruitfully than those of my fellow seekers of academic knowledge.

These days I come across an equally diverse range of hi-fi dealerships. There are large retail chains with guys who'd live and die in the service hi-fi, and small one-owner affairs who'd have the shirt off your back - and vice versa, of course. But should you find a good one, and if you look hard enough and trust your judgement you surely will, you'll be rewarded. If there's love and affection in the salesman's eyes (for the stuff he's selling, rather than for you, I hasten to add), you'll know you're on to something good●

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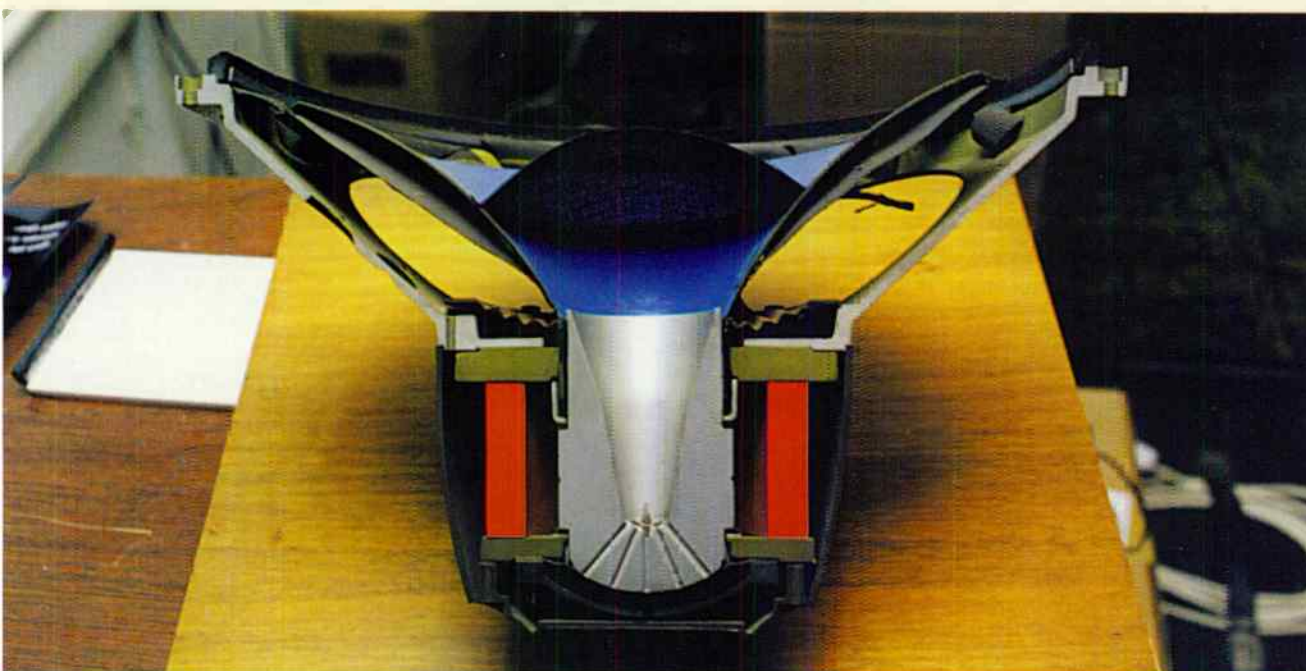
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VINTAGE VIRTUES

by Haden Boardman

There is but a handful of names that are truly synonymous with hi-fi, those that were there at our industry's birth, founder members if you like. One of those is Tannoy, whose name is listed in every English dictionary as "a type of public address system". The company was set up in 1932 by Guy R. Fountain, and the name is actually abbreviated from Tantalum Alloy, a material the company used to make its first products, solid-state rectifiers. Of course, the company became a household name thanks to its loudspeakers, and in Japan there is no other loudspeaker worth considering!

From a hi-fi point of view, it's the "Dual Concentric" unit, introduced in 1946, that made the company's name. The combination of a high-frequency pressure unit firing through the centre of a large bass cone wasn't exactly a brand new idea, nor is it a device unique to Tannoy; Altec's famous 604 operates on a similar principle. What marks the Tannoy unit out is its refinement, which left the rest of the field sounding coarse, crude and industrial by comparison.

High-frequency pressure units work by compressing the air behind a phase plug and forcing sound down a small HF horn. At high frequencies, the wavelength of the sound coming off the small metal diaphragm is physically smaller than the diaphragm

itself, at which point cancellation sets in, hence the need for a phase plug.

To say the design of the plug is a little critical would be a major understatement; it makes or breaks the loudspeaker. Tannoy's early design is excellent. It was christened the "pepper pot" after the small holes drilled from the 'back' of the plug. These merge at the 'front' to form the throat of the horn, thus ensuring smooth transition from phase plug to horn.

This is one of the single most complicated casting/machining jobs you can imagine. Tannoy couldn't afford to make this part anymore, even if they really wanted to, and have moved on to the Tulip Wave-guide with their more recent models. I don't feel this new system is quite as good as the old, but neither system is absolutely perfect, so it's probably six of one and half a dozen of the other.

The other trick Tannoy's clever designers engineered into the system was to make sure that at the crossover frequency (1kHz), the pressure unit and bass cone are exactly half a wavelength apart. Therefore, by connecting the HF unit out of phase with the bass unit, the sound emanating from the system as a whole is in near-perfect phase, no matter what axis you listen on. No other multi-way loudspeaker manages this very important point so

well; the Tannoy Dual Concentric is a genuine point-source driver.

COLOURFUL HISTORY

Early units made from the late Forties and on through most of the Fifties have been nick-named Silvers. This refers to the colour of the magnet cover (or, more accurately for the Silver, the cover on the magnet and pressure unit). These variants came in 12in. and 15in. chassis sizes, had separate crossovers and are now very rare indeed. Power handling is low by modern standards at 15-25watts, and impedance high at 15ohms. A version of this unit was made for Pye and their HF25 loudspeaker.

Later refinements saw a change from Silver to Red, which brought with it a new cone surround and a hammerite-red magnet cover. I personally have not noticed any sonic difference between these two eras of Tannoys, but that doesn't stop the earlier Silvers fetching higher prices! Still, you are rather more likely to come across a pair of Golds, made from the late Sixties up to 1974, or the unpopular HPD series (High Performance Dual).

There is little that separates the Golds and earlier units sonically, but again, myth and legend dictate that the Silvers and Red are somehow superior. In my experience, the Golds need to be driven harder than their ancestors to get them to perform, but this is pretty marginal, and could just reflect the state of the particular drivers I was listening to.

Notable changes for the Gold included a change to 8ohms for the impedance (to help transistors out) and user-adjustable HF Energy and Roll Off controls. Power handling also rose to 30watts for the 12in. and 50watts for the 15in. By the way, the first Golds do not have crossover controls and their plastic magnet cover is actually pink.

Introduced with the Golds was the little ILLZ unit. Although barely smaller than a 12in. Monitor Gold, it could be used in a much lower volume cabinet and gave sound quality just as good as its two big brothers. Strangely, this unit has a slightly larger HF diaphragm, perhaps in an attempt to reduce distortion.

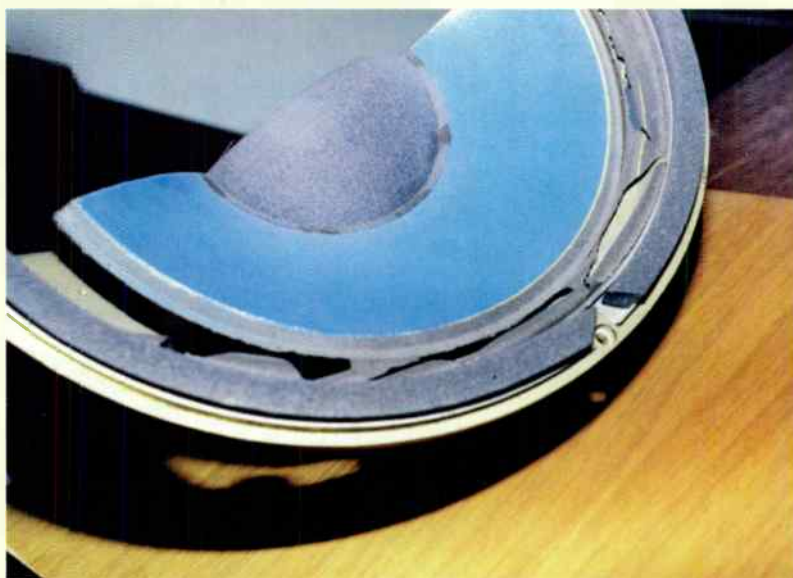
PUTTING ON WEIGHT

By 1974, Tannoy were struggling to produce a high-power unit. 70% of the world's recording studios used Tannoys for monitoring at that time, but the growth in electronic music and transistor power amplifiers led Tannoy to rework the range and introduce the HPDs. Basically, they made the cone heavier by adding 'petals' to its rear.

Tannoy said this was done to cut down on cone flex, but it handily shaved a dB or two off the efficiency figures and increased power handling for a 15in. to 80watts. Sadly, in



Original Tannoy crossovers are best left unmodified to preserve their value.



One problem to watch out for in later drivers is terminal surround-rot.

common with some of the late Golds, Tannoy decided to move from a plastic-impregnated fibre surround to a purely synthetic-foam one as well; after 25 years, you can imagine the rotten state these are going to be in, unless you're very lucky.

HPDs are pretty good but they sound a bit lifeless in comparison to their predecessors. All Tannoys up to and including the HPDs used Alnico ring magnets (common to both treble and bass drivers), while later units relied on ceramic.

If you've got a set of drivers, there's a bewildering variety of cabinets to bolt them into. At the top of the range is the Guy R. Fountain Autograph, at the bottom the bookshelf ILLZ. It has to be said that attempts to shrink the cabinets of later models didn't work too well - both the 12in. and 15in. need massive enclosures to function correctly, and in these days of stereo, not many people would put up with a pair of such huge loudspeakers in their front room.

Other than the models listed above, there were several 'professional' cabinet makers who constructed their own versions of Tannoy's enclosures, the most well-known being Lockwood. Most of these non-Tannoys tend to be bigger and ugly, but sound fine.

Sound-wise all of these loudspeakers possess a big, clear sound. If you had to split hairs, then you might say the high treble can be a little 'tizzy', and the cabinets have a massive effect on the sound (just remember, the bigger the better!)

I have not mentioned tweaks on old Tannoys. As far as the units and crossovers are concerned, they should be left alone. However, it is worth bypassing the level controls on Golds and HPDs, as these do dull the sound. Some people rebuild the crossover with new components, but be very careful here as you will reduce the value of your Tannoys. The best tweak for smaller enclosures is a larger enclosure! Chatsworth and Lancaster owners in particular take note.

BOXED IN

What follows is a potted guide to cabinets up to 1974. Solid metal badges usually indicate Silver or Red units, plastic badges Golds (except for those in GRF and Autograph cabinets, which always had metal badges). Corner unit width is quoted at the widest point, and depth is front to corner-back.



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IILZ 15in. (h) by 23in. (w) by 9 5/8in. (d). Invariably loaded with Monitor Golds. Great little infinite-baffle speaker, 99.9% of the time in Teak. Sounds best close to walls on substantial 24in. stands. Pay around £200 for a good, clean pair.



CHATSWORTH Two versions, corner - 39in. (h) by 19in. (w) by 12in. (d) - and rectangular. Takes 12in. units and you'll find Reds, Golds and the odd Silver. Built late Fifties to late Sixties. Corner unit works better than rectangular on small stands about 10in. to 12in. high. Early models have little wooden legs, later versions a small plinth. Very good infinite-baffle loudspeaker. Pay £200-£300 for a pair, depending on Red or Gold drivers. Singles, £75-£100.



LANCASTER Two versions, corner - 33in. (h) by 24in. (w) by 16 1/2in. (d) - and rectangular 33in. (h) by 21 1/2in. (w) by 12 1/2in. (d) Takes both 12in. and 15in. units, 95% Golds. 12in. is a reflex enclosure, 15in. an infinite baffle. Good sound, but the poorest of the lot, and the most common! 15in. rectangular sounds very compressed, with one-note bass; prefers small rooms with a 12in. Prices for the 15in. Tannoys did go mad at one point; thankfully they have come down quite a bit in recent times. Pay £200-£300 with 12in., and up to £500 for 15in. (slightly more for Reds). Rare as single cabinets, usually paired up. Cabinets are worthless really - these prices are mostly for the units themselves.



CANTERBURY 37in. (h) by 25in. (w) by 17in. (d) Larger dual-port reflex corner unit, lovely Fifties radiogram look! Silvers or Reds normally fitted. These are rare but beautiful loudspeakers. Superb sound - open, dynamic, glorious. Budget on £250 for a single, twice that for a pair (hard to pair up though).



LANDSDOWN 32in. (h) by 36in. (w) by 17 (d) Silver or Red drivers. Oddity; large, imposing thing that doesn't sit well in a room, and the unit is positioned too low. Very, very rare - leave them for the collectors. First model Tannoy designed trying to avoid the use of a corner, but this back-fired. Worth about as much as a Lancaster in my opinion.



YORK Early version: 45 1/2in. (h) by 32in. (w) by 22 1/2in. (d) Red, Silver or Gold. Large, dual-port reflex corner enclosure designed for 15in. drivers. Big brother to the Canterbury. Totally superb. This is pretty much the ideal enclosure for 15inchers. Hard to find, so you will pay £800 up for a pair.

YORK Late version

Rectangular, single-port reflex with Golds. Looks like a bigger Lancaster, has a great sound. In demand, so £500 to £800 is the going rate.

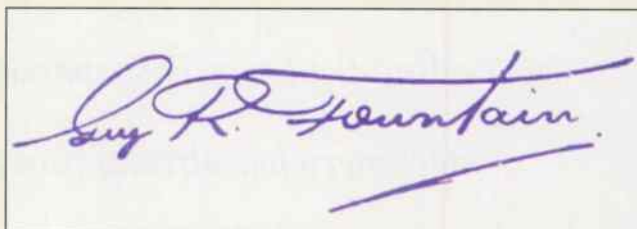


G.R.F. 46in. (h) by 40in. (w) by 23 1/2in. (d) Quasi-horn for corners, which will handle Silvers, Reds or Golds. Simply awesome. I once owned a pair but had to sell them to buy a house! I should have rented instead. Effortless bass, just glorious. Not as rare as you would think, either. £1200 to £2000 will buy a pair.

G.R.F. Rectangular 42 1/2in. (h) by 23 1/2in. (w) by 19 1/2 (d) Liable to be Gold drivers. Compromised version of the above, but still excellent. Rare, but commands same price as above.



G.R.F. Autograph 58 1/2in. (h) by 43in. (w) by 26 1/2 (d) Silvers, Reds or Golds. Goes beyond the G.R.F. by having a larger overall bass horn and a horn in front of the main unit as well. More efficient, more of everything. The only set I ever heard was in Japan, with matching ultra-rare GRF amplifiers. I was very jealous! "Rare" is not quite the right word for either amps or 'speakers! Simply priceless, Tannoy did not make many of these brutes.



ONE CAREFUL OWNER...

Some spares are still available from Tannoy, and considering the immense cost of the units new, they are quite reasonable. Bass cones blow before the HF pressure units do, and getting an original cone for a Silver or Red is now impossible. Later Golds and all HPDs suffer from surround rot, so tread with great care here; you can be certain the cone will need to be replaced. The later magnet covers on Golds are plastic and easily broken too. Beware missing magnet covers, as it can make it difficult for the uninitiated to tell one driver from another and doesn't do their value any favours.

Tannoy have survived the past 67 years and an American take-over, a management buy-out and the relocation of the entire factory from West Norwood, London to Glasgow. The reputation the company has world-wide is astounding, especially in the Far East where Tannoy is 'the' cult 'speaker system. Throughout the late Seventies and on into the present day, outfits exist who have done nothing but ship older Tannoys across to Japan. This had forced prices up, but thanks to the current strong pound, now is the time to buy yourself a pair of Tannoys and enjoy!



Let me begin with an apology. At a time when pretty much every second column inch in the papers talks of the impending new millennium, the last thing you probably want to read is yet another page on the subject. But whether you believe the year 2000 to be profoundly important or profoundly hyped, you can hardly fail to have noticed the prevailing state of confusion. There's literally a time-bomb waiting to go off in computers almost everywhere, and the supposed national millennial focus, the Dome, was on shaky ground for a while and its contents still are. The consumer electronics industry is playing its part in this millennium muddle as well, and the microcosm of the world of hi-fi is suffering the consequences in a way that will be familiar to many people.

“Compact Disc is under assault from Digital Versatile Disc. Not content with strangling the Laser Disc market, DVD machinery has already proved a match for CD.”

The transience of formats was brought home to me recently during a retailers' seminar at which I was asked to talk. The subject was recording media, the format in question Digital Compact Cassette. "What's DCC?" a voice from the back asked. . . But the biggest surprise comes from the fact that two formats which appear to have assured their survival into the 21st century are MiniDisc and the vinyl LP.

Six or seven years ago both formats were in rough shape, vinyl because it had been pushed to the verge of total extinction by record companies which wanted to see the back of it, and MiniDisc because it looked as if it might not even get off the starting blocks. These are both minority factions though. The three formats that relay audio information to most people most of the time - CD, Cassette and radio - face a less certain future.

Compact Disc is under assault from

Digital Versatile Disc. Not content with strangling the Laser Disc market, DVD machinery has already proved a match for CD. Even when playing conventional discs, the best of the new technology is mightily impressive. Switch to 24-bits at 96kHz and DVD offers a resolution that even HDCD can't equal. And this is just the beginning. The earliest versions of recordable DVD for use in the computing sphere are just starting to surface and these, if properly developed for audio purposes, could deliver a blow to CD-Recordable (and VHS video for that matter).

The big problem here is standardisation. After the initial wrangling over video discs, a standard now has to be set for a recording version. Clearly, CD and CD-R still have plenty of breathing

space. However, the launch of Sony and Philips' Super Audio CD (mooted for the end of this year) will mean further uncertainty for the buying public, although for SACD to succeed it's going to have to show a hefty sonic advantage over DVD, which will by no means be an easy task.

So where does this leave hi-fi enthusiasts looking for a digital source? CD players offer great value at the moment, and buying a player under £250 still makes sense. If you're making a larger investment, the decision becomes harder. A DVD machine looks a pretty good bet, as it will play conventional CDs. But the age-old dilemma of whether to wait for DVD technology to be refined and come down in price remains. If nothing else, the track records of CD and MiniDisc have shown us it takes about five years for the price of machines to halve whilst the sound quality improves. The result is that now is really not a good



Dominic Todd

time to sink a substantial sum into a digital source.

Sadly, the same confusion reigns with radio. Digital Audio Broadcasting is upon us, begging the question again, is it going to be worth waiting for? Unlike CD versus DVD, I believe the answer to be a more emphatic "No". Get yourself a decent analogue tuner and aerial today and you'll enjoy great sound quality. Digital radio's sound, by contrast, is rapidly building a reputation for being merely on a par or even lower grade than Nicam. Rather like RDS, DAB looks like a technology which will benefit in-car listeners more than those at home. And the plug is unlikely to be pulled on analogue transmissions for several decades to come.

Finally, what will happen to Compact Cassette? Well, despite there being many murmurings along the lines of "last nail in the coffin" and the growing threat of MD, cassette may just surprise us all by seeing CD out. For serious professional and domestic use it's well past its sell-by date, but in the wider scheme of things tape still represents a considerable force. It's far and away the cheapest recording format, replay devices can be found everywhere and bought for under a tenner, and there's a vast number of pre-recordeds out there. All the same, my advice here would be the same as with CD - only buy your next component if it's inexpensive.

The best advice I can offer at the present time is that, if you're thinking about getting into a new technology but are unsure, then do hold your fire for a while. After all, you don't want to be the only one on the street stuck with a compilation of DCC tapes for your millennium party, do you?

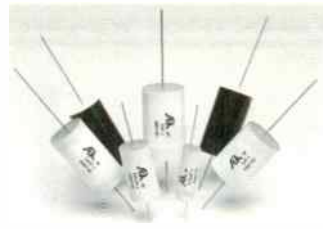
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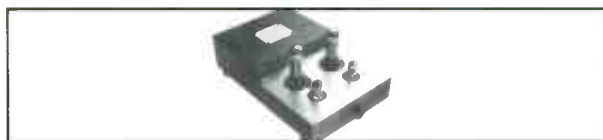
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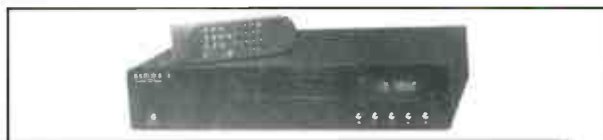
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TALKIN' 'BOUT A REVOLUTION

Simon Pope dons his Che Guevara beret for a spot of Revolution with Tannoy's R1 loudspeakers.

When I first took the R1s out of their packaging I thought Tannoy had sent us their cheaper brethren, the Mercury m1s. This is an understandable mistake, as the cabinets are exactly the same dimensions. And the 1in. soft-dome tweeter and 5in. long-throw mid/bass unit are outwardly identical too, differing only in specification.

The major visible difference is round the back, where (joy of joys) Tannoy have finally taken the plunge with four terminations for bi-wiring. Icing the cake are the real wood veneer and MDF in place of chipboard for the cabinet. Invisibly, the R1 gains an auto transformer (as wired into the crossover units of previous dual-concentric models) instead of the wire-wound resistors which normally step tweeter level down to match the mid/bass. The intent here was to produce a smoother, sweeter top end, apparently.

After breaking the R1s in, I teamed them up with Audio Analogue's Puccini integrated (non-SE version), Creek's CD43 CD player and DNM's Reson bi-wire 'speaker cable.

Mozart's String Quartet in C, K.465 (played by the Schubert Quartet on Nimbus) was duly loaded into the Creek and the dulcet tones of 'Mozzer' filled the room. The transformer was certainly doing its job, the R1s' treble steering clear of the slight hardness and grain occasionally audible on the m1s and m2s. However, those windings also glossed over subtle detailing and joined a midrange cabinet honk on the colorations list.

The Tannoys had a happier time with the compressed Electronica of Massive Attack's 'Inertia Creeps' track from their Mezzanine album. The extreme panned percussion was



clean and crisp, and there was a grin-inducing amount of fast, tight bass to be had from the tiny enclosures. With this well-produced, multi-layered recording there was none of that sense of closed-in treble which had marred Mozart, just sweet, pure upper registers.

The tension and menace which characterise this Massive number are created by a long drawn-out crescendo that the R1s captured in all its excitement. During this extended climax the midrange roughened a touch as the volume rose, but then Easy Listening music this ain't!

After the change in the Tannoys' performance between the Mozart and Massive Attack, I reached for a large-scale acoustic recording (always demanding of small boxes) with Ravel's Daphnis et Chloe: Suite No.2 and the Orchestre de Paris on a DG recording. This was better received by the R1s than the intimate setting of

the string quartet, but there was still a fine veil laid over violins, the glorious opening 'Sunrise' ducking behind light cloud cover.

In the last movement, Danse Generale, treble was once again notable for its pleasant tonality in cymbals and triangle. Woodwind sounded fresh and clear too. Many other loudspeakers have tweeters which draw attention to themselves with excessive brightness and a 'fizz' which taints orchestral strings. By contrast, the Tannoys were unobtrusive and mellow.

The Revolution R1 is a good looking, capable loudspeaker and, like its cheaper brother, the Mercury m1, delivers an impressive bass punch that can shame bigger boxes. Unlike the m1, it faces strong competition, especially from Mission's £170 771s, whose superior tweeter adds the insight the R1s lack.

Tannoy Revolution R1
£199.95

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Coatbridge,
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WORLD VERDICT



Well worth an audition if you need to balance a bright source and amp, but treble lacks transparency.

Measured Performance
see p111

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This is a specialised 28watt amplifier based on the highly linear 300B triode valve. Our 300B runs in Class A, giving one of the most sweet, open and neutral sounds possible today. Matched with good loudspeakers, it is unsurpassed. All parts are included in the kit, except valves since different 300B makes are available. Weight 26kg, external dimensions with valves 44cm(w) x 35cm(d) x 20cm(h).

KEL34 VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT

The KEL34 is our all new budget stereo integrated valve amplifier, providing a massive 40 watts of pure valve sound, with 4 line level inputs and one tape output, fully controllable from the front panel. The KEL34's simple and elegant circuit design utilises a 6AU6 pentode input valve, an ECC82 double-triode phase splitter and a push-pull pair of Ei 6CA7s (a turbo-charged EL34). The result is a typically sweet, open valve sound with atypical bass control and power. And with 40watts output, KEL34 will work its magic into 'speakers of average sensitivity too. "When I first heard the KEL34 under test I was astonished at the strong, punchy bass which, good as it was, did not compromise the smooth clarity and true detailing in the treble. What I most appreciated about this amp was the sumptuous valve midrange; the feeling that the sounds were being painted from a broad and secure palette." 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 10kg. External dimensions with valves: 33cm(w) x 27.5cm(d) x 18cm(h).



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K5881 MkII VALVE AMPLIFIER KIT

MkII with SRPP input stage!

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K5881 MkII Upgrade kit

Upgrade your pre November 1996 K5881 amplifier to MkII status. The kit converts your amplifier to the new 7025 double triode input stage in place of the original EF86 pentode input.

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KLPP1 & KLP1 use the same chassis

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K5881PSE VALVE AMPLIFIER KIT

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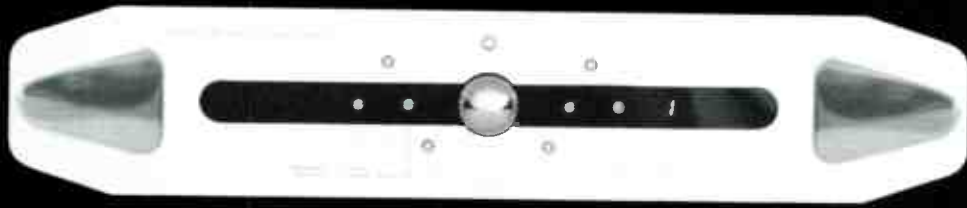
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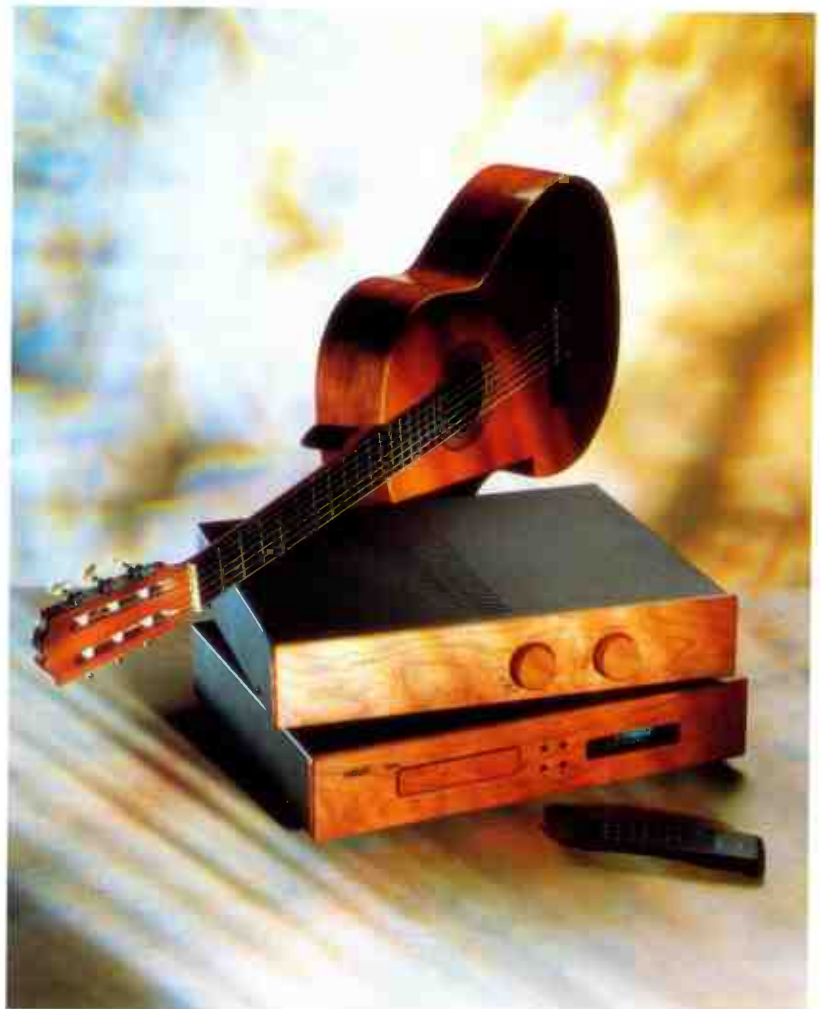
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Vertically Challenged

David Price investigates the great transistor technology that never was - the V-FET.

By the early Seventies, a great many audiophiles were replacing their ageing valve amplifiers with new transistor models. Boasting higher power outputs, superior reliability and lower prices, solid-state seemed to have a lot going for it. Not everyone saw it that way though; despite the wonders of modern science, many thought transistor amps just didn't sound as good as their thermionic forbears. Quad users found the new 303 transistor power amp cold and uninviting compared to the Quad II valve monoblocs, and Leak owners were completely underwhelmed by their company's forays into solid-state.

How so? After all, in practically every measured parameter the new transistor amps beat their valve predecessors hands down - and measured specs couldn't lie, could they? The answer

was there if you read between the lines. Although valve amps gave higher measured distortion figures, it was mostly of the

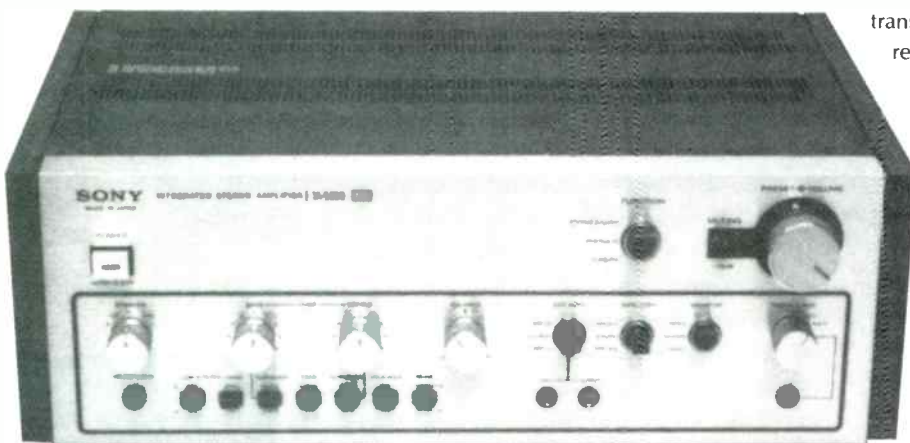


Not for the faint-hearted - Sony's 25kg TA-N7 power amplifier had a pair of grab handles for good reason.

relatively innocuous second-harmonic variety. By contrast, transistor amps gave largely odd-order distortion, which resulted in a hard, grainy sound.

By the early Seventies, Japan had become synonymous with transistor amplification. Selling the world ever-smaller and lighter solid-state electronics like TVs, radios and hi-fis, the country's success seemed down to this one technology. Strange then that Japanese audiophiles were solid-state's most vociferous critics, many stoically refusing to 'upgrade' their vintage Luxman, Marantz and Victor tube amps. What they wanted was a transistor that performed like valves but without the size, heat dissipation and reliability problems.

Developed in the mid-Sixties, FETs (Field Effect Transistors) had seemed a possible solution thanks to their input impedance characteristics which were similar to those of



Easier on the arms, back and wallet was Sony's TA5650 integrated. Those innocuous wooden end-cheeks hide a gifted performer.

pentode valves. But their output voltage range was too small, making them useless in power amp sections which needed high current capacity. Instead, FETs started appearing in the voltage amplifying stages of pre-amps. So the search for the holy grail began in earnest, and eventually researchers came up with an answer in the shape of the first generation of power FETs.

Based on an invention by Junichi Nishizawa, an academic at Japan's Tohoku University, this power FET was soon developed by Nippon Gakki (better known as Yamaha) with aid from the Japanese government and, thanks to the country's liberal patent laws, quickly seized upon by Sony and NEC.

Using a different mode of operation and construction to conventional bi-polar transistors, these early power FETs had many of the strengths of valves; indeed, their overall input/output characteristics were very similar to triodes. Because of their unusual vertical construction, they became known as V-FETs (Vertical Field Effect Transistors).

Such was their superior heat dissipation and excellent thermal stability that they were claimed to be more reliable than existing bi-polar transistors. And with their better linearity designers could get away with lower levels of negative feedback, making for a more musical sound. The rub was cost.

Because of the way they were made V-FETs were an expensive proposition, and thanks to their audiophile properties were unlikely to appear in high-volume applications where economies of scale could be made. Hence the first commercially-available V-FET power amplifier, the Yamaha B1 from 1976, cost over £2500 in today's money. Sony subsequently took up the mantle with the TA5650 and TA8650 integrations, using their own variation on the V-FET theme, but the price was still high at around £1200.

Not surprisingly, dyed-in-the-wool valve-lovers were reluctant to part with so much money for what was, after all, still a transistor amp. Meanwhile, budget buyers couldn't understand why a 50watt Sony cost so much when rival companies offered bi-polar designs with the same power output for a fifth of the price. The answer was simple - the sound.

Even compared to the best integrations around today - Sonneteer's Alabaster or Sugden's A21a, for example - the TA5650 sounds superb. Deliciously sweet treble, beautifully clear midband and tight, fast bass make for an awesome amp.



Miniaturisation and minimalism weren't the name of the game with Yamaha's B1 power amp from 1976. This huge chunk of metal is decorated with a sprinkling of controls and those all-important power meters.

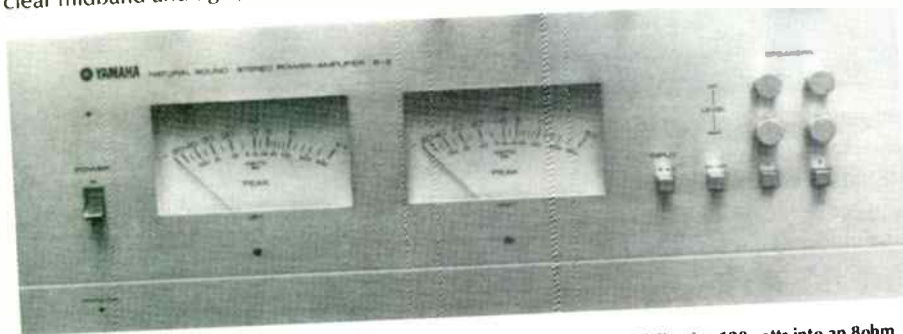
By 1978 Sony's V-FET integrations had been joined by a high-end power amp, the TAN-7. Costing upwards of £4000 in today's money and weighing in at over 25kg, it made most other heavyweights look anaemic. With 100watts of dual-mono power, it had enough muscle to drive the most demanding 'speakers.

Not to be outdone, Yamaha entered the fray with the B2, a 120watt (into 8ohms) monster complete with huge power meters on the front panel. Best characterised as fiercely analytical, with one of the most detailed and transparent midranges around at the time, neither the Sony nor the Yamaha was an easy match for existing systems - lacking the tonal colour of valves, they didn't fit easily into traditional audiophile camps. In Britain the Naim-loving press gave them a hard time, criticising the Yamaha for lacking gusto and calling the Sony clinical.

Soon the rising Yen, high manufacturing costs and the arrival of cheaper MOSFETs made V-FETs uneconomic and they were quietly discontinued. Sony and Yamaha's 1979 amps went back to bi-polars, and sounded all the worse for it.

V-FET amps still pop up now and again second-hand and are an interesting proposition. Generally, the power transistors are the last components to fail, but the problem is that, when they

do, you can't get replacements anymore. This means buying a Sony TA5650, 8650, TAN-7 or Yamaha B1/B2 is risky. One-careful-owner specimens are the best bet, but prices are anyone's guess - something for you and the vendor to sort out. The high-end power amps will trounce much of today's tranny gear but are worthless if they break down - they're hi-fi's answer to Russian Roulette. Happy gambling!



Yamaha followed the B1 with, guess what - the B2 power amplifier, capable of delivering 120watts into an 8ohm loudspeaker.

LIFE BEGINS AT 40?

Richard White re-visits G.A. Briggs' fifth edition of Loudspeakers.

Forty years ago this October, Gilbert Briggs published the monumental fifth edition of his Loudspeakers book, a considerable revision and enlargement of its predecessors. This complete re-vamp reflected the broadened interest in hi-fi since the first edition in 1947.

British manufacturers like Acoustical-Quad, Lowther, Leak, Tannoy and Briggs' own Wharfedale had become well-known throughout the world and, once the post-war days of austerity had receded a little, hi-fidelity as a serious (and socially-acceptable) hobby gained a footing in domestic circles which it had never enjoyed before. Compared with his books on Sound Reproduction, Pianos And Sonics, Amplifiers and so on, perhaps G.A.B.'s Loudspeakers was looking sketchy with a whole new audio public clamouring to read all about it, hence the bumper fifth edition.

Taking no previous knowledge for granted, Briggs leads the reader on as complete a guide to the design, building, testing and use of loudspeakers as had then appeared. Cones, chassis, coils, crossovers, centring devices - just to mention a few of the Cs - are all covered thoroughly. Sonic cause and effect are properly demonstrated with tabulated results and annotated oscillograms. Don't forget that, in 1958, there were no basics to which hi-fi owners had ready access, unless it were the technical columns of the few audio magazines or dry old tomes in public libraries. Even today, when new books on all audio subjects roll off the presses at an unprecedented rate, few try to cover their subject with such a happy combination of broad sweep and knowledgeable depth. After all, by then Gilbert Briggs had been 'Wharfedale' for over 20 years; few of the problems and puzzles he described did not come from his own personal experience both as

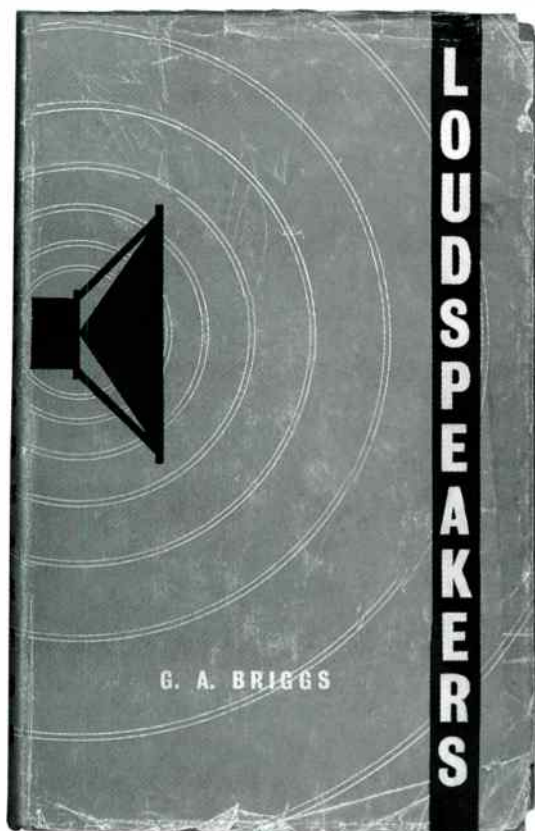
home experimenter and manufacturer.

The first four editions of the book had been comparatively modest in scope. For the fifth, Briggs went to town and produced a volume which not only covered more 'speaker topics than before but also ventured a bit of autobiography in the chapter 'Looking Back'. Although the purist might query the relevance of Gilbert's unsuccessful time in the rag trade to the subject of loudspeakers, it is a timely reminder of days when the electric reproduction of sound was so recent that

technical books. On the other hand, it is sobering to find just how much remains pertinent, especially for the home constructor. Briggs' insistence on listening and personal taste as the real arbiters when it comes to 'fidelity' ring all too true even today, especially when you think of the number of 'perfect' sound systems about and the number of firms who have the 'only' answer to musical reproduction. Wharfedale Wireless Works is not rammed down readers' throats either; other firms and other designers are given full and generous credit throughout the book.

Since the plates for all of the Wharfedale opus were destroyed a few years ago, it is unlikely that Loudspeakers, Fifth Edition will ever be reprinted in the style that it deserves. Many of the sections have been superseded in practice, if not in theory, so it will hardly pass muster as bang up-to-date. Conversely, the still-relevant chunks are too numerous to condemn it as an historical curiosity.

Perhaps the best reason for marking the 40th anniversary of the book's publication is to pay tribute to Gilbert Briggs' positive genius for communicating enthusiasm. It is easy to forget when reading the book that it was written by a 60-odd-year-old family man who'd been grinding away in a very competitive business for 25 years. For this reason alone many, myself included, will always owe a debt of gratitude to Gilbert Briggs.



'a career in audio' barely existed as a concept and the moving-coil loudspeaker was a new and exciting field for the enthusiast; when home-made speech-coils were wound on glass bottles and 80c/s (pre-Hertz!) was Deep Bass!

Much in Loudspeakers has dated inasmuch as the chatty, slightly avuncular style has long been out of fashion in

Loudspeakers Fifth Edition by G.A. Briggs was published by Wharfedale Wireless Works in October 1958. There are copies in the National Lending Service and the Science Reference Library. They turn up quite frequently at Audio Jumbles, and a good copy changes hands for £12-£15. A reprint of the Fourth edition is available from World Library price £10.95 + post and packing.

ROCK & POP

by Jon Clarke & Stuart Lenz



GRACE JONES
**PRIVATE LIFE: THE
COMPASS POINT
SESSIONS**
ISLAND 524-501-2

Best remembered for the mark she made on Russell Harty's show (and for the one she left on his face), Grace Jones was the darling of the Warhol jet-set at the time Disco reached its prime. With her androgynous looks, chiselled features and pointed stare, she looked like something from the future. As it turned out, it was more her music that was way ahead of its time.

Recorded in the Eighties, her output was so very different from those all-pervasive Disco influences, especially her early tracks, like the anthem 'I Need A Man', which triggered such gay abandon in the Studio 54 toilets. 'Warm Leatherette' and 'Nightclubbing' also defined an entirely new dance ethos.

These Compass Point Sessions comprise the tracks from this period. The double-CD collection, including two unreleased tracks and four alternative versions of familiar songs, demonstrates genuine musical pedigree as well as

Grace's own ability to evolve Bowie-like with the trends. Still, having assembled a band at the Bahama-based studios which included African keyboardist Wally Badarou, and Jamaica's premier rhythm duo, Sly and Robbie (already household names in their own right), it was hard to go wrong.

For all her innovation, it seems all the more surprising that some of her most acknowledged songs are covers. Far better than the original is her version of The Pretenders' 'Private Life', Chrissie Hynde's drawl replaced with a sensuous, cool aloofness. Roxy Music's 'Love Is The Drug' and Iggy Pop's 'Nightclubbing' are outstanding achievements too, the latter fully capturing the drug-addled mood of the original.

The biggest surprise has to be her reworking of Joy Division's 'She's Lost Control'. Northern angst has never travelled well, but the steamy Reggae-Funk concoction that Grace cooked up had her bellowing with all the panache of a dominatrix swinging from the chandeliers - a truly frightening and misconceived idea of what angst is supposed to be.

For the most part, the Compass Point songs possess the sort of languorous ambience associated with Parisian cafes - a little seductive and rather intimate. 'Walking In The Rain', 'I've Seen That Face Before' and 'My Jamaican Guy' are definitely meant to go with a

coffee and a Gitane.

In strong contrast is 'Pull Up To My Bumper', with its knob/horn double-entendres, mantric grooving and an unequivocal invitation to, well, "Pull up. . . in your long, black limousine. . . and drive it in between".

Most of this compilation's contents bear their age well. On the other hand, the tracks culled from the album *Living My Life* don't rank so highly, only *Slave To The Rhythm* managing to be more than just mundane.



LHOQQ
LHOQQ
ECHO ECHCD22

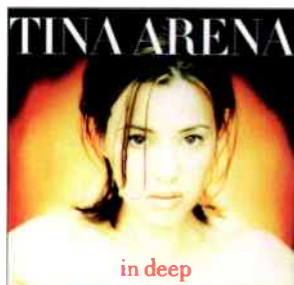
The first thing you notice about this bunch is the duff name, but seeing as they hail from Iceland, we can probably excuse that. The second is the moody cover and the fact that lead singer Sara Gudmundsdottir shares her surname with Björk. And, you've guessed it, with the quirky little voice and the country she heralds from, it was inevitable that Lhoqq would be compared with Iceland's most famous export. And, on numbers such as

'Missile' and the catchy debut single, 'Losing Hand', the similarities with Björk are in fact quite striking. But from there on in, the music takes a different course.

Much more so than Björk, Lhoqq embrace a sanitised, clean version of Trip-Hop, replacing the genre's darker, more forbidding textures with lighter, more palatable tones. The result is a sort of Portishead on saccharine, an apt description given their fondness for willowy, noirish and sci-fi film ambiances. 'Take Me Away', for instance, could conceivably be a backdrop to *Twin Peaks* or the prelude to *The Third Man*, where Orson Welles emerges in a cloud of smoke.

A typical Lhoqq composition has Sara murmuring sultry, breathy vocal lines, all around her drum machines scuttling and competing for attention with the cut-up electronics and meandering keyboards. However, Johann Johannsson, the electronics wizard, and bass player Petur Hallgrímsson (who coincidentally moonlights for Kylie Minogue) deliberately curb their experimental urges to keep the whole thing commercially engaging. This leaves little room for ideas to be properly fleshed out, and at times this debut sounds a bit flat. In spite of this, the tracks have a nicely hypnotic feel to them. Feted by David Bowie, who asked them to support him on a recent world tour, Lhoqq may well surprise us yet.

ROCK & POP



TINA ARENA

IN DEEP

COLUMBIA XPCD1023

Arena by name, and arena by nature. This girl and her lungs are going to be world-wide hits, worthy indeed of her relation Wembley.

Once a child star in Australia, making her reputation on the popular TV show Young Talent Time, Tina Arena (her real name) has since matured from a Disco diva into a singer on the international playlist. The title of her new album, *In Deep*, also suggests an emotional leap forward from the days she spent in her vixen period singing 'I Need Your Body'.

No matter what you happen to blame it on - political correctness, the vagaries of fashion, good taste, whatever - there's little appetite nowadays for classic female performers who are only capable of belting out relentless heart-stoppers. At one time, this would have included Barbara Streisand, Tammy Wynette or even Aretha Franklin, and more recently Whitney Houston. But without exception, these artistes have shuffled off to the vaults. With Mariah Carey and

Celine Dion having taken their crowns before themselves moving in other directions, there are few contenders for future female vocalist.

It's a tall order but Tina delivers. Thanks to her powerful voice, *In Deep*, with its melange of Soul, Pop and Gospel, is a classy affair like its predecessor *Don't Ask*, and more than meets the mass-market diva pitch.

Through interpretative conviction, sheer lung power and carefully-layered arrangements, Tina renders moving what on paper might seem clichéd. Hence a cool rendition of a Lloyd-Webber-penned 'Whistle Down The Wind', for example.

The songwriting, much of it by Arena herself, is purposefully sincere and communicative, lacking the starry-eyed glamour normally associated with the genre - just like an Australian really.



JACK

THE JAZZ AGE TOO PURE 72CD

Jack is not a sax soloist as the name might suggest. Instead, it's a seven-piece outfit who hail from London. They made

an impression two years ago with their debut, *Pioneer Soundtracks*, which showed they belong distinctly to the 'Broken Hearts, Smoke Gets In Your Eyes' school of songwriting - incurable misty-eyed romantics all, and The Jazz Age is a yearning for that idealised past.

In a nutshell, what we have here is F. Scott Fitzgerald literary sentiments set to modern orchestral Rock. Commercial it isn't, and even the album's outstanding songs, such as the opening 'Three O'clock In The Morning' with its flurry of violins over a word-playing ballad, is not the stuff of Pop radio. This is a shame considering the evident ambitions of the band.

Strong, versatile writing there is aplenty here, and if texts about faded grandeur, old-fashioned romance and longings never required are what gets you up in the morning, then this should be your bag. The dour 'Nico's Children', 'Lolita Elle' and 'Half Cut, Wholly Yours' are great laments in true Leonard-Cohen style.

More laughs can be found on other tracks: 'Pablo' is jaunty Glam-Rock (platform shoes required not for such svelte dressers as Jack). The piece de resistance, however, is 'Cinematic', an amusing journey into a heaven of artists, very much the twin of REM's 'End Of The World As We Know It' in which Jack go through a roll-

call of icons with all the aplomb of a Channel-Four art critic.

The Jazz Age can be a little laboured in places, as it seems the instinct is to throw in an orchestral concoction where none is warranted. Understatement is key, while Anthony Reynolds' warblings can be a tad too close to Jarvis Cocker's for comfort - an anodyne version of Pulp is the last thing they want to become.

Ultimately *The Jazz Age* needs time to reveal its many charms and patience is rewarded - the difficult, often complex layers hide seductive melodies which grow stronger with each pass.



SARAH MCLACHLAN

SURFACING

ARISTA 07822-18970-2

At home in her native Canada, Sarah McLachlan falls somewhere between Alanis Morissette and the erstwhile Martha And The Muffins in the fame stakes. Most notably she has been associated with advancing the cause of Lilit Fair, the progesterone equivalent of the Lollapalooza festival.

ROCK & POP

RECORD OF THE MONTH



UNKLE
PSYENCE FICTION
MOWAX MW085CD

A few times a year an album is so eagerly awaited that the expectations can only be disappointed by the results. While not blatantly hyped by the record label (unlike the All Saints of this world) Unkle had the industry bigging up this unique disc months before its eventual release. And while it gets very close, it sadly doesn't quite earn its cigar. It's a shame really, because the best of Psyence Fiction will blow you away - over half of this intriguing compilation can only be described as masterful.

Recorded over three years with the technical wizardry of

spindocter DJ Shadow and compatriot MoWax supremo James Lavelle, Unkle has all the hallmarks of an All-Time great. Grabbing the services of such luminaries as Thom Yorke (Radiohead)

and Richard Ashcroft (The Verve), on paper the album looks like a winner. And this is MoWax's finest hour to date, the rare-breed label, a specialist connoisseur of rarefied beats which blend Jazz, Hip-Hop and Techno, at last raising its profile. While it's always been informed, fresh and experimental, until now MoWax was a world of no-stars. Now, standing above the throng of lowly turntable practitioners, DJ Shadow is becoming to MoWax what Oasis are to Creation.

Shadow's debut, *Endroducing*, and the follow-up, *Preemptive Strike*, documented his evolution from a kid with a turntable to a full-blown meister with soul. This time, he has

MoWax's founder, James Lavelle, at ground control.

The two set off suitably together with 'Guns Blazing (Drums Of Death Pt1)', a manic Hip-Hop track bolstered by the rhymes of Old-Skool hero Kool G. Rap, which gives a respectful nod to the label's street-wise roots. Mind you, the Hip-Hop intro proves to be the exception rather than the rule, and thereafter the influence of the Shadow looms large. Hence on the title track, 'Unkle', speech fragments weave in and out of an assortment of guitar lines and Arabic horns. 'Bloodstain' is equally mystical.

Moving on, 'Meanwhile Unreal' is a funky collage of sounds, while 'Getting Ahead In The Lucrative Field Of Artist Management' is apparently an archive trailer for a Seventies game called, in all seriousness, *Ballbuster* (very funny too!)

Is there no end to the invention? Not when the crafty duo haul in the big attractions. The Verve's Richard Ashcroft evokes his 'Drugs Don't Work' piece in 'Lonely Soul', where he deadpans: "I believe there's a time when the cord of life should be cut, my friends."

Which should have been the case for the next venture, Beastie Boy Mike D's 'The Knock (Drums Of Death Pt2)', a poor rap sequence with a better bass and theremin contribution, the latter interestingly by Metallica's Jason Newstead.

Things perk up rapidly once more with 'Rabbit In Your Headlights', a stirring number courtesy of Thom Yorke, a long-time supporter of DJ Shadow, whose services were used on the last Radiohead tour. Showcasing Thom's tremulous vocal over a spartan Satie-like piano line, 'Rabbit...' is a fine ditty that does Thom no disservice either, despite his sounding like the unhappy bunny of old.

However, it is the lesser-known mortal, Atlantique Khan, who goes on to provide the album's best track, 'Chaos', a blissful but beguiling ballad that happens to employ Mark Hollis, the ex-Talk Talk man on piano.

If Unkle had to live by a code, it would be: experiment or die. *Psyence Fiction* is the living embodiment of that - darned quirky and eccentric. And by the looks of it, there's no shortage of takers and participants either.

Surfacing, her fourth album, shamelessly mines the reserves of quiet strength which ensured that her last album release, *Fumbling Towards Ecstasy*, such a

rapturous reception. Perhaps as much due to her involvement with Lilith as with her constant touring demands though, *Surfacing* doesn't possess the same emotional

impact as its predecessor.

Unfortunately, the relative simplicity of the piano arrangements, the lack of variation in the chord progressions and the

repetitive vocals means *Surfacing* is singularly lacking in drama and invention, and at best potters along with all the speed of a pensioner in his garden.



VARIOUS - MIXED BY
JUDGE JULES AND BOY
GEORGE

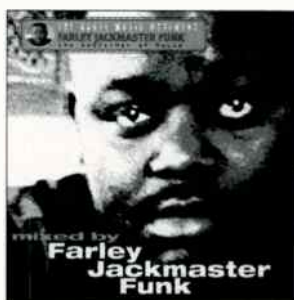
THE IBIZA ANNUAL
MINISTRY OF SOUND MOSCD2

It's the second huge compilation this year from Dance music's manic merchandisers, Ministry Of Sound, and once again Judge Jules and Boy George are spinning the discs. But it's not like anyone will be buying this for the DJs or the mixing - this double CD's greatest strength is its huge selection of top tracks which you can bet has very little to do with Mr Jules' and Mr George's current taste in tunes, and a lot more to do with a carefully-planned marketing drive. You can forget the Ibiza 'connection' too; Ministry may be well established on the island, but you won't have to have spent your holiday in San Antonio to recognise these Jazzy House numbers.

Jules opens with that annoying 'Ruffneck' Ragga track that Freestylers featuring MC Navigator drove us all mad with over the summer, while Boy George sets his mix swinging with 'Sounds Of Wickedness', the tune that was all over Radio 1

like a rash in August. Then there are charty House contributions from Daniel J. Lewis, Baby Bumps, Juliette Lewis and so on, all tracks you might expect to find down yer dodgy discotheque rather than Ibiza's poncey Pacha (or in Britain's foremost superclub, for that matter).

Everyone deserves a bit of cheese once in a blue moon, and if you've yet to supplement your Dance collection with a hopelessly-handbag House album for '98, then this might be the one. It's got a couple of remastered corkers such as Golden Girls' 'Kinetic' and Energy 52's 'Cafe del Mar '98' and oooh, 40 other varieties of pure, unadulterated cheese - which is more than your local supermarket can claim.



VARIOUS - MIXED BY
FARLEY JACKMASTER
FUNK

**THE HOUSE MUSIC
MOVEMENT**

MASTER DANCE TONES
HMMCD-8092

This is another new release that comes with a special-offer twin CD and one of the first to package audio

interviews alongside the music. The theme of the pair is as encapsulated in the title, which is a novel idea, but a little pretentious to say the least. Derrick May is the first in line with his recollection of the birth of the House music movement, but the combination of a sycophantic journo with very little to say and May's repetitious account of his first trip to the Powerplant says more about the hyped-up nostalgia that is the Dance music industry than anything else. Fortunately, there's actually some music to listen to, otherwise CD2 would be annoying enough to warrant violence towards the hi-fi and that's not good. CD1 can tell you infinitely more about the birth of House music than anyone who claims to have been there.

This disc showcases the Soul-influenced sounds of the genesis of House, by definition the roots of today's Dance grooves. Mr Funk's own contribution to the movement is well documented in various mixes, Yulandist Brown's Gospel 'Child Of God', Ruth Jackson's 'It's Too Late' and, of course, the tune that helped bring House to the masses, 'Love Can't Turn Around'. There are new tracks to be found too, The Funk Junkeez 'Got Funk' being a prime example, its modern version of the vibe beefed up with a phatter bass line spattered with the Garagey vocals that the godfather of House is famed

for. This is the stuff of warm-up DJs, laid-back Soulful Garage that verges on the category of House music as we know it.

COMPETITION TIME!

It isn't only dodgy stains on the carpet and suspicious yellow liquids in polystyrene cups that will make up the fallout from the celebrations of Fused And Bruised's second-birthday and almost a score of singles. We've secured from the label six give-aways for lucky winners, with the first prize a copy of Fused And Bruised Vols1 and 2 accompanied by an exclusive F&B T-shirt. Five runners up will each get a copy of Fused And Bruised Vol2.

All you have to do to be in with a chance of walking off with one of these musical jewels is answer the following question: How many singles has the label put out to date? Is it 20, 25 or 19? You can send in your competition entries (which should reach us by November 4th) in the ways listed on p35.

Below: another of Fused And Bruised's releases, reviewed back in September '98.



DANCE & AMBIENT

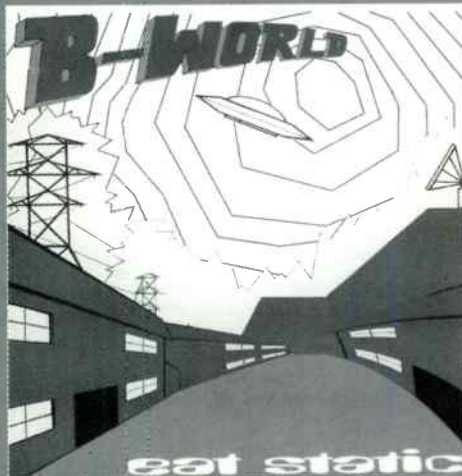
by Sara Davis

RECORD OF THE MONTH

EAT STATIC
B-WORLD
ULTIMATE MUSICAL PUBLISHING

The thing about Eat Static is that they're always brilliant live. In fact, Eat Static tunes take on a whole new meaning when you're standing in the middle of a stadium with 500 animated nutters listening to their unrelenting Trance-Techno manifesto. That's the great thing about B-World - it's recorded live and complete with atmospheric cheering, so with a decent set of 'speakers you could almost be there.

Eat Static can lay claim to status as one of the UK's first live Techno outfits, having started their career at many of the



Orbital raves in the early Nineties. Since then, they have proved themselves one of

the hardest-working Trance acts, touring unceasingly, both alongside Ozric Tentacles and in their own right.

For Eat Static followers who have experienced any of the seven gigs featured on this disc, this is your chance to re-live the occasion any time you like for the rest of your life. And even if you weren't there, B-World is a fine set of Eat Static favourites, amongst them 'Interceptor Pt III' and 'Contact' (from the recent Science Of The Gods CD), Cold Cut hot-tip 'Dionysiac' and 'Survivors' from the classic Implant album. B-World also presents that until-now-unreleased Breakbeat track 'Zanti-Misfit' which has so far only appeared at live shows.



THOMAS FEHLMANN
FLOW '90-'98
APOLLO

Thomas Fehlmann began his foray into the wild and uncharted world of electronic music with the acquisition of a chunky keyboard in the Seventies. This just goes to show what talent a piece of basic hardware can breed. Swiss-born Fehlmann's destiny became apparent as early as '85 with the signing of his first solo project, Ready Made, in the Techno capital of the world, Berlin. A decade later and the long hours spent holed up in his bedroom paid off big time in a chance meeting with

Alex Paterson, who liked his style enough to put him in touch with The Orb.

The Flow EP of four years ago gave a taster of Fehlmann's harder edge, featuring six tracks that paved the way for this more sublime, sophisticated album.

Flow '90-'98 is a celebration of 10 years of Techno-tinged Ambient Electro which confirms his status as a happenin' geezer. The collection of tracks focuses on concise slices of Orb-style Ambience that are well worth grabbing for relaxing accompaniment to this winter's long nights. There are groovy samples such as the A-Team theme on 'Foreign TV' (Kufi And Nashi) and plenty of complex drum-'n'-bass-oriented rhythms which were way ahead of their time.

Flow chops between mellow tunes that are melodic and easy, and more experimental mish-mashes of sounds and samples. It's a

wicked combination that, well, flows.



VARIOUS
10 KILORS
10 KILO

A classy compilation that's coming out on 10 Kilo, 10 Kilors the album showcases the label's current gentle Techno tip in the form of artists like Aussie Higher Spin States, the funky Rock City Shockers and Excess Head.

10 Kilo is one of those labels that's well on the way to making a big name for itself, mainly due to the fact that it produces consistently good releases in a smooth, funky,

Drum 'n' Bass style.

Most of the tracks featured on 10 Kilors will either appear shortly as singles on other labels (Marine Parade, Skulduggery) or even on Kilo 10in. pressings before too long, so this release is a bit like a company catalogue - record selection from the comfort of your armchair.

And it's a fine album in its own right, working the sound Daft Punk made famous into a funkier and phatter vibe; there's nothing better than slow, slow 303 melodies that distort and twist over mellow Funk beats and samples. Pink Floyd fans should check out the Kilo blend of funky Drum 'n' Bass with vocal sampling, and see how samples of dialogue have progressed since the days of 'Alan's Psychedelic Breakfast'.

Regular 10 Kilo homebirds will just cream themselves when they hear what's coming. Like the label, these releases just keep getting better and better. ●

Q. What have the BBC, The Royal Opera House, Dolby Laboratories, EMI and Abbey Road Studios have in common?

The best of British



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JAZZ

by Ian Nicolson



MICHAEL 'PATCHES' STEWART
PENETRATION
HIP BOP HIBD 8018

US bass-star Marcus Miller's touring and recording trumpet player is still committed to the Miles Davis legacy, including playing extended, ethereal mute lines over drifting Jazz-to-Rock rhythms. But there's a soulful side to Stewart's playing that never suited Miles; fans of Chuck Mangione and Kenny G will also find plenty to enjoy here.

There are times when I want to hear brass without it sounding brazen, and the relaxed grooves on *Penetration* make a fine springboard for Stewart's unaggressive but potent playing. He's helped out by Bill Evans and Kenny Garrett on saxes, James Genus and Miller himself on basses, Hiram Bullock on guitar and an unexpected but elegant Al Jarreau came on 'My Funny Valentine'.

The rest of the album (save for a gentle, instrumental version of Sting's 'Fields Of Gold') serves as a series of shag-pile to industrial carpets for Stewart to understate his stuff over, all written by

producer and keyboard player Jim Beard. Mellow, classy and quite a bit tastier than first listening might suggest.



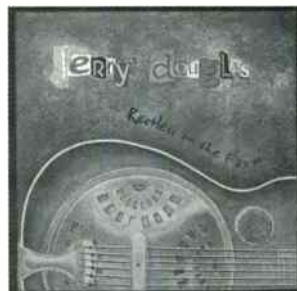
OSCAR PETERSEN/BENNY GREEN
OSCAR AND BENNY
TELARC JAZZ CD-83406

The pit-orchestra pianist who taught me to love Jazz had a pet name for Oscar Petersen: "God". For decades the big man's effortless mastery of his instrument made him the envy - and inspiration - of players around the world, while his ability to fill concert halls with adoring fans kept the flame kindled by Ellington and Basie burning through the Hard Bop, Post Bop and Jazz Funk waves.

After a major challenge to his health in the early Nineties and an extended recovery period, Petersen has now moved to Canada and returned to the piano. Several albums on Telarc have happily led him back to the concert stage as well, usually in the company of his protege, young Glenn-Gould prize-winner Benny Green.

This 20-bit direct-to-digital recording of piano duets does justice to both the recovering

old master and the young contender. They are supported by Ray Brown (bass) and Gregory Hutchinson (drums) on a selection that skips easily from Lehar through Waller to Parker.



JERRY DOUGLAS
RESTLESS ON THE FARM
SUGAR HILL VIA DIRECT SHCD 3875

In which the "A-list" Nashville session dobro and steel player takes on Errol Garner, Donal Lunny and Paul Brady to illuminating - and occasionally startling - effect. Fans of plucked-string-led crossover Jazz will be alternately amazed and delighted, and even those who reject the mixing of musical genres as though it transgresses a biblical injunction against miscegenation should be pleasantly surprised.

This disc's recording and mixing quality is superb, and the track sequencing exceptional. It helps to be open to Country influences and instrumentation, but when the players are as adventurous and talented as these guys (and the sheer enjoyment they convey

so strong), well hell, it's worth dipping into something new.



KARRIN ALLYSON
DAYDREAM
CONCORD JAZZ CCD 4773

Sometimes I can imagine the days of satin pumps and Julie-London eyes are slipping back into vogue. Which would be no bad thing - there's something truly restorative about the sound of a character vocalist breathing new colours into much-loved classics over a cushion of vibes, brushes and double-bass. And with Stacey Kent, Cassandra Wilson and Lisa Ekdahl making waves this year, Karrin Allyson's swinging and seductive voice deserves maximum exposure.

With her regular Kansas City band boosted by stellar support from Randy Brecker on horns, vibist Gary Burton and pianist Paul Smith, Concord Records are expecting a real breakthrough with her latest album.

Allyson's gamine looks and easy style disguise a sophisticated Jazz sense - just check out the Monk Medley on *Daydream*, or her delightful, double-time reworking of 'So Danço Samba' for proof.

JAZZ

by Simon Hopkins

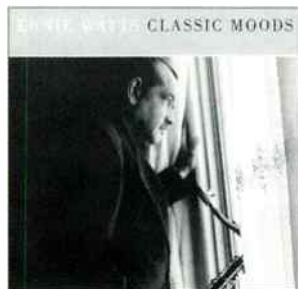


TEX BENEKE DIRECTS THE GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA
ORIGINAL RECORDINGS
HALCYON DHDL 134

When WWII ended, and Glenn Miller's manager wanted to reform the scattered Orchestra - with the blessing of Miller's widow Helen - he turned to Tex Beneke, who had played tenor in the Miller Orchestra from '38 to '42, when the band broke up as Miller enlisted. Beneke had also sung the lead vocal on 'Chattanooga Choo Choo', the first official million-selling record (in 1941), and led his own services band from '42 to '45.

Despite the upheavals of the war and the early peace, the Beneke-led Orchestra proved a massive success, both on the radio and at the enormous dance venues that characterised the period. Preserved - superbly remastered and restored - here are 24 seldom-heard, late-Forties big-band classics such as 'These Foolish Things', 'The Man I Love' and 'The Woodchuck Song', all

played by superb musicians in full swing. And with the spotlight shifted a little from Miller's clarinet to the Orchestra's ensemble playing and arrangements as well as fine (often hilarious) close-harmony vocals from the Crew Chiefs and Beneke, this makes a fine companion piece to BMG's previously-unreleased Andrews Sisters and Glenn Miller compilation



reviewed earlier this year.

ERNIE WATTS
CLASSIC MOODS
JVC 9041

For a boy who only took up the saxophone because there were no trombones left in the school band's kit-room, Ernie Watts has made the most of the Fates' passing whim. As one of the most in-demand Jazz, Rock and Soul session players in California (Charlie Haden, The Rolling Stones, Lee Ritenour, Smokey Robinson, Stanley Clarke, Steely Dan and dozens more have all called on his services), and the originator of the acclaimed Tenor Trio album in 1997 (with Pete

Christlieb and Rickey Woodard), Watts could have rested on his Grammy and his studio date-book. Instead, he's picked seven absolute belters like 'Round Midnight', 'In A Sentimental Mood' and 'Lush Life' that inspired his teenage playing, added a trio of his own tunes, and produced another timelessly gorgeous album of dinner Jazz good enough to make you put down the fork.

These tunes are Jazz milestones indelibly associated with some of the most magical players, bands and arrangers in Jazz. Yet Watts and his live-to-two-track-digital quartet prove that, in the right hands, the 12-bar Blues is still kicking like a thoroughbred missing his oats.



THE DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET
SO WHAT'S NEW?
TELARC JAZZ CD 83434

Although he's 78 years old now, and his dicky heart makes travelling to high altitude venues dangerous, the first modern Jazzer to

make eccentric time signatures like 9/8 and 5/4 genuinely popular is still going strong.

If you remember his Fantasy albums of the Fifties, or the phenomenally successful Columbia sets with Paul Desmond, this latest collection of tunes is sure to evoke some sweet dreams. The trademarks are still intact - the block chords, the achingly sweet, yet almost thrown-away melodies, and the playful, percussive piano. But Brubeck's latterday emphasis on composition over improvisation has helped his recent albums depend less on effects and innovation for impact.

Backed by a suitably swinging acoustic quartet, anchored by the brilliant British drummer Randy Jones, and top-lined by alto-sax star Bobby Militello - a Desmond fanatic himself - this is inspirational, engaging modern Jazz that repays your attention with laughter and tears as well as pleasure.

The Quartet are on tour in the UK during October and November - the 40th anniversary of their very first British dates. If you know someone who went first time around - and can prove it with memorabilia or ticket stubs - call Terry O'Brien on 0171 487 2558. Brubeck himself wants to meet them backstage for a laugh and a shared memory or two●

CLASSICAL

by Peter Herring

This month's recordings reflect music's contrasting moods: the ceremonial, in a liturgical celebration from 14th-century Italy; the contemplative, with the miniature masterpieces of Orlando Gibbons; the epic, in Dmitri Shostakovich's wartime symphonies.

RECORDS OF THE MONTH

Symphony No7 in C major, Op60 - Leningrad
BBC National Orchestra of Wales; conductor, Mark Wigglesworth
 BIS CD-873 (DDD/79.66)

Symphony No8 in C minor, Op65
Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra; conductor, Yevgeny Mravinsky
 PHILIPS VIRTUOSO 422 442-2 (DDD/59.15)

Of these performances of Shostakovich's two epic wartime symphonies, one is a classic and the other possesses all the prerequisites to become one.

The late Yevgeny Mravinsky, long-time principal conductor of the Leningrad (now St Petersburg) Philharmonic Orchestra, had the strongest imaginable links with the Eighth Symphony: he was its dedicatee and, in 1947, conducted the first performance in the former Soviet Union.

This Philips recording of the work comes from another concert given almost 40 years later, in 1987, by

which time Mravinsky must have directed the work on countless occasions. A sense of over-familiarity, even staleness, might justifiably have been anticipated, instead, the result was electrifying. While this is not the best played Shostakovich Eighth in the catalogue, there are some shortcomings

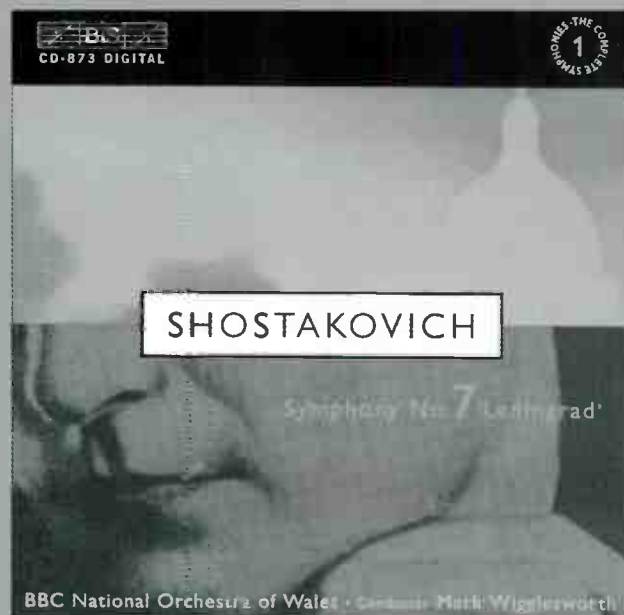
structure, not least in the vast opening adagio whose exacting tempo changes have been the bane of many interpretations. It is this understanding of the broad emotional canvas that allows Mravinsky to delve into the symphony's musical depths without sacrificing momentum.

Mravinsky pulls no punches, and in his hands the pounding, Beethoven-like pulse of the third movement is nothing short of a depiction of uncontrolled barbarism.

The culmination of Mravinsky's reading comes with the deceptively enigmatic finale. There is an unequivocal certainty here induced by Mravinsky's flowing tempo which for once binds together all the disparate emotional threads of this symphony: reflection, desolation, compassion, relief and a surely-vested pessimism.

Yevgeny Mravinsky shared with the composer the appalling circumstances in which these symphonies were written. The young British conductor, Mark Wigglesworth, comes from an utterly different society and generation, yet his understanding of the Seventh Symphony, the Leningrad, is strikingly evident, both in performance and in the very personal view of the work which he contributes to the accompanying booklet.

Wigglesworth rejects the notion of the Seventh as superficial propaganda; the march sequence of the opening allegretto, rarely the most controversial element of the work, is neither pate-



in the ensemble - it remains the most thrilling and compelling, and in this latest transfer for the Virtuoso series the sound has emerged with even greater fullness, presence and clarity.

Above all, Mravinsky has the measure of the work's complex five-movement

The Eighth was composed while the historic battle for Stalingrad was still raging, and its graphic portrayal of brutality and suffering is uncompromising. In the second movement, allegretto, music which falls to sound the grotesque and rubble-pomp of Nazi ceremonial,

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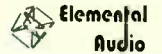
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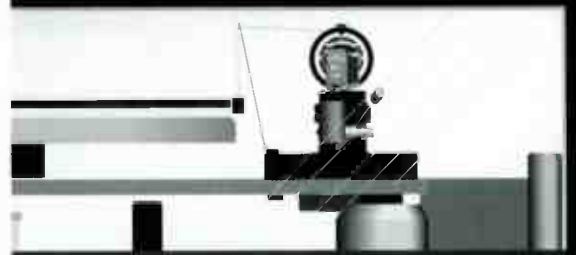
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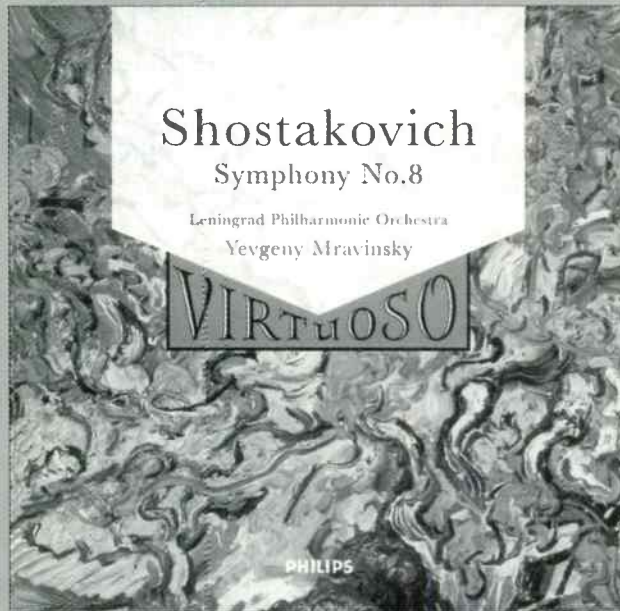
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CLASSICAL

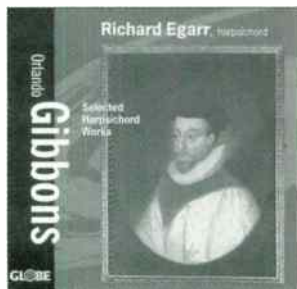
bombast (as some commentators have labelled it), nor solely a terrifying depiction of an invading army. For Mark Wigglesworth, it is "... one of the most extraordinary 15 minutes of music ever written. Shostakovich piles agony upon agony upon agony. Just when you think it has to end, another onslaught envelops you."

Such feelings strongly influence his conducting of this movement, and Wigglesworth proves equally sensitive to the bitter-sad recollections of the following moderato. Anguish faced with anger characterises the



adagio, and if humanity enjoys a kind of triumph in the finale, the insistent side-drum is recalled from the opening march theme to remind us that evil in whatever form can only be resisted, not eradicated.

With committed playing from his Welsh orchestra and a typically fine BIS production, Mark Wigglesworth's gripping performance of the Leningrad Symphony represents an auspicious beginning to his projected Shostakovich cycle, the first to employ all-British forces, and it readily complements Mravinsky's Eighth.



ORLANDO GIBBONS
Works for harpsichord
Richard Egarr,
virginals and
harpsichord
GLOBE GLO5168 (DDD/62.41)

Born in 1583, Orlando Gibbons was the most successful of three musically-gifted brothers, becoming organist of the Chapel Royal of James I aged just 21. He subsequently added the post of organist at Westminster Abbey to his royal role. During a relatively short composing career, Gibbons composed a wealth of church music, madrigals and music

for viols. However, it was as a composer and performer of works for harpsichord and virginals that he earned the highest praise. In 1624, the year before his death, the French ambassador to England described Gibbons as, "the best singer of that age", and this engaging recital by Richard Egarr supplies the evidence to justify that accolade.

As Egarr points out, Gibbons was not a keyboard virtuoso in the 'showman' sense; his virtuosity is more subtly stated, in sonorous counterpoint and harmonic control. He was one of the first musicians to realise the potential of what, at the time, was a relatively new instrument, the harpsichord.

In a well-chosen programme of pieces selected from the Musica Britannica edition of Gibbons' keyboard music, Richard Egarr sets out to convey the invention and originality that characterise this

collection of Preludes, Pavans, Fantasias and dances. He uses two instruments, both Dutch-made copies of originals built by the Ruckers brothers, Joannes and Andreas, in 1640.

The first is a 'Muselar', or Flemish virginal, a typically domestic instrument of the period with a sound akin to that of a harp. The second is what might be described as the 'professional' instrument of Gibbons' time, a one-manual harpsichord. The contrast in range and tonal quality is striking, and only adds to the charm of this quietly-satisfying recital.

Richard Egarr's playing combines taste and style with a carefully-weighted expressive intensity. Without being at all showy, it allows the richness of Gibbons' keyboard writing to shine through, and both instruments have been sensitively recorded: clear and detailed, but with plenty of 'air' around the sound. The music of

Orlando Gibbons, clearly, is a case of virtuosity bringing its own rewards.



ROBERT SCHUMANN
Four Goethe songs:
Ballade des Harfners,
Op98a No2; Wer nie
sein Brot mit Tränen
ass, Op98a No4 et
al/Vier Husarenlieder
von Nikolaus Lenau,
Op117/Drei Gedichte
von Emanuel Geibel,
Op30 et al
Simon Keenlyside,
baritone; Graham
Johnson, piano
HYPERION CDJ33102
(DDD/70.21)

CLASSICAL

Not content with generating a complete edition of the Lieder of Franz Schubert, all 600 plus of them, the Hyperion label has now embarked on a similarly ambitious, if somewhat less daunting plan to record the entire song output of Robert Schumann.

As in the Schubert project, the driving force is the pianist Graham Johnson and, continuing the policy of the earlier series, each release will see Johnson accompanying a different singer in works particularly suited to his or her voice. With Schubert, that policy has attracted (and still attracts) a galaxy of star names and, on the evidence of the first two CDs, there is every prospect that the Schumann series will exert a comparable draw.

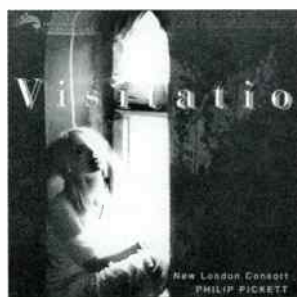
Taking centre-stage here is the young London-born baritone Simon Keenlyside, whose open, almost operatic style is well suited to the more declamatory songs such as Lenau's *Husarenlieder*. There is nothing understated about these performances, the voice possessing a resolute firmness but coupling that with a persuasive flexibility and eloquence. Keenlyside's German is impeccable and his pointing up of the drama and detail within each song is evidence of a clear understanding of the texts.

The words of five poets are featured here: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (four Wilhelm Meister settings); Nikolaus Lenau (the aforementioned *Husarenlieder*); Emanuel Geibel; Adalbert von

Chamisso; and Justinus Kerner. The 12 Kerner settings are without doubt the pick of the bunch (Schumann's songwriting lacked the consistency of his predecessor, Schubert) and they inspire the most searching and heartfelt performances.

Keenlyside is outstanding in the fiendishly difficult *Stirb, Lieb' und Freud!* where the voice is required to perform startling falsetto leaps from the low baritone which dominates the texture. The glorious melodic sweep of *Stille Tränen* is wonderfully conveyed, as are the starkly personal utterances of the final two songs, *Wer machte dich so Krank?* and *Alte Laute*. This is Schumann at his most intimate and soul-searching best.

As well as providing acutely perceptive accompaniments throughout, Graham Johnson furnishes the listener with an exhaustive and illuminating analysis of each song in the accompanying booklet. Full marks, therefore, for both performance and presentation, and for Antony Howell and Julian Millard's well-balanced and strikingly clear and immediate recording.



VISITATIO: HOLY WEEK IN CIVIDALE DEL FRIULI
Catherine Bott, Julia

Gooding, Elisabeth Scholl, sopranos; Andrew King, tenor; Simon Grant, bass; New London Consort; director, Philip Pickett
L'OISEAU-LYRE 455 489-2 (DDD/76.30)

Like many Italian towns, Cividale del Friuli, tucked away in the north-eastern corner of the peninsula close to the borders with Slovenia and Austria, has a long tradition of performing liturgical dramas in its streets and churches. What distinguishes Cividale, however, is how much of that tradition has been preserved. Its museum possesses several very fine manuscripts dating from the late Middle Ages containing the texts and music used at the town's ceremonies, particularly those for Holy Week. It is from these sources that Philip Pickett, in collaboration with Dr Susan Rankin of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, has attempted to reconstruct the Easter celebrations which the inhabitants of Cividale del Friuli, both clergy and laypeople, would have either witnessed or taken part in sometime during the 14th century.

Pivotal to this reconstruction are versions of two liturgical dramas, the *Planctus Mariae* and the *Visitatio Sepulchri* (from which the entire CD takes its title). The former, a lament performed on Good Friday, depicts the Virgin, in the company of Mary Magdalen and Mary Jacobi, mourning

her son at the foot of the Cross. The latter - the most common of medieval liturgical dramas - re-enacts the defining moment when the three Marys discover that Jesus's body has disappeared from the tomb where it was laid.

Philip Pickett's recreation begins, however, with Palm Sunday and an acoustically-conjured evocation of the procession from the gates of the town to the Church of Santa Maria Assunta, this mirroring of course Christ's entry into Jerusalem. Once 'inside' the church, the mood darkens for the lengthy Good Friday sequence, the *Veneration Of The Cross*, which concludes with the drama, *Planctus Mariae*. It is sung most movingly here by the sopranos, Catherine Bott, Julia Gooding and Elisabeth Scholl. These three are equally compelling in the second drama, the *Visitatio*, which provides the focal point of the Easter Sunday ceremonial.

The concluding celebrations are full of brilliance and colour, the joyful dance-like rhythm of the *Laudes Salvatori* contrasting with the solemn splendour of *Victimae Paschali Laudes*.

Philip Pickett and Susan Rankin's researches (augmented with a measure of informed intuition and inspired guesswork) have brought a rich reward. The result is no academic exercise, rather a vibrant, moving and often hauntingly-beautiful realisation, one enhanced by an appropriately atmospheric recording. ●

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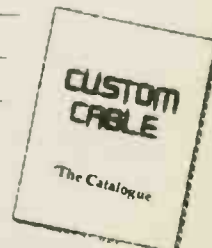
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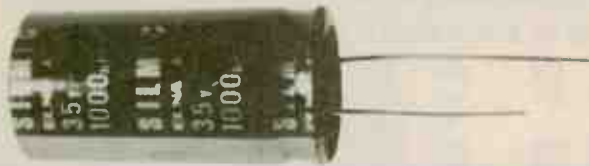
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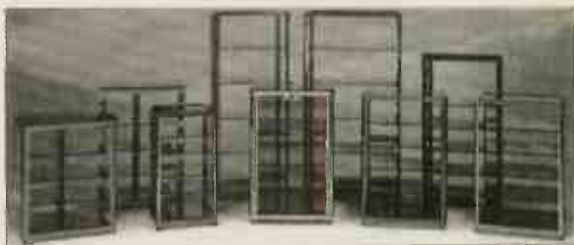
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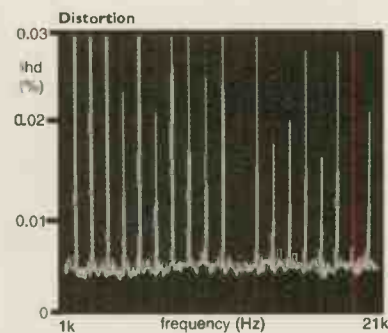
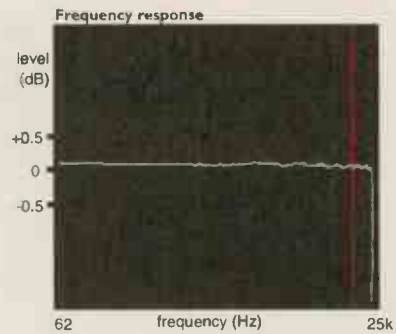
The Denon turns in a normal enough set of test results, with flat frequency response, good channel separation, healthy output of 2.3V and low enough noise.

Our sample had an outstanding peculiarity though: distortion. At high music levels of -6dB, representing musical peaks, it measured 0.02% distortion. At -30dB music level, where distortion normally measures 0.02%, it was ten times higher at 0.2%, with an extended harmonic structure as our analysis shows.

It is rare to see this sort of thing nowadays. Both channels were similar, suggesting a generalised problem rather than an individual channel fault. I would expect this sort of distortion to add some coarseness to the sound, especially

since the DCD-835's treble output is strongly maintained. **NK**

Frequency response	4Hz-21kHz	
Distortion (%)	left	right
-6dB	0.02	0.01
-30dB	0.2	0.1
-60dB	0.6	0.54
-90dB	31	30
Separation (dB)	left	right
1kHz	115	117
20kHz	90	91
Noise	-102dB	
with emphasis	-102dB	
Dynamic range	104dB	
Output	2.3V	



AMPLIFIERS

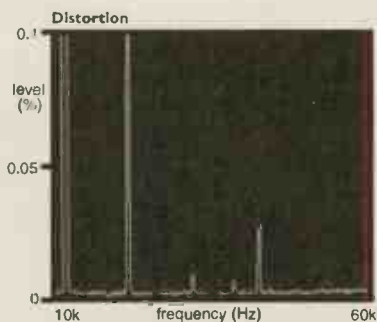
AMC 3150A

The AMC 3150a is massively powerful for its size, producing no less than 180watts into 8ohms and 290watts into 4ohms. That's more than enough for any situation, including a party. But do not equate this sort of power with equivalent loudness; most loudspeakers overheat with much more than 60watts applied. Partnered with a large, multi-driver loudspeaker, though, the 3150a will certainly produce a lot of volume.

AMC have engineered in a wide frequency response down to 2Hz

and right up to 147kHz. Going too far can bring problems with low-frequency stability and high-frequency distortion, depending upon the effectiveness of the circuit topology. There was quite a lot of high-frequency distortion in fact, albeit mostly second order. There could be some coarseness from extended harmonics. **NK**

Power	180watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	2Hz-147kHz



Separation	40dB
Noise	-104dB
Distortion	0.02%
Sensitivity	200mV
DC offset	3.3mV/2.2mV

MISSION STRAIGHT LINE

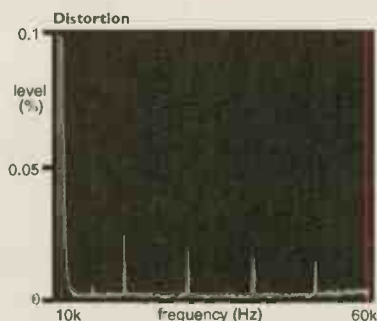
With an output of 66watts into 8ohms and 100watts into 4ohms the Mission Straight Line has plenty of power, in spite of its small size.

There was a little more high-frequency distortion than expected nowadays, measuring 0.04% at 10kHz and one watt output, with an extended harmonic structure. This may colour treble a little.

The CD/tuner/aux inputs

measured flat from 11Hz up to 41kHz. Noise was low at -97dB and sensitivity good enough for most sources at 250mV for full output. **NK**

Power	66watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	11Hz-41kHz
Separation	73dB
Noise	-97dB
Distortion	0.037%



Sensitivity	250mV
DC offset	6mV

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TAG MACLAREN AUDIO PA10 AND 60P

The P60 delivers a nominal 60watts, but we measured output as 78watts into 8ohms. This rose to 120watts into 4ohms, so there is enough power here for most rooms, and for low-impedance loudspeakers. The power amplifier has a chunky toroidal mains transformer with good regulation and plenty of current delivery.

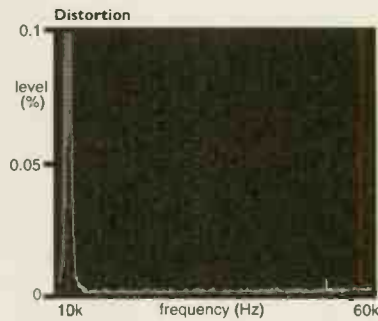
Frequency response extends right down to 3Hz for strong subsonics. It has been curtailed at high frequencies, reaching just 40kHz before rolling off in order to minimise high-frequency distortion. This is the usual pattern of performance for these amplifiers, as is the minimal distortion residual seen in our analysis. Distortion measured a low 0.005%. With normal sensitivity and channel separation, the amplifier measured well with CD.

The phono stages cater for both

moving-magnet and moving-coil cartridges. The moving-coil stage has a lot of gain and is quieter than most, making it suitable for higher-quality, low-output designs. The moving-magnet stage also proved hiss-free. Both have a warp filter which cuts output below 40Hz to prevent cone flap, but this will also lighten bass a touch. Otherwise equalisation was accurate.

The TAG McLaren Audio PA10/P60 amplifiers measured well in all areas, and the former has an excellent phono stage. NK

Power	78watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	3Hz-40kHz
Separation	77dB
Noise	-97dB
Distortion	0.006%
Sensitivity	300mV
DC offset	1.6mV



Disc (MM)	
Frequency response	50Hz-33kHz
Separation	90dB
Noise	-84dB
Distortion	0.008%
Sensitivity	6mV
Overload	150mV

Disc (MC)	
Frequency response	50Hz-30kHz
Separation	80dB
Noise	-78dB
Distortion	0.009%
Sensitivity	0.3mV
Overload	7mV

AUDIO ANALOGUE PUCCINI

The Puccini produces 40watts into 8ohms and 64watts into 4ohms, enough to drive most loudspeakers well, especially modern sensitive designs. It has wide bandwidth, output running healthily down to 9Hz, but right up to 126kHz as well. I would expect good subsonics but possibly a clear overall presentation, as opposed to warmth.

At 0.006% in the midband and 0.009% at 10kHz, the Puccini produces little distortion, with only a minor increase at high frequencies - always a good sign. It probably uses a goodly amount of feedback.

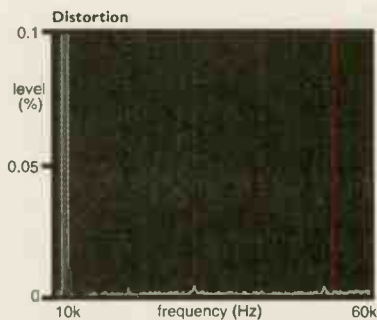
There was no DC output offset and sensitivity was normal at 250mV, high enough even for old cassette decks and tuners (which put out around 300mV).

The phono board has small jumpers on it which can be set to moving magnet (MM) or moving coil (MC). The moving-coil option is very

noisy (equivalent input noise), after taking into account the high gain available. The MM stage was quiet enough, however, possessing good sensitivity, plenty of overload margin and accurate equalisation. There is no warp filtering, so subsonic frequencies are amplified strongly right down to 11Hz, the -3dB point being 6Hz. There will be cone flap from most loudspeakers with warped records. NK

Power	40watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	9Hz-126kHz
Separation	80dB
Noise	-95dB
Distortion	0.006%
Sensitivity	250mV
DC offset	0mV/0mV

Disc (MM)	
Frequency response	12Hz-76kHz
Separation	78dB



Noise	-77dB
Distortion	0.007%
Sensitivity	2.8mV
Overload	90mV

Disc (MC)	
Frequency response	12Hz-100kHz
Separation	50dB
Noise	-58dB
Distortion	0.008%
Sensitivity	0.3mV
Overload	9mV

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You won't find our Virtuoso speakers in every high street Hi-Fi shop. In fact, you won't find them in *any*. Excellent, exclusive and, yes, rather expensive (but superb value for money) they are made to order, not mass produced, and sold direct to discerning customers - people who can appreciate the exquisite sound quality as well as the fine cabinet making. For lovers of live music (and single ended triode amplifier connoisseurs), there are no comparable loudspeakers. They are *so* easy to drive, and sound so real. When the music starts, the speakers disappear. Three versions, from £2995. Ask for a demonstration.



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b

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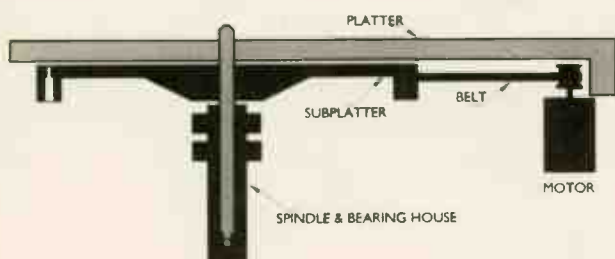
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HI FI NEWS SUPPLEMENT NOV 97



ORIGIN LIVE MODIFICATION FOR THE REGA RB250 & RB300 ARM

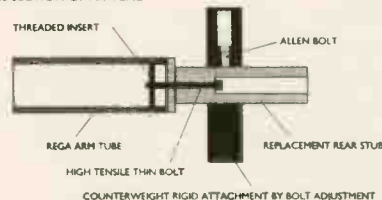
If you are the proud owner of one of these two arms why not turbocharge it into the league of super arms with the Origin live structural modification:- £75 inc post & packing. Those investing in this upgrade report that the transformation is simply night and day. Rewiring with silver litz cable is also offered at an additional £70.

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

WHAT HI-FI Sept 98 gave this modification a 5 star rating.

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Email: origin.live@virgin.net
web site: <http://www.originlive.com/index.htm>

PIONEER A-300R PRECISION

The Pioneer produced a healthy 50watts into 8ohms but power increase into a low 4ohm load was limited to 72watts.

Pioneer have given this amplifier plenty of bandwidth - 4Hz to 24kHz. Distortion measured a low 0.02% in the midband and at high frequencies. Being second harmonic it is likely the Pioneer will sound relaxed and open.

Pioneer have fitted a moving-magnet (MM) phono stage of normal sensitivity and low noise. It has plenty of subsonic gain, measuring -3dB down at 6Hz. This isn't enough to prevent cone flap but it

will sound weightier in the bass as a result. A little treble lift in the 75uS characteristic will enhance detail.

The Pioneer should sound clean and smooth, but it may lack the bottom-end clout of bigger rivals.

NK

Power 50watts

CD/tuner/aux.

Frequency response 4Hz-124kHz

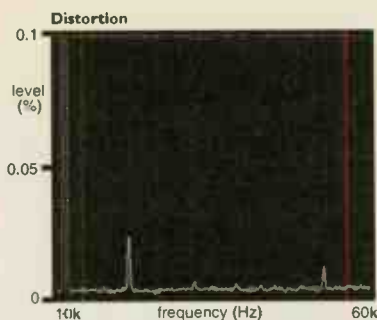
Separation 72dB

Noise -91dB

Distortion 0.02%

Sensitivity 250mV

DC offset 2mV/3mV



Disc (MM)

Frequency response 11Hz-125kHz

Separation 75dB

Noise -80dB

Distortion 0.02%

Sensitivity 4mV

Overload 140mV

MYRYAD T-40

The T-40 produces 66watts, making it man enough to give good volumes with many loudspeakers in all normal listening rooms. More power is available if partnered with low-impedance loudspeakers - up to 100watts with a 4ohm load.

The CD/tuner/aux. inputs need a normal 270mV for full output, just enough to work with most sources, 300mV being the break point.

Subsonic response stretches down to 4Hz, the lower limit of CD. The supersonic response reaches up to 77kHz, a little high but enough to give a clear sound without the warmth common to band limiting.

With distortion hovering around 0.01% at all frequencies, and showing little rise as power goes up,

the T-40 works well.

A moving-magnet (MM) disc stage gives a good set of results. Equivalent input noise was relatively low, so hiss will not be a problem. There is plenty of gain, but no IEC-type warp filter. Instead, Myryad have compromised, reducing gain below 20Hz usefully such that there is some loss at warp frequencies, around 5Hz. NK

Power 66watts

CD/tuner/aux.

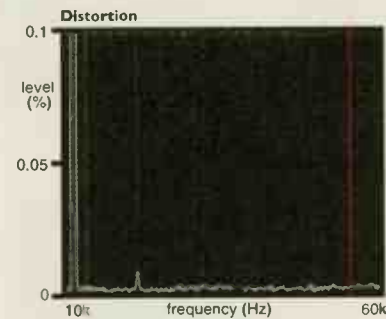
Frequency response 4Hz-77kHz

Separation 65dB

Noise -95dB

Distortion 0.006%

Sensitivity 250mV



DC offset 0mV/0mV

Disc (MM)

Frequency response 22Hz-60kHz

Separation 57dB

Noise -77dB

Distortion 0.008%

Sensitivity 2.8mV

Overload 85mV

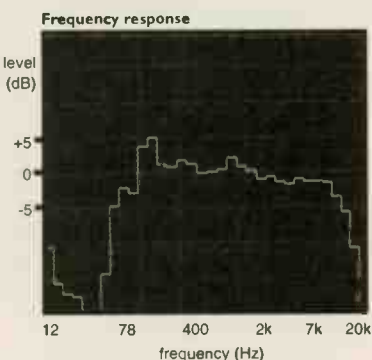
LOUDSPEAKER

TANNOY R1

The drivers of this small 'speaker were well integrated. There was no phase cancellation above or below the main axis of the loudspeaker, giving it a consistent forward sound wherever a listener sits.

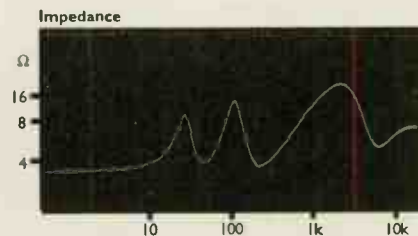
There is a slow downward tilt in response toward higher frequencies and an absence of crossover suck-out. This should give the R1 a full-bodied sound with good detailing, without shrillness or brightness. A rear cabinet wall-return puts a small peak in the response at 1kHz, and a little coloration may result.

Bass output peaks up around 140Hz, as is usual with a small box in order to squeeze an impression of



bass from it. In truth, it runs down to 63Hz and the port goes lower, so there is real bass output. It should be used close to a rear wall - one foot or so - to make the most of this.

Small loudspeakers are usually insensitive and, in spite of low



impedance, the R1 was mediocre here, producing just 86dB SPL from a nominal watt (and that with an impedance of 5ohms, which draws current from solid-state amplifiers).

The R1 was neatly engineered in many respects, although pink noise testing did reveal obvious coloration. NK

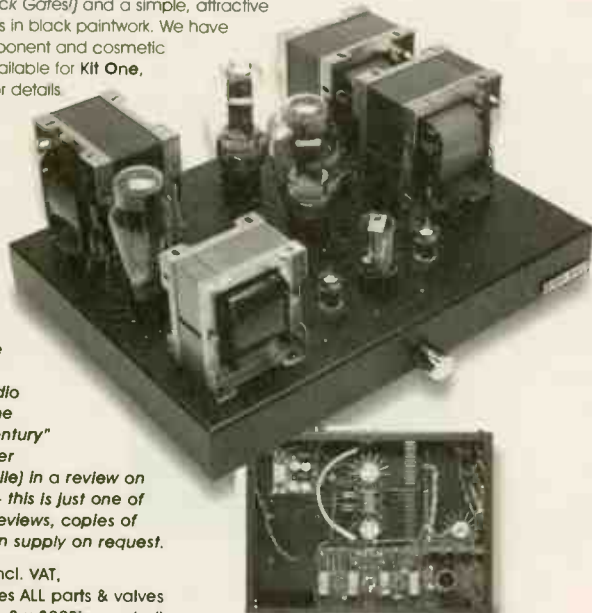
Audio Note Kit Amplifiers -

Power-Amp Kit

The Audio Note Kit One (Illustrated)

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

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



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

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

KIT ONE ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-001

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

Audio Note Loudspeaker Drivers & Kits

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

Audio Note Circuits, Valvedata & Basic Technical Information

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

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

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

Audio Note Mains Transformers

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

The Audio Note Kit Two

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

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

KIT TWO ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-002

The Audio Note Kit Three

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

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

KIT THREE ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-003

The Audio Note Kit Four

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

The **Kit Four** costs: £279 incl. VAT but not delivery.

KIT FOUR ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-004

Audio Note Driver, Interstage & Pre-Amplifier Output Transformers

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

Audio Note Paper In Oil Signal Capacitors

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

Audio Note Paper In Oil Tin Foil Signal Capacitors

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

Audio Note Paper In Oil Copper & Silver Foil Signal Capacitors

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

Audio Note Acid & Chloride Free Silver Solder

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

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

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

Audio Note High Quality Valve Bases

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

Audio Note Resistors

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

BEYSCHLAG - HOLCO - SHINKOH Tantalum Film Resistors

AUDIO NOTE 1/2 Watt Tantalum Resistors

AUDIO NOTE 1 Watt Tantalum Resistors

AUDIO NOTE 2 Watt 1% Tantalum Resistors

AUDIO NOTE Precision Carbon Film Resistors

ALLEN BRADLEY 1 Watt 5% Carbon Film Resistors

Components & Valves

Pre-Amp Kit

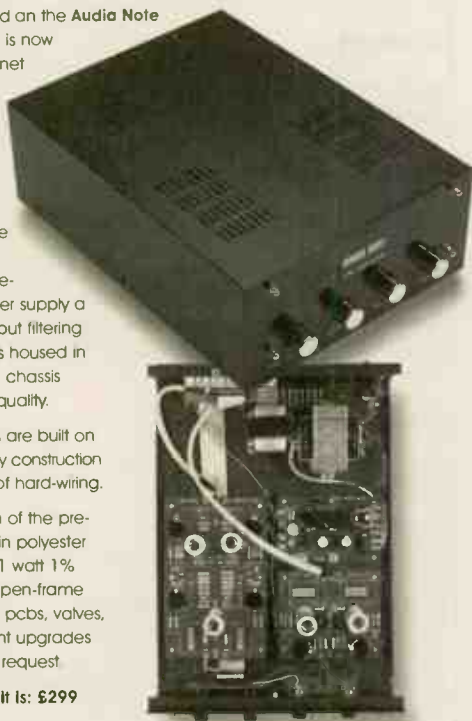
The Audio Note Pre-Amplifier Kit (illustrated)

A complete kit loosely based on the Audio Note 6N7 tube pre-amplifier circuit is now available. The moving-magnet compatible phono stage consists of a cascade output, with passive RIAA equalisation and anode-follower output using the 2AX7/ECC83. Line buffer/amplification for the four line inputs consists of an ECC82 configured in parallel anode-follower mode. For the power supply a diode rectifier and choke-input filtering is employed. All circuitry is housed in a non-magnetic aluminium chassis giving the very best sound quality.

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

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

Cost of The Pre-Amplifier Kit is: £299 incl. VAT but not delivery.



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

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

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

Audio Note Cerafine Powdered Ceramic Electrolytic Capacitors

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

Audio Note Potentiometers

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

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

Audio Note Moving Coil, CD Line & Input Matching Transformers

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

Valves

The Audio Note AV300BSL (illustrated)

Audio Note has very limited stocks available of the AV300BSL and AV32BSL.

AV300BSL - 50 watt dissipation for about 12 watts class A, single ended configuration.

AV32BSL - 65 watt dissipation for about 18 watts class A, single ended configuration.

These super linear output tubes are widely regarded as the best amplification devices available

Previously offered with a 2 year warranty at \$250 and \$300 respectively.

They are now available without warranty for the unbelievably low prices of \$50 and \$75 each.

Offer subject to availability on a first come first served basis.

Prices are exclusive of VAT.

Audio Note Selected Audio Valves

Our valves are selected from the best available sources and are tested to the same stringent standards that we apply in the production of our own amplifiers. They fall into two categories, standard production items and rare, mostly NOS (New Old Stock) valves which are no longer in production. We have compiled a special list of the NOS items, which is available against a stamped self addressed envelope, if you live outside the UK, send US \$2. You should be aware that the valves on this list are NOT cheap, but we have stock of original GE, RCA and United Electronics 211, both standard versions and reinforced anode type for the US airforce, 845 Westinghouse, VT25/1Q, 10Y, VT62/801A, WE300B, STC4300A, Mullard GZ34/CV1377, Tungsol 5U4G (best sounding 5U4G we have ever heard!), Chatham 5R4WG and many others.



Audio Note Recommended Magazines

Listener

Review based music & hi-fi magazine that contains some of the best considered & well written articles in print. A very good read £4 per copy.

The Audio Adventure

Glossy, well produced publication that provides a good alternative to the established magazines. Not afraid to be controversial £4 per copy.

A full list of available issues on request.

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Concordant modified Quad 22 pre-amplifier £ 95	Musical Fidelity 'The Pre-Amplifier' MM/MCE 150 £ 895
Nytech CPA 60 power amplifier. some marks £ 475	Nytech Active Cross-over. Good with Arc101 £ 75
T-VAC Model TA801 Integrated Valve amplifier. £ 125	K188 p/pull. Ex cond. Cost £1800. Bargain only £ 350
Arion Adonis int Valve amp. Class A. Mint. £ 475	Pair Leak TL25 + amplifiers in black £ 550
Moth series 30 power amplifier (special) and power supply. 60W + 60W. Solid rosewood Mint Bxd £ 125	Pioneer A400 integrated amplifier £ 125
Harman Kardon HK610 integrated amplifier £ 295	O.A.C. Mistral integrated amp. 55W/CH £ 130
Fisher X100A integrated valve amplifier g/c DPA DSP200S pre-amplifier. EX Condition £ 149	Marantz PM66SE amplifier. Mint. Boxed £ 125
Rogers HG88 Mk2 integrated valve amp. £ 395	Hafler DH101 pre-amplifier. Ex cond £ 275
Musical Fidelity E200 pre-amp. Ex Dem. Mint £ 125	Dynaco CA35 integrated Valve amplifier £ 495
Musical Fidelity B1 amplifier. Ex Condition £ 300	Beard p35 Valve power amplifier. Ex cond. £ 195
Luxman LV105 integrated hybrid amp. Mint Pair Quad 2s in nice original condition. £ 500	PS Audio Model 2 power amp. Mint. Boxed £ 195
amplifier. Ex Condition £ 75	Richard Allen Class A integrated amplifier. £ 150 Quad 33 pre-amplifier. Ex Condition £ 195
Rogers Cadet 2. Pre/power amplifier £ 150	Rogers cadet monoblock amps * 2 £ 125
Leak Stereo 20 power amp. 12 months gntee £ 350	Rogers cadet 3 Valve integrated amplifier £ 195
Audiolab 8000Q pre-amplifier. Mint. Boxed £ 550	Leak TL25+ Various. All mono £ 100
Dnm 2A pre-amplifier and power supply £ 300	Sugden c51 pre-amplifier £ 400
	Dnm 2A pre-amplifier and 2 power supplies £ 400

TURNTABLES

Systemdeck 2X and Moth arm. £ 150	Thorens TD160 and Thorens arm. Ex cond. £ 75
Garrard 301/401S price Varies on condition £ 35	Thorens 124 Various prices and condition £ POA
Nad 5120 Record deck. VGC. £ 35	STD 305M turntable with Mayware arm £ 125

SPEAKERS

Celestion 300 speakers in walnut. absolutely in mint condition. cost £1200. Boxed. Be quick at only £ 500	Castle winchester spkrs Mint Bxd. Cost £1695. 995Mordaunt short MS600 spkrs/Decca Kelly £ 275
Ruark Broadsword 2 speakers. cost £899. 400 Kef 103/4 loudspeakers. Cost £1095. g/cond £ 500	Spendor LS35A loudspeakers in black. £ 295
Lowther Accustas using PM7A. Ex cond £ 295	Arc 101 Active/passive speakers. Marked cab £ 75
Kef 102/2 speakers. Ex condition. Boxed £ 295	Quad Electrostatics ESL375. £ 450
Monitor Audio M14 Floorstanders £ 150	PCM Timeframe T1700 speakers. Ex cond. £ 300
Keystick Audio Volante in cherry. Mint. Bxd £ 395	Monitor Audio MA3 & stands. Boxed £ 250
Kef 101/2 in rosewood. Mint. Boxed £ 295	Lowther Delphics using PM2A units. Ex cond £1800
	Triangle Titus Black. Ex demo. Mint/boxed £ 299

OTHER ITEMS

Quad Table & Base panels. Exchange £100.00 each
ESL 57. Full service. Ring for details.

Teac VRDS -T1 CD transport & remote £ 300	Audio Alephs* Dsp in the box £ 95
Cambridge Daemiac 2 DAC. Mint. Boxed. £ 100	Musical Fidelity E60 Cd player. Mint Bxd. £ 180
Marantz CD 85 CD player. A classic. Boxed £ 250	Mendiant 203 Dac. Mint. Boxed £ 225
Sony TCK 611S Dolby S 3 Head. Cost £330 £ 150	Linn Baski LVV Tone-Arm. Ex condition. £ 40
Lowther PM3C drive units. New. Boxed £ 200	Leak Troughline 2&3 mono. G/cond. £ 75
Boxed set records 'THE RING' Decca. mint. £ 195	Acou Lustre tone-arm. Ex cond £ 50
Decca Super Gold & Decca pod. Ex cond. £ 150	SME 3009 tone-arms. From £ 60
Yamaha KX580 SE cassette Deck. Mint. BXD £ 150	Sony CDP 561E cd player £ 125
Marantz Model 2100 stereo tuner G/cond £ 75	Qed Digit & positron power supply £ 100

AUTUMN SALE PRICES. SAVE ££££

Leff Rowland model 1 power amplifier. £1400	£1100	T-Vac Model TA801 Int Valve amp £895	£695
Musical Fidelity E200 pre-amp £ 395	£ 345	Castle Winchester Speakers £995	£795
Qed Digit & positron power supply. £ 100	£ 75	Beard P35 Valve power amplifier £495	£395
Kef 101/2 speakers in rosewood £ 295	£ 225	Keystick Audio Volante .Mint. Boxed £395	£295
Lowther Accustas with PM7A units £ 350	£ 275	Monitor Audio MA3 & stands £250	£175

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EAR 834p Phono stage. MM only. No volume control.	Brand new. Boxed. At only £349
EAR 834L Line only valve pre-amplifier. Amazing.	Brand new. Boxed. At only £450

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301/401/124 Power supplies. Amazing value at only £125 each.
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Rotel RCD930 AX CD Player	140	180
Marantz CD63Mk2 KI Signature	349	500

Amplifiers

Naim 102 remote preamp	850	1,080
Naim 180 poweramp	850	1,090
Alchemist Nemesis incl. Phono stage	550	750
Roksan Caspian inc remote	595	700
Rotel 921 New Model	70	100
Marantz PM66 KI Signature new unused	349	400

Loudspeakers

ProAc Response 2.5's (Cherry) treat yourself!	2,100	2,700
ProAc Tablette 50 (Light Oak, mint)	475	600
Naim SBL, latest, (black)	1,500	2,300
Kef Q55	399	500
Roksan Rok 1 (Light Elder)	475	645

Headphones etc

Sennheiser HD 535	75	105
Other Sennheiser bargains - please ask		

Custom Design 24" stands, Ferrari Red	60	85
Musical Fidelity X-LP mrr/mc Phono stage	100	130

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COMPACT DISC PLAYERS

QUAD 67 SECOND-HAND

One of Quad's best products for a long time, the 67 is warmer and smoother than most, yet is highly musical and revealing.

BRUNNEN DP-3080/II £180

Has great clarity and presence for the price. Not quite as naturally expressive as the CD4SE though.

AMBRIDGE CD4SE £200

A touch soft in the treble but outstanding in every other respect.

ARCAM ALPHA 7 £330

This British-built player is extremely good value. Up-front, punchy nature suits Techno and Rock.

MARANTZ CD-63MKII KI-S £400

Similar to the CD-63SE but more powerful bass and an all-round smoother sound.

PHILIPS CDR 870 RECORDER £500

Replay quality is on a par with £250 machines but analogue and digital recordings on CD-R and CD-RW are outstanding.

ROKSAN CASPIAN £895

The Caspian has a smooth, slightly bright sound with some of the clearest treble in the business. Very engaging, dynamic character.

MERIDIAN 506 20-BIT £1100

Very detailed and revealing player. More cerebral than visceral though.

MARANTZ CD-17 KI-S £1100

The Marantz excels in all areas. Without doubt this is one of the most involving CD players on the planet. Build quality is also exemplary.

DENON DCD-S10 £1300

A warm, atmospheric and smooth performer that never fails to involve.

PINK TRIANGLE LITAUERAL £2100

Possesses the same lush tonal colour as the Da Capo but is far superior in every other way.

MCINTOSH CDM7009 £2635

A thoroughly inspiring machine. One of the most musical CD players around; sweet, open and detailed.

COMPACT DISC TRANSPORTS

TEAC VDRS-T1 £550

Not as substantially built as its chunky looks suggest, the T1 is nevertheless a good entry-level transport with a warm, expansive sound.

TEAC P-30 £2500

Cheap it isn't, but then it sounds like a million digital dollars. Nothing short of superb.

CD CONVERTORS

MIDIMAN FLYING CALF £130

Great-value DAC which has a superbly smooth and fluid presentation.

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-DAC £300

A bargain for normal CDs and even better with HDCDs.

ASSEMBLAGE DAC-2 £400 (KIT)

Takes little building to produce a clean, clear sound. HDCD filter included.

MARSTON SILHOUETTE £795

With Crystal Semiconductors' 18-bit DAC the Marston produces clean-cut images and a transparent sound stage. Very rhythmic too.

PINK TRIANGLE DA CAPO £1450+

Offers a choice of filter modules. The Da Capo is good in many respects, but can sound a touch polite on Rock and is showing its age.

DPA 1024 £6000

Proof positive that today's CDs needn't sound CD-like! Uses an in-house discrete convertor, and DPA haven't skimped on the build either!

DCS ELGAR £8500

Future-proof convertor which will handle 24/96 and 24/192 in addition to CD. Extremely open and natural performer that sets the digital benchmark.

TURNTABLES

GARRARD 301/401 second-hand

In a decent plinth with an arm of SME 309 calibre, the 301 is capable of a highly authoritative sound with surprisingly solid, expressive bass. Very musical, but treble isn't up to modern standards. Slightly easier to service than the later 401 but otherwise similar.

THORENS TD124 second-hand

One of Thorens' best turntables. Needs a modern plinth to give its best. Duly installed, it's good enough to face off the Garrards, swapping some of its bass power for a more delicate, incisive treble.

ORIGIN LIVE STANDARD £145 (KIT)

Fine in standard form with AC motor, frighteningly good with a DC motor and battery PSU.

SYSTEMDEK IIX900/RB250 £330

A fine all-rounder and easy to upgrade too. Has more depth and breadth than Rega Planar 3.

PINK TRIANGLE TARANTELLA £680

Not only does the Tarantella have more style than a catwalk full of models, it also combines PT's usual clarity with real authority. The biz.

VPI HW19 JUNIOR/RB300 £599

With its control and grip on music the Junior never fails to engage. Set-up is a piece of cake and there's a whole range of upgrades on offer too.

MICHELL GYRODEC £875

Stunning looks, build and fine sound. Standard PSU has detailed, architectural, if undynamic sound. With QC PSU, scale and insight excel.

PRO-JECT 6.1SA £999

The Pro-ject places the listener in the best seat in the control room. Outrageous dynamics and a punchy, seriously deep bass. Comes with Sumiko arm and Ortofon MC 30 Supreme.

ROKSAN XERXES X £1295

DSU or XPS 3.5 power supply £150/170 extra. Excellent pitch stability from a new Swiss motor and outboard power supply. Very tight bass, fine dynamics and revealing clarity.

MICHELL ORBE £1995

The Darth Vader of analogue, the Orbe builds on the strengths of the Gyrodec. An ultra-tuneful, expansive sound.

SME MODEL 20 £3400

Including the excellent SME V tone-arm, the Model 20 is one of the last great turntables, unless you've got £11000 for the Model 30, that is.

TONE-ARMS

LINN ITTOK second-hand

This early heavyweight arm benefits from fine engineering. Good dynamics and grip.

REGA RB300 £180

Supremely capable at the price, but not quite humankind's salvation. Some may prefer the simpler RB250 at £130. Detailed, tight, rhythmic sound but tonally rather grey and cold-sounding.

SME 3009SII £309

This Paleolithic device is no longer state-of-the-art with frequency extremes or detail, but its legendary serviceability makes it a cult in Japan. Can be picked up for peanuts second-hand.

SME 309 £689

A down-market version of the IV and V with aluminium armtube and detachable headshell. Tight, neutral sound with good tonality, but lacks the IV's pace and precision.

World favourites guide

SME V £1460
A masterpiece of precision engineering with a cohesive, ultra-transparent sound.

CARTRIDGES

GOLDRING 1012GX £74
An accomplished MM with a solid bass, slightly forward midband and clean transients.

ORTOPHON MC 15 SUPER II £140
Not quite as good as the dearer Ortophon Supremes but the Super II is a splendid introduction to the joys of moving-coil cartridges.

DNM MICA £185
Better Goldring's 1042 and costs only £135 on trade-in. A very assured and transparent MM.

ORTOFON SUPREMES £299-£549
The MC 10, MC 20 and MC 30 Supremes all offer superb sound and value for money, with a rich, smooth and musical performance.

ORTOFON MC 2000 £799
We came across this in an SME IV on a Garrard 401; it gave one of the best results we've heard.

ORTOFON ROHMANN £1000
In a way it's MC 2000 meets MC 7500 with great tonal strengths and a dynamo sound.

LYRA LYDIAN £649
A truly musical, sophisticated device that makes most other MCs sound frigid.

VAN DEN HUL MC-10 £840
Fluid bass, finely-etched treble and highly tuneful in-between. The MC-10 is honey, pure and simple.

ORTOFON MC 7500 £2000
Conclusive proof that there's hope for the world. CD lovers would die if they heard it.

INTEGRATED AMPLIFIERS

MISSION CYRUS I/II S/H
Both versions give a detailed, articulate and dynamic sound.

DENON PMA-250SE £160
It might not have bags of grunt but the Denon can sound very natural and open.

ROTEL RA-970BX £250
With its smooth and powerful sound, the Rotel sings a seductive song with all types of music.

PIONEER A-300R PRECISION £399
This is the A-300 tweaked. Rhythm and detail are first-class and the phono stage isn't far behind.

AUDIO ANALOGUE PUCCINI SE £595
This superbly-built Italian integrated has a lucidity and control which leave the competition at up to £1000 standing. Sound stage depth is unequalled.

SUGDEN A21A £640
Class A transistor amp. Rich, crisp, deep, tight sound and it images well too. Wonderful.

ROKSAN CASPIAN £695
Smooth, warm integrated with remote control that works happily into most 'speakers.

SONETEER ALABASTER £995
Builds on the strengths of the Campion with ample control, colour and drive.

UNISON SIMPLY 2 £995
This single-ended valve amplifier is smooth, sweet and open. An extremely musical performer.

UNISON SIMPLY 4 £1495
Sonically similar to the Simply 2, but with more power and control.

MCINTOSH MA6800 £3735
The MA6800 not so much plays music as takes control of it, with effortless bass drive.

PHONO STAGES

QED DISCSAVER £35
A true bargain that offers a cohesive, musical sound but avoid using it in thin sounding systems.

NAD PP1 £39.99
An unassuming little box that nevertheless gets on with it. Comes complete with wall-plug power supply. No provision for battery power.

ROTEL RQ-970BX £130
Superb-value entry-level phono stage with audiophile quality components and clear sound.

LFD MISTRAL PHONO STAGE £300
The Mistral has a warmth and involvement that make many pricier stages sound overpriced.

MICHELL ISO/HERA £530
Open, spacious and 3-D sound. Not for fans of warmth though.

AUDIO INNOVATIONS P2 £749
Fantastic bass and super insight make this one of the best phono stages around. One for vinyl lovers.

ROKSAN ARTAXERXES X £950
With the Attesa PSU the Artaxerxes X MM/MC stage still shines. Its fortes are great stage depth, neutrality and tonal colour. Musical too.

PRE-AMPLIFIERS

CREEK OBH-12 PASSIVE £200
If you're not driving long cables, the remote-control Creek is a star.

AUDIO ANALOGUE BELLINI £475
Showcases AA's characteristic mix of clarity, detail and musicality and stomps on the competition.

XTC PRE-1 £1000
Almost valve-like in its smoothness, the line-level Pre-1 is warm and seductively clear.

CHORD CPA1800 £1800
Clarity, insight and control are second to none - an addictive mixture.

MARANTZ MODEL 7 PRE-AMP £3500
A Sixties reissue, the Marantz pre-amp still sounds superb. Has a great phono stage.

POWER AMPLIFIERS

QUAD II second-hand
Classic valve monobloc with many thousands still in use. Archetypal warm, smooth valve sound.

LEAK STEREO 20 second-hand
The Stereo 20 can sound impressively up-to-date, although power and detail are ultimately limited. The TL10, TL12 and TL12+ are also worthy contenders but all have very high sensitivity (125mV for full output) so beware of overloading.

ARCAM ALPHA 9 £400
With 70watts on tap, the 9P will drive most loudspeakers with a spacious and detailed sound. Good bass welly too.

MISSION CYRUS POWER £450
This power amplifier is a real honey. Rich and smooth, but with a firm grip.

SUGDEN AU41P £530
Extremely competitive at the price with 100W of unusually smooth, full-bodied sound.

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-A200 £1000/PAIR
200watts of high-end monobloc power in a grooved tube.

NAIM NAP180 £1060
Partnered with a NAC82, this has classic Naim control, and a superbly rhythmic presentation.

MICHELL ALECTO STEREO £1300
A refined transistor amp with valve-like transparency and a full, warm, easy-going sound. The £1800 Alecto monoblocs have rare lucidity and three-dimensional realism.

World favourites guide

CHORD SPM400 £1400
There's a sense of effortless power to the Chord that gives music real scale and presence.

CHORD SPM1200 £2995
Like the SPM400 but loads more power on tap. Will drive just about anything.

XTC POW-1 £2000
As smooth and composed as the Pre-1, the POW-1 has bags of power and refinement.

MARANTZ MODEL 9 £8000
Authentic reproduction monoblocs still more than cut the sonic mustard.

TUNERS

LEAK TROUGHLINE second-hand
Our favourite way of listening to the wireless. A deliciously mellifluous sound will have you junking your transistor radio in seconds.

NAD 412 £190
The 412 is remarkably musical and natural sounding. Rich sound and full bass are rarities.

SONY ST-SA3ES £250
Beguiling RDS tuner for sonically discerning button-lovers. Good ergonomics and sensitive too.

MISSION CYRUS FM7 £300
Clear and lucid sound puts it up with the best. Superb build too.

ROTEL RT-990BX £500
High-quality Michi-based tuner with a sophisticated, forward sound with great imaging.

NAIM NAT03 £595
The NAT03's warm, atmospheric sound is further proof of Naim's proficiency with tuners.

FANFARE FT-1 £1295
In its native US the FT-1 is no mere tuner but a 'broadcast monitor', a task at which it acquits itself well, with a clear and powerful sound.

NAIM NAT01 £1380
This is the best solid-state tuner available bar none. For better radio, go and live in the studio.

CASSETTE DECKS

KENWOOD KX-3080 £160
A simple deck, but excellent-quality head and transport give an unusually high level of sound.

AIWA AD-S750 £200
Sonically a very decent machine. Comes fitted with Dolby B, C and S.

YAMAHA KX-580SE £250
The 'Special Edition' tag is more than a marketing gimmick. Sound is solid and clear with Dolby S.

AIWA AD-S950 £300
A stable transport, superb head and Dolby S make the AD-S950 an excellent all-rounder.

PIONEER CT-S740S £430
A great piece of engineering from Pioneer, with first-rate sound on playback and recording.

NAKAMICHI DR2 second-hand
Tragically discontinued, the DR2 pushes recordings to the limit, remaining unflustered at all times.

NAKAMICHI DR1 second-hand
Better still than the DR2, with manual head-azimuth adjustment to boot.

NAKAMICHI CR7 second-hand
Kills all other tape deck and stamps on the graves.

LOUDSPEAKERS

TANNOY MERCURY M2 £140
A true audiophile bargain which embarrasses many more expensive boxes.

KEF Q15 £199
These stand mounters offer impressive bass and excellent clarity but need a powerful amplifier to perform at their considerable best.

MISSION 771 £170
Characteristically fast, punchy Mission sound from the Aerogel mid/bass and silk-dome tweeter.

B&W DM 602 £300
Deep, strong bass, pure, projected and uncoloured midrange. Treble quality is a little metallic, but imaging is precise. A lively, enjoyable sound.

REL Q-BASS £350
Few subwoofers match the Q-Bass at the price. The tuning controls can be a bit of a fiddle, but once set up the rest is pleasure.

CASTLE EDEN £469
Impressively vice-free 'speakers that offer great transparency and involvement at the price.

EPOS ES12 £495
Strong, punchy bass is allied to detailed and articulate midrange and treble.

REL STRATA £500
The Strata subwoofer is not a toy. It offers superb, true hi-fi bass depth and power, and opens up sound stage depth in particular.

HARBETH HL-P3ES £799
A fine example of good loudspeaker engineering. The top of the mini-monitor league.

HARBETH HL-K6 £1049
Clean, musical and classy - Harbeth have done themselves proud again.

KEF REFERENCE SERIES ONE £995
The KEFs combine pin-point imagery and detail with a smooth, polite balance. Good, agile bass.

JAMO CONCERT 8 £1500
With their inch-thick cabinets and fabulous drive units, the Concert 8s are the most transparent stand mounters around.

EPOS ES25 £1505
Epos' best. Combines near-uncoloured tonality with characteristic fireworks in the rhythm department. Superb by any other name.

TANNOY AMS8 £2700
Bold sounding professional active monitor with solid bass, clear midrange and delicious treble.

QUAD ESL 63 £3450
A reference against which all other loudspeakers are judged, the '63s have superb imaging and genuine transparency.

KEF REFERENCE SERIES FOUR £3299
Superb bass and near-electrostatic sound staging make these involving loudspeakers a reference for others. Need a strong amplifier though.

JBL S2600 £3500
Smooth, detailed and spacious with great dynamics and fine imaging. Capable of producing a superb performance when used in a big room.

TANNOY WESTMINSTER ROYAL £14920
An incredibly dynamic, detailed full-range horn design with a rich sound. Its high sensitivity predisposes it to valve amplification.

MINIDISC PLAYERS

SONY MDS-JE510 £300
An impressive sound and unmatched convenience make this MiniDisc player an excellent buy.

KENWOOD DM-9090 £500
One of the best MD players yet. ATRAC 4.5 gives clean and very musical recordings from this Kenwood.

SONY MDS-JA50ES £1300
The Sony can put the wind up Nakamichi cassette decks when used with better blank MDs.

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TOP QUALITY HI-FI
Classic or Modern - all types urgently required

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Basis Gold Vacuum		
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Grado tonearm		£498
kenwood KD990 DD 'Flagship model'		£295
Linn LP12 Valhalla Zeta Koetsu BIK	£2500	£998
Linn LP12 (Afr) Zeta		£795
Linn LP12 (Blk) Ekos/Lingo	£3500	£1798
Linn Arkiv 1 Cartridge	£900	£298
Lyra Parnasus		£POA
Manticore Mantra / Magician		
+ MBP6 pwr sup / Ort MC3000		£998
Mantra + Magician, AT OC5 & PSU		£748
Naim Aro	£1070	£785
Naim MC Board for 92 Pre		£80
Oracle Delphi/Dynavector DVXX1 /Koetsu		£1248
Oracle Delphi II/Linn Ittok LVII		£1395
Ortofon T-300 Transformer	£900	£495
Pink Triangle Export (Ex/dem)	£900	£597
Revolver / Helius Scorpion / P77		£249
SME 3012 (Boxed)		£275
Thorens TD160 Super/SME 3009		£175
Thorens TD160B Silver, ADC, VMS20E		£145

AMPLIFIERS - SOLID STATE

Alchemist Maxim Intgd	£319	£195
Audiolab 8000M Mono's	£1600	£898
Audiolab 8000LX	£470	£378
Audio Research D200(Ex Dem)	£3250	£1997
Aura Evolution		£195
Aura 80 SE-X (Integrated)	£250	£175

FOCUS ON ARCAM

Already offering excellent value when new, these highly acclaimed British products are obviously outstanding at these prices. There's simply no reason to choose 'cheapo' hi-fi when the real thing costs no more. And remember, all used equipment carries a full three month warranty.

Arcam Alpha amp		£85
Arcam Alpha Tuner		£75
Arcam Alpha 5	£250	£148
Arcam Alpha 5 Tuner	£230	£168
Arcam Alpha 7	£250	£185
Arcam Delta 290		
(Integrated with phono input)	£500	£365
Arcam Delta 120		£250
Arcam Alpha Plus CD		£148
Arcam Delta Black Box (DAC)		£148
Arcam Delta Black Box 5 (DAC)		£248
AVI S2000 MP Pre	£799	£498
Chameleon 900S 2 x 300w pwr	£1000	£495
Chord SPM1000B (SH)	£2785	£1295
Counterpoint Solid 1 Pwr	£1495	£845
Counterpoint SA12 Solid State/Valve		
Hybrid 85 watts per channel	£1400	£695
Cyrus 2 + PSX		£415
Cyrus Pre/Power	£1095	£850
Deva 250 Pre + PA Pwr		£495
DPA 50S Power	£1500	£695

PART-EXCHANGE

YOUR VERY BEST TRADE-IN PRICE IS GUARANTEED WHEN YOU CHOOSE ANY NEW HI-FI FROM THE HI-FI COMPANY

DPA DSP200 Line Pre (Ex Dem)	£499	£397
DNM Pre Series 2	£900	£398
DNM PA1 Power	£1800	£898
Dynaco ST120 (Classic circa '76)		£328
Exposure XVIII (Power)		£POA
Exposure XXI (Pre)		£POA
Gryphon The Pre-Amp	£6000	£2000
Harmon Kardon AVP1a Processor	£2000	£495
Heybrook C3+P3 Pre/Pwr	£1425	£795
Heybrook Integra (Integrated!)	£555	£250
Jeff Rowland Consumate Pre	£5500	£1498
Krell KBA Pre	£4998	£1898
Krell KAV300i (Intgrd) Mint	£2550	£1998
Krell KSA100 Mk2	£4000	£1495
Krell KSA200B	£5500	£2758
Krell Ref KR5BP(6 comp balanced pre)		£3595
LFD LSB + PA2 (Pre/Pwr)	£3800	£1498
LFD LS2/PA1 (Pre/Pwr)	£2600	£1198
LFD Miskral (Head amp)		£198
Linn LK100 Power		£398
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B & O	Beolab 6000	Active Loudspeakers	X	1	£1,550.00	£1,350.00
B & O	Cx 50	Aluminium Bookshelf Speakers	X	1	£325.00	£250.00
Cambridge Audio	Dac Magic 2	Digital to Analogue Converter	S	1	£150.00	£95.00
Cannon	SB20	Subwoofer	S	1	£100.00	
Castle	Severn II	Loudspeaker Of The Year 1997-Mahogany	N	1	£580.00	£500.00
Celestion	A 1	Loudspeakers with Stands Black	X	1	£1,100.00	£700.00
Celestion	A 2	Floor Standing Loudspeakers	X	1	£1,500.00	£1,250.00
Celestion	A 3	Floor Standing Loudspeakers	X	1	£2,400.00	£1,900.00
Kef	Q 35	Floor Standing Loudspeakers	N	1	£350.00	£275.00
Kef	Q 55	Floor Standing Loudspeakers	N	1	£500.00	£400.00
Meridian	551	Amplifier	X	1	£795.00	£550.00
Meridian	566	Digital to Analogue converter	X	1	£1,095.00	£695.00
Meridian	565	Dolby Digital, 7.1 DTS, THX Processor	X	1	£2,850.00	£2,000.00
Meridian	562 V	Digital Controller	X	1	£995.00	£700.00
Mission	750 SE	Loudspeakers Special Edition	X	1	£250.00	£190.00
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Nad			N	2	£850.00	£650.00
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Yamaha	APD 1	RF Demodulator	X	1	£850.00	£650.00
Yamaha	DSPA 1092	Dolby Digital Prologic Amplifier	X	1	£1,600.00	£900.00
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Yamaha	DSPA 990	Prologic Amplifier	X	1	£350.00	£175.00
Yamaha	DSPA 590	1996 Pro-logic Amplifier of the year	X	2	£330.00	£290.00
Yamaha	DSPA 592	Pro-logic Dolby Digital Upgradable	X	2	£250.00	£190.00
Yamaha	DSPA 492	Pro-logic Amplifier	X	2	£250.00	£190.00
Yamaha	DSPE 492	Pro-logic Amplifier	X	1	£250.00	£150.00
Yamaha	DSPE 200	Pro Logic Processor	X	3	£250.00	£190.00
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AMERICAN ROCK

David Price remembers Marantz's classic Seventies tuner heavyweight, the ST-8.

In modern life, as someone once said, rubbish? Not necessarily, but it can often be rather tame, especially compared to the Seventies, when things were all a bit more free and easy. Rock stars trashed hotels and drove Rollers into pools; racing drivers raced with hangovers and chain-smoked joints like there was no tomorrow, which for many was sadly the case.

Hi-fi was also a different breed. It looked and felt just like hi-fi should - big and bold with a touch of kitsch thrown in for good measure. At the time, larger-than-life boxes were pretty much de rigueur. Discrete transistors and hard wiring were commonplace, as ICs had yet to really make their mark. It all took up space, making for hulking, over-the-top designs; man-size, as they used to say back then.

Marantz's top tuner was a perfect example. Housed in a wooden sleeve with walnut veneer and garnished with champagne-gold aluminium, it was a typically gauche American exercise in bad taste, and all the better for it. A vast tuning dial spanned the front panel, under which the company's trademark 'Gyro' tuning wheel sat.

Best of all was the mini TV screen to the left which, on closer inspection, turned out to be a real, working oscilloscope! Mad Seventies techno silliness? Very probably. After all, a Leak Troughline managed to emit nice noises without one. But the Marantz's 'scope wasn't just a gimmick - it actually performed a range of useful functions. Signal strength, tuning accuracy, multi-path, modulation level and even frequency response were all available for the user's perusal at the touch of a button.

Switching on the ST-8 brought to mind Oxford Street at Christmas time. The tuning scale and frequency markings were suddenly awash in azure light, while the tuning pointer and indicator lights glowed red. And then, of course, there was the 'scope, which beamed electric blue. Jean-Michel Jarre at the Docklands had nothing on this.



Controls running along the lower fascia select narrow or wide bandwidth, 'hi-blend' (which reduces noise by blending the two stereo channels together at high frequencies), the test tone and muting level.

Then there are the 'scope controls. Press the Tuning button and it displays a short vertical trace which has to be lined up with the central vertical guide line. Switch to Multi-path and the trace becomes a horizontal line, the flatter the better. Modulation level was displayed by the width of the line, full volume being shown by the widest possible line. Finally, selecting Audio displayed the programme content, with left channel signals giving a vertical deflection and right horizontal.

This was all clever stuff, but the Marantz's true star quality was its sound. If you're used to modern digital synthesiser tuners, this big lump will be a revelation. Along with a handful of seminal late-Seventies Japanese designs, the Marantz gives a window onto the airwaves that none of today's top tuners can beat. Amazingly clean, clear, detailed and dynamic, it possesses not one iota of the fuzzy mush that is the staple of modern IC-based digital designs. Properly aligned, its IF strip and decoder gave a ruler flat response on both channels, superb pilot-

tone suppression, extremely low distortion and superb crosstalk figures. The usual FM nasties like hiss were banished, and the unit was amazingly sensitive for its era, requiring the use of only a modest aerial for decent stereo performance.

Back in the days before digital recording and signal processing, when all studio output came from either live broadcasts, taped recordings or the end of a studio turntable (like a Garrard 401 or Technics SP-10), the Marantz must have sounded a treat. With a rich, warm feed from the studios and not so much compression going on, conditions would have been ideal. Yet the ST-8 makes an impressive job of things even now, introducing very little of its own character while flattering the compressed, digitised, hard-disk-recorded output of modern music stations.

These days, Marantz tuners packing oscilloscopes are rare creatures, so prices are high. Even in 1980 a new ST-8 would have set you back £350, half as much again as a Linn LP12, so don't expect to pay peanuts for one now. Factor in their relative scarcity, that wacky period styling and the awesome build, and you're talking over £500 for a well-preserved specimen. But should you strike it lucky, everything from the cricket scores to live Radio Three outside broadcasts will never sound the same again (or look the same, for that matter)●

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CD & DAC's

CD & DAC's	Cost	Price	LINN LK280 with spark power supply .smooth & powerful	1350 400
ARCAM DELTA 70.2 cd player	550	200	LINN MAJIK	400
MICROMEGA STAGE 3 trihorn 2 and psu	1000+	450	MARC LEVINSON No 26 pre with mc boards	5450 2000
MICROMEGA MICRO DAC	350	140	one of the last ones made, still under guarantee	
MICROMEGA DUO 3.1 transport	1500	800	MARC LEVINSON ML7 WITH MC BOARDS	5000 1500
MICROMEGA T-DRIVE transport & T-DAC with AES-EBU lead	2150	900	MOTH 30 watt monoblocks	250
MICROMEGA DRIVE 2 cd transport	1000	425	MUSICAL FIDELITY E100 remote integrated	700 400
MICROMEGA LEADER mk II cd player	600	200	MUSICAL FIDELITY MX pre with mc/mm.	1400 550
PIONEER PL1200 Cd/laserdisc player	500+	90	MUSICAL FIDELITY PRE 8 export version pre 3	150
TEAC P 500/D.500 transport & dac	1200	550	MUSICAL FIDELITY MX/P180/CRPS	2700 1000
MISSION DAC7	300	100	MUSICAL FIDELITY A1000 two box integrated fore runner to A1001	950
PINK TRIANGLE DA CAPO 22 bit + 18 bit	850		NAIM 62 pre old style with mm or mc boards	200
			NAIM 42.5 /140 pre/ power old style with mm or mc	450

VALVE AMPS

AMC 30 watt power amp	450	200	NAIM 250 power amp old style	725
AUDIO INNOVATIONS SECOND AUDIO MONOBLOCKS	3000	1350	NAIM32.5/HICAP	550
AUDIO RESEARCH SPI4 pre 3298	1350		NAIM 102 PRE AND PSU	850
BEARD P35 mkII power amp	500		PIONEER spec I/4 Pre/Power 150 Watts	400
BEARD P100 MKIII line level integrated	1500	650	PROJECT 7 integrated amp with phono	150
BEARD P500A valve pre with phono	450		PS AUDIO TWO power amp 50 watter	225
BEARD P80 power amp big ugly beast with vu meters	500		PS AUDIO PLUS C power amps pair bridgable for 150 watts per channel pair	560
CROFT SERIES V power amp	650	325	QUAD 44	160
CROFT INTEGRATED	£350		REVOX B150 integrated amp	330
EDISON 12 stereo valve power amp	200		YAMAHA C2A/B2 pre power combo 100watts now reduced pair	500

LOUDSPEAKERS

APOGEE CALIPER	700		TURNTABLES/ARMS/CARTRIDGES	
BOSE 901	350		ARISTON RD115/SYRINX PU2	250
CASTLE DURHAM	100		AUDIO NOTE TT11 black boxed	450
CELESTION SL65	150		DECCA LONDON cartridges	From
CELESTION SL600	280		£80 ring for details	
GAMMA EPOCH REF 5 very efficient, fast and decent bass	3000	1500	DYNVECTOR DV17D2 moving coil cartridge good used	250
JR 149 round version of Is3/5a	175		GARRARD 301 on amazing two-tone granite plinth with SME 312 arm (special version with Vdh wiring series V bearings)	1600
LINN KAN MK1	200		LINN lp12/lingo/ ITTOK	800
LINN KELTIC active with tune box and cards	6000	2400	LINN LP12 valhalla /AKITO	400
MAGNEPLANAR 2.5R large panel speaker	2500	900	LINLP12 valhalla /ITTOK	550
ROGERS LS3/5A	280		LINN LP12 with avondale psu	350
ROGERS STUDIO 1	300		ORACLE DELPHI MKII WITH WELL TEMPERED ARM & ONIX PSU	1000
SONUS FABER CONCERTINO mint boxed	450		ORIGIN LIVE OASIS deck out out for rega arm	150
SONUS FABER MINIMA AMATOR	1050		OXFORD ACOUSTICS CRYSTELLE turntable (floorstanding model) with sme 309 arm	1500
SONUS FABER CONCERTO mint boxed	700		SIMON YORKE ZARATHUSTRA S5,SLATE,GLASS AND STEEL turntable 2000 upgrading stops here, sme cut out SME 312 special van den Hull silver wired, Series V beangns, and V interconnect	1000
SONUS FABER MINIMA mint boxed	700		VOYD THE VOYD 3 MOTOR WITH SPLIT PHASE PSU & AUDIONOTE ARM	1100
SONUS FABER CONCERTO GRAN PIANO mint boxed	1500			
SONUS FABER EXTREMA and stand	3500			
SPENNOR S100	1650			
TANNOY BERKLEYS with 15" hpd	600			
WILMSLOW AUDIO LS3/5 A KIT	100			

CASSETTE DECKS & TUNERS

A&R T 06 TUNER	100		BEAU DECCA AMPS with PX4 pair	700
LEAK TROUGHLINE STEREO	100		LEAK TL 121 for restoration pair	1000
LEAK STEREO TROUGHLINE WITH STUDIO 12 DECODER	120	140	LEAK TL12+ singles available	150
QUAD FM 2 tuner valve matches 33/303	100		nice late pair rebuilt and ready to roll	350
REVOX A77 2 track BOXED	100		LEAK STEREO 20 very nice example	250
SUGDEN R21 tuner in teak case	100		ROGERS CADET III integrated valve amp	1000
SUGDEN R51 black & silver front	100		START HERE	100
TANDBERG 301.1 fm tuner	285		QUAD I monoblocks nice early pair POA	100
YAMAHA KX580 special edition CASSETTE DECK	250	130	PYE MOZART stereo with preamp	400
YAMAHA CR820 tuner amp	100		PYE HF25 pair mint rebuilt	1000
NANA MICH1 480Z	200		PYE HF25 for rebuilding 500, PF91 for rebuilding 800, nice pair	1000

SOLID STATE AMPS

AVI INTEGRATED	1000	600	TANNOY 12" MONITOR REDS Pair	600
DNM 3 pre with twin psu	500		TANNOY rectangular GRF horn loaded cabinets with 15" golds	2600
ELECTROCOMPANET ELCTRO 25 watt class A power amp	400		TANNOY YORK rectangular with 15" golds	1500
HENLEY MC 200 MC phono stage	800	400	LOWTHER PM6A pair	250
LECSON CPI/AP3 flat pre & round power	350		LOWTHER TPI corner horn with pm3a single	800
LFD PA1 power amp	900	450	LOWTHER ACOUSTAS with pm6a	350
			LOWTHER TPI original pair available part exchange considered	1600

WANTED: RADFORD VALVE AMPS including single monoblocks AUDIO RESEARCH ANYTHING AUDIO INNOVATIONS LIU/PI, P2 B&O CD player CYRUS TUNER EAR 859P MARANTZ CD94 MARANTZ MA24 monoblocks MICHEL GYRODEC NAIM NAC 82 NAT 02 PIONEER CT1 1000 or similar QUAD 66 or 67 CDplayer QUAD FM4 REVOX B760 ROGERS LS3/5a SME 3012, I.V V SONY ESPRIT PRE/POWER TANNOY LANCASTERS TRANSCRIPTORS TURNTABLE TRIO TUNER KT9500

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B & W P6 ROSENET	£595	SH
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EPOS ES14 SPEAKERS	£295	SH
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MUSICAL FIDELITY F22 PREAMP	£595	SH
MUSICAL FIDELITY F22/F15 PRE/POWER AMP	£1500	SH
MUSICAL FIDELITY X10-D NEW	£85	NEW
NAIM CD3 PLAYER	£695	SH
NAIM 22 PREAMPLIFIER	£95	SH
PROAC RESPONSE 3.5 LIGHT OAK	£2500	SH
ROKSAN ATTESSA	£395	SH
RURAK TEMPLAR	£295	SH
STAX NOVA BASIC SYSTEM HEADPHONES	£295	SH
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TEAC VRDS 25 CD PLAYER EX DEM	£895	XD
TEAC VRDS 10SE EX DEM	£595	XD
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THORENS PRE/POWER	£595	SH
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YAMAHA DSPA 590	£195	SH

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DETAILS

LEAK TL10 (2 pairs) £550 per pair or £1000 the lot. Leak Stereo 20 (x3) from £225. Garrard 401/SME 3012 £350. Cambridge Audio R50 mint, offers. Wharfedale Airedale corner units £220. Lockwood LE1 cabs £40. Stentorian corner units £30. Tel: 07970 416197 (Nov/1)

HEYBROOK TT2/11 turntable with Linn LVX + arm. Immaculate. Boxed with manual. £175. Give your old records a treat. Tel: 01244 535 979 (Nov/1)

CHORD CEL 301 floor standing speakers. Based on BBC LS 5-12A with built-in sub woofer. Finished in yew. Cost £3000 - bargain £1650. Tel: Tony 01924 259 603 (evening) (Nov)

CELLO (MARK LEVINSON) Etude Passive pre-amplifier (the best) mint, boxed £425. Avondale power amplifier, 150w per channel, superb £325, B&W Matrix 80S (walnut) & stands, mint, boxed £625, Arcam BB500 & 250 transport, mint, boxed £675. Genuine reluctant sale, sensible offers considered. Tel: 0961 368323 day / 01942 201031 eves (Nov/1)

CONRAD JOHNSON PV10AL preamp 6 months old. £550 ono (£1000). Beard P100 MkII power amp. recently serviced by Bill Beard. Complete new set of Golden Dragon valves (KT88 retro) an excellent example. Includes box and full service manuals. £550 ono. Buy both and get a new pair of Van Den Hul The Second interconnects free. Worth £260. Tel: 01227 371796 (Nov/1)

WANTED: AUDIONOTE OTO SE phono amplifier. Tel: Tim 01273 730 519 (Nov/1)

QUAD 34 control unit, Quad 405 power amp, Quad FM4 tuner, Castle Severn speakers, Sony CD player 502ES. all with boxes and manuals. £1300. Tel: 01622 832356 (Kent) (Nov)

MONITOR AUDIO Studio 20SE loudspeakers. What Hi-Fi 5 star and reference system, multi-award winner. Genuine reason for sale. Absolutely immaculate, boxed (new £2500) £1550. Delivery and demonstration can be arranged. Tel: 01924 870606. (Nov/1)

RUARK TALISMAN 2 black Soundbyte filled, boxed as new £350. Also AMC hybrid valve/Mosfet amp model CVT 3030A superb sound, boxed £200 Tel: 01708 344 334 (Romford) (Nov)

MERIDIAN 200/203 CD transport and DAC. Excellent condition, DAC recently serviced. Upgrading to 508 - £475. Tel: 01536 517534 (home) 01536 400 777 (office) (Nov/1)

GARRARD 301 in granite and wood plinth with SME 3012 arm, (all mint) a real heavyweight plus accessories £400 ono. Remote unit for Quad 66 set up £50. Tel: 0171 791 1395 (Nov/1)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS7 valve preamp. Box and manual £850. Meridian 500 CDT and Meridian 563 DAC £800 for pair. Tel: 01273 693631 (Nov/1)

AUDIONOTE MEISHU. 300B single ended line integrated amplifier. Dynamically awesome. Rich, deep and superbly detailed sound. Eight months old but only 100 hours use. Sale due to upgrade. Willingly demonstrate £2250 ovno. Tel: Mark 01765 677639, eves and weekends (Yorkshire) (Nov)

MISSION CYRUS II last edition black metal case and matching PSX £395. Nordost Flatline Gold 2x5 mtrs. terminated £45. Denon TU120 tuner FM+MW £45. All owned from new. Tel: 0181 952 2044 (Nov/1)

WANTED: PCM Audio Adapter for VCR. I4-bit EIAJ compatible eg Sansui Tricorde, Sony PCM-F1 etc. Tel: John 01628 537453 (days) 01628 639863 (eves) or e-mail: john@vistek.demon.co.uk (Nov/1)

MERIDIAN 201 PRE-AMP pre-amp control unit. M3 active speakers with wall brackets. A&R T21 stereo FM tuner, excellent condition £800. Tel: 01246 865640 (Nov)

EPOS ES 145 in rosewood. Dedicated stands, absolutely mint. £350. Brand new Audio Technica OC9 £210 inc P&P. DPA 8s speaker cable 2.7 mts. £60. Rotel RT 950 tuner. £160 ono. Denon TU450 RDS boxed 1yr old tuner mint condition r/c £100. Linn Majic I amp inc r/c £300 ono. Tel: Jules 01792 280061 (Nov/1)

LEAK TROUGHLINE Stereo 3 £120. Leak Stereofetic tuner £30. Leak Stereo 70 £30. Armstrong 626 £50. Goodmans MOD80 £40. Technics SL3 turntable £20. Wharfedale, Nakamichi cassette deck. Not working, offers. Tel: 01908 674193 (Milton Keynes) (Nov)

NAIM EQUIPMENT. 42/110 upgraded to 42.5/140 by Naim. 42 £120, 140 £250. Hi-Cap (old style) £250. Naxo 2/4 xover £150 All v.good condition & boxed. Tel: 01554 774638 (Nov/1)

AUDIO ALCHEMY headphone amp. Excellent condition £250 new accept £150 ono. Tel: 0121 744 1528 (Nov/1)



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	Choice Price	Original Retail Price
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Audio Research D240 mk II	£ 1495.00	£ 3500.00
Chameleon Ruby Power Amp (200W)	£ 495.00	£ 1200.00
Alchemist Kraken x 2 Stereo & Pre-amp	£ 695.00	£ 1400.00
Audio Innovations S500 Integrated	£ 450.00	£ 999.00
Exposure V Active x over	£ 295.00	£ 995.00
EAD 7000 Transport	£ 995.00	£ 2495.00
Alphason Sonata (No arm)	£ 355.00	£ 700.00
Roksan ROK-DAC 1	£ 250.00	£ 495.00
LFD PA2/ LS1/ MC1	£ 1495.00	£ 3000.00
AV1 2000 pre/ remote	£ 495.00	£ 900.00
Tesseract Tala	£ 750.00	£ 1495.00
Magnum P200	£ 950.00	£ 1895.00
ATC SCM 10 Black	£ 695.00	£ 1150.00
Alon IV mk II	£ 1800.00	£ 3500.00
Monitor Audio 700 PMC	£ 395.00	£ 600.00
Royd Priors	£ 450.00	£ 950.00
Sonus Faber Gravis Sub woofer + X-over + power amp	£ 1395.00	£ 3200.00
Kenwood 9010	£ 250.00	£ 500.00
Audio Alchemy Transport DDS 2	£ 395.00	£ 900.00

New in This Month

POWER AMPLIFIERS		
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Krell KSA 100S + Remote	£ 2995.00	£ 5843.00
Krell FPB 600	£ 8995.00	£ 12900.00
Krell KSA 250	£ 2750.00	£ 6700.00
Mark Levinson No. 331	£ 2995.00	£ 5000.00

PRE AMPLIFIERS		
Hafier Iris Remote	£ 295.00	£ 800.00
Audio Research LS2	£ 1495.00	£ 2798.00
Audio Research LS7	£ 1095.00	£ 1620.00
Angstrom 200	£ 1800.00	£ 3495.00

SPEAKERS		
Acoustic Energy AEGIS 1/ Stands	£ 295.00	£ 590.00
Martin Logan SL3	£ 2795.00	£ 3499.00
Tannoy D700	£ 1750.00	£ 2500.00
B & W 801 Series 2 (Black Ash)	£ 2200.00	£ 4000.00

TURNTABLES/ ANALOGUE/ VARIOUS		
Pink Triangle PT Too Ref Bearing, platter, clamp	£ 950.00	£ -
Stax Lambda Nova		
Signature/ SRM-TIS	£ 995.00	£ 1195.00
Goldring Eroica	£ 75.00	£ 100.00
Audio Technica AT-OC9	£ 250.00	£ 400.00

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Roksan Atessa CD Player	£ 800.00	£ 1500.00
Vimak DS2000 DAC/ Pre-Amp	£ 2195.00	£ -
Audio Research CD2	£ 2495.00	£ 3500.00
Micromega Duo CD2	£ 895.00	£ 2000.00
Krell Studio 2 Dac	£ 1250.00	£ 3198.00
Teac T1 Black	£ 395.00	£ 525.00

TUNERS		
Musical Fidelity Electra Tuner	£ 295.00	£ 395.00

Power Amplifiers

Exposure XV	£ 495.00	£ 795.00
Jadis JA500	£ 7995.00	£ 21000.00
Audio Research Classic 60	£ 1495.00	£ 3600.00
Boulder 102 AE	£ 2650.00	£ 3400.00
Pioneer A400	£ 195.00	£ 300.00
Krell KSA 150	£ 2295.00	£ 4000.00

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Boulder 500 AE	£ 3795.00	£ 5000.00
LFD PA1/LS1	£ 895.00	£ 1998.00
Meridian 505 Monoblocks	£ 1195.00	£ 1590.00
Audio Note P1 SE	£ 595.00	£ 950.00
Jadis JA 80 Monoblocks	£ 4995.00	£ 10000.00
Meridian 551 Integrated	£ 650.00	£ 900.00
Audio Golden Knights	£ 2495.00	£ 4000.00
Audio Silver Knights (Gold)	£ 1495.00	£ 2250.00
Musical Fidelity P140	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Jadis Dely 7 mk III	£ 3250.00	£ 4790.00
Krell KSA 80	£ 1495.00	£ 3000.00
Krell KSA 200 B	£ 3000.00	£ 5550.00
Quad 77 Integrated	£ 495.00	£ 700.00
LFD PA2M/ LS2 Stone	£ 1995.00	£ 4700.00
Audio Research VT150 SE	£ 11995.00	£ 17000.00
Naim Nap 250	£ 1200.00	£ 1800.00
Micromega Amp	£ 750.00	£ 1295.00
Micromega Tempo 2 Integrated	£ 595.00	£ 900.00

Pre Amplifiers

Krell KRC 2	£ 2250.00	£ 3690.00
Chord 3200 pre	£ 2250.00	£ 3800.00
Musical Fidelity X-Tone + X-psu	£ 225.00	£ 320.00
Conrad Johnson PV12 (mm/mc)	£ 1995.00	£ 2590.00
Krell KRC	£ 3795.00	£ 6700.00
CAT SL1 mkII Black/ Silver	£ 4500.00	£ 6500.00
McCormack Micro Line Drive	£ 395.00	£ 595.00
Audio Research LS3	£ 1195.00	£ 1900.00
Audio Research LS5 mk II	£ 3000.00	£ 5700.00
Meridian 541 Dolby Surround	£ 895.00	£ 1095.00
Conrad Johnson PV10 (mm/mc)	£ 895.00	£ 1250.00
Audio Research LS3B	£ 1295.00	£ 2250.00
Audio Research Reference 1	£ 5995.00	£ 8500.00
Audio Research LS 22	£ 2950.00	£ 4000.00
Naim Nac 72	£ 550.00	£ 650.00
Naim Hi Cap (Old Style)	£ 400.00	£ 650.00
Unison Research Mystery One	£ 1095.00	£ 1800.00
Burmester 785	£ 395.00	£ 900.00
Micromega Tempo P	£ 750.00	£ 1250.00

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Magneplanar 2.5	£ 995.00	£ 2000.00
B & W 802 mk III (Walnut)	£ 1895.00	£ 2800.00
Acoustic Energy AE1	£ 595.00	£ 795.00
Acoustic Energy AE120	£ 365.00	£ 500.00
Ensemble PA1	£ 995.00	£ 2000.00
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Alon Lotus SE	£ 3000.00	£ -
Sonus Faber Extrema + Stands	£ 4250.00	£ 7000.00
Linn Kan	£ 250.00	£ 500.00
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M C Cormack DAC-1	£ 695.00	£ 995.00
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SONY MINIDISC decks. JA3ES
bought £580 July 1997, £280.
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Fidelity 2.B. preamplifier £75.
Technics SL P520 CD player £55.
Linn Valhalla board £55. Goldring
G99 turntable £55. Tel: 0191 2810
260 (Nov/I)

REGA 3, RB300 vgc £150.
Micromega CD3.1 + duo Pro 2
DAC Excellent sound £1450
ono. Hitachi FT5500 MKII tuner
£60. Tel: Keith day 0468 791840
eve 01252 518 136. (Nov/I)

ACOUSTIC ENERGY AE1
speakers. Black with dedicated
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(Nov/I)

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amp excellent £400. Meridian 506
II CD player, boxed £500.
Troughline + Studio 12 decoder,
mint £100. Leak TL 12 +
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Innovations First Audio as new
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100k 24 step attenuator/volume
control. New and unused. Wrong
value for my amp. See review
HFW supp. April '98. £105 new,
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(Nov/I)

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Two's modified £110, Delta BB3
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713 (Nov)

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player, approx 2 years old, mint
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LEAK TL12.1 pair, £850. TL10.1
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amp £60. Rogers HG88 Mk1 £80.
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Innovations PI. Mint, boxed and
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Fidelity 3A preamp £100. Thorens
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71 1778 (Horsham) (Nov/I)

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5361 (Bristol) (Nov/I)

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(Nov)

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43 943 (Maidstone, Kent) (Dec/1)

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immaculate £600 inc carriage. 1yr
old. Epos E514s, walnut inc. stands,
mint cond. £350. Rotel RB 850
power amp £80. Linn Pre-Tek.
Mint cond. £150. Rotel RT 950 BX
tuner £150. Tel: Jules 01792 280
061. (Nov/1)

MICHELL FOCUS I & Linn LVV
tonearm mint £115, Rotel RC
970BX pre-amp perfect £65,
Heathkit FM-4U tuner "valve"
stereo original unmarked £45,
NAD 310 amp mint £40.
Cambridge CD3 CD player,
unmarked £100. Arcam Delta 290
line level amp, boxed £155. All plus
P&P. Tel: 0141 571 4947 (Nov/1)

THORENS TD 160 S with
Alphason Xenon arm and
Pickering XEV 3001 cartridge vgc
complete with Ringmat and 180
assorted LPs £300. Tel: 01765
600 450 (N Yorks) (Nov/1)

MUSICAL FIDELITY P180 power
amp mint cost £900 new, accept
£395. Proac Super Tower
speakers, Walnut, mint condition
cost £1200 new, accept £595.
Wanted Zeta tone arm/Lyra
Clavis. Tel: 01634 268 660 (Nov/1)

LINN WAKONDA with phono
£450, LK100 £400. Bronze
Gyrodec with Gyropower PSU &
SME 5 £1250. Linn LP12 (Valhalla),
Basik Plus Arm £400. Pioneer SD-
T5000 rear projection 50" TV
better than any projector with
LD/DUD as new £2500. Will
haggle. Marantz 63 K1 Signature
CD £275. Tel: 01952 502 097
(Telford) (Nov/1)

PINK TRIANGLE Pip 2 box pre-
amp, just serviced £1150. Quad
ELS63 plus stand £1150. Marantz
105b tuner £50. M/F x 10-d £50.
Philips N4520 reel to reel £350.
Quad 34 MC MM £125 (consider
turntable in PX) Tel: 01386 446
756 (Nov/1)

MUSICAL FIDELITY A1001 mint
condition £1750. Tel: 01462 896
401 (eves) (North Herts) (Nov/1)

NAIM NAC 102 pre amp. With
Naim PSU remote. As new mint
condition with box, manuals, all
leads etc. Can demonstrate. £800.
Tel: 0181 270 9393 (eves) (Essex)
(Nov)

LEAK SANDWICH speakers -
original couple single ownership
since 1965 require new home. to
continue tender loving care
received over these years - £175
the pair. Tel: 0181 747 0498
(eves/weekends) (Nov/1)

GALE 401 chrome loudspeakers,
stands £400. Revox G36 £250.
AMC CVT 303 valve amplifier
£300. Thorens TD 150 £40.
Yamaha TC 800 "Wedge" cassette
mint £200. Lux PD 300 vacuum
turntable £250. Tel: 01704 530
928 (Nov/1)

MONARCHY 22B 20 bit DAC. As
new. Boxed. £395. Tel: Mike 0161
291 9331 (Nov/1)

CABASSE (FARELLA 400)
floorstander black ash new Nov 97
£595. Audio Innovations (Second
Audios) modified and serviced by
Arion £1095 ono. Danish Audio
CTI £75. Tel: 016625 486 23
(Nov/1)

MUSICAL FIDELITY preamp 8. 2 x
MA 65 monoblock power amps,
manuals, boxed mint condition
£560. Marantz CD 63SE manual
boxed mint condition £150.
Thorens TD 16 MkII turntable fair
condition, no cover £40. Tel: 0171
729 5429 (Nov/1)

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S/hand and ex-demo clearance items - October '98

	Was	Now
Alchemist Kraken Stereo Power X2	1098	499
Arcam Delta 70.2 CD player	699	220
Audio Note CD2 Valve CD player	999	750
Audio Note TT1/RB250/IQ1	750	575
Audio Research D400 Poweramplifier	5800	2300
Audion Golden Knights 300B Mono Blocks	3995	1799
Audion Premier 1.5/2.0 Phono 2 Box Pre	2499	1295
Blueprint Point 1 Loudspeakers	1000	749
Cogan Hall Intermezzo REF 0.5M	375	100
Densen Beat 100 integrated	650	475
dpa Enlightenment DAC	825	475
Heybrook Quartet Loudspeakers inc. stands	785	425
Mark Levinson NO331 Power Amplifier	4500	3750
Micromega Stage 1 CD Player	549	229
Monitor Audio 352 Rosewood Speakers	299	149
NAD 5120 Turntable	99	35
Naim Audio Hi-Cap New Style	780	425
Naim Audio NAC 32.5 M/C Boards	N/A	225
Naim Audio NAC 32 MM/MC Preamp	N/A	175
Naim Audio NAP 140 (new style)	745	425
Naim Audio Naxo 3/6 X-over (new style)	650	349
Orelle CD100E CD Player	649	499
Orelle SA100 Amplifier	449	359
PS Audio IV Phono Preamp	499	195
Rega ELA Cherry latest spec.	535	450
Rega Elicit Integrated Amplifier	740	595
Rega EXS Stereo Poweramp	598	425
Rega HAL Pre amp MM/MC Remote	998	695
Rega Kyte Black	198	129
Rega Planet CD Player	450	375
Roksan Artemiz Tonearm	895	495
Roksan Atessa DP2T Transport	1295	699
Roksan Atessa DP3P CD player	1595	995
Roksan Atessa DP3T Transport	1295	795
Roksan Caspian Integrated	695	575
Roksan Caspian Poweramplifier	599	475
Roksan DS 5 Power Supply	549	429
Roksan DS 1.5 High Current P.S.U	695	549
Roksan DS 4 Power Supply	495	249
Roksan L 2.5 Preamp	1295	750
Roksan L 1.5 Preamp	2250	1595
Roksan M 1.5 Mono Power Amplifiers	4500	2750
Roksan S 1.5 Stereo Power Amplifiers	1495	999
Roksan Xerxes XPS 3/DSU/RB300/MC25FL	1200	695
Roksan XPS 3.5/DSU Power Supply	320	249
Rotel RB 970 BX Stereo Power Amplifier	225	175
Rotel RC 970 BX Pre Amp (new)	175	129
Rotel RCD 965 BX Discrete CD Player	399	229
Royd Doublets Black Ash inc. Stands	520	349
Royd Priors Walnut Loudspeakers	998	495
Ruark Sceptre S Cherrywood	599	449
Ruark Templar II De-luxe	629	479
SME V Tonearm mint	1400	850
Sony CDP59ES CD Player	599	269
Spendor SP2/Mk2 Mahogany	599	295
TDL RTL 3 Rosewood Loudspeakers	399	249
Theta Data Basic Transport	1850	895
Thorens TD124/SME 3009 vgc.	N/A	225
VDH CD102 Mk 3 0.5M	70	39
VPI TNY Mk 2.5 (new parts fitted)	3995	2495
Wadia DAC 12 D/A Converter	1500	650
XLO Type 1 interconnect 1.5M	160	75

Midland Audio X-change are looking for good used British & American Hi-fi, cash paid call John Roberts on 01562 822236 now!

Vinyl

Hubert Sumlin - I Know You 180grm	£21.99
Jeff Buckley - Sketches for my Sweetheart the Drunk	£21.99
Jimmy DeLane - Legacy 180grm	£21.99
Muddy Waters - Folk Singer 120grm	£10.99
Paul Simon - Songs from the Capeman	£11.99
The Waterboys - The Live Adventures	£16.99
Tori Amos - From the Choirgirl Hotel	£11.99

New and now demonstrating

Wadia 830/850/860 Compact Disc players of the finest quality. The 830 being the new arrival, full 24 bit d/a system, DVD/96K Chip fitable, fully balanced outputs with digital volume control, a truly ground breaking price £2999.99

J M Labs: Mini Utopia A 2 way bass reflex which when seen and heard for the first time a "must have" sign appeared. These quite frankly are the best and awesome sounding speakers ever! The price is a very attractive £3750.00 per pair, matching stands essential at £750.00

Sirius: D 200 Power Amplifier fully balanced studio quality. Precise imagery and depth at a realistic price £2995.00

Bks: Hybrid 107 Mk II Loudspeakers from Denmark made from the finest granite known to man. Amazing sound from this small floorstanding Ribbon Hybrid £1500.00

Audio Analogue: Pagannini CD player Stunning sound and looks from this Italian Amplifier manufacturer. Utilizing 24-bit technology, Sony mechanism. A must at £695.00

Basis: 1400/2000 Series Turntables. A new range from the USA's leading turntable specialist. Prices start at £1000.00 including the Basic Rega RB250 with fully adjustable V.T.A.

Michell Engineering: New Orca Pre amps and redesigned Alecto Stereo/mono power amps. Transparency from the UK's leading Turntable manufacturer. Prices on application

Electrocompaniet: All new EC1-3 fully remote control integrated amplifier, with that unmistakable Class A sound and Norwegian build quality. £995.00

Lyra: The Beta is the latest edition to the Lyra family of cartridges it weighs 8.0 gram has a compliance of 12cu at 100hz an output voltage of 0.5mv it is recommended that high quality rigid bearing resonance free tone arms are partnered with it. £599.00

Turntable Technology

Rega: Planar 2/3/9
 Roksan: Radius 3/ Xerxes X/ TMS Reference
 Michell: Syncro/ Mycro/ Gyrodek/ Orbe
 Audio Note: AN TT1/AN TT2/AN TT3/AN TT O.5 reference
 VPI: HW19 Junior/ TNTmk3
 Basis Audio: 1400/20012002/Debut Gold

Tonearm Precision

Rega: RB250/RB300/RB900
 Roksan: Tabriz/Tabrizii/Aretemiz
 SME: 309/1V/V
 Graham Engineering: 1.5 Basic/2.0
 Airtangent: 1e/1d/Reference Series 2 1c/10b

Coils and Magnets

Orofon: MC2000/MC3000/MC5000/MC7500
 Rohmann: Supreme 10/20/30 500 series
 Transfiguration: Spirit/Temper
 Sumiko: Blue Point/Blue point Special
 Dynavector: DV50/DV10x4Mk2/DV17D2/DV23D2/XX1/L
 Roksan: Corus Black/Shiraz
 Rega: Bias/Super bias/Elys/Exact
 Grado: Platinum/Reference
 Emt: HSD 15/TU2/TU2/s
 ClearAudio: Gamma/Reference/Insider
 Lyra: Beta/Lyidian/DaCapo Dc/Parnassus Dc

Head Amps

Densen: DP01/DP02
 Roksan: Artexerxes X
 Rega: EOS
 Electrocompaniet: ECP1
 Audio Note: ANS -1/ANS - 2/
 Lehmann Audio: Black Qube
 Dynavector: D100
 Henley Designs: HMC 50/100/200
 Pass: phono
 B A T: VK 5/10

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QUAD ELS57 speakers fully re-conditioned £350. Kef 104/2 speakers, excellent condition £450. Wanted: tuner Quad FM4 & Quad ELS 57 speakers any condition. Tel: Tony 01203 460 729 (home) 01203 216 650 (work) (Nov/1)

NORDOST SUPERFLAT bi-wire loudspeaker cable 8m pair £150 (£300 new), Nordost Blue Heaven 1m interconnect £75 (£150 new) Audiotech wall shelf £60 (£120 new). Tel: Julian 01344 643 135 (Nov/1)

AUDIOLAB 8000Q £700, 2 X 8000GP £400 each. Mission 753's rosewood £400, Meridian 203 DAC £180, Pioneer DV500 Region 1 DVD player £325, Arcam Delta 2's black £100. Tel: 01952 660 207 (Telford) (Nov/1)

AR CAMBRIDGE A60 amp £60. Dynaco PAT 4 preamp £70. QED 240CD amp with MC input £65. Leak Delta 70 £60. QED 2 way speaker switches £10. Tel: 01372 467 264 (Surrey) (Nov/1)

LINN ISOBARIKS, walnut, later type, £895. 3 x Linn LK 280/Spark, £2000. Linn Aktiv/Dirak, £495. Linn K600 speaker cable, £80. Naim Hi-cap, serviced, £350. Linn Trampolin, £50. All vgc Tel: 01273 505 122/306 519 (Nov/1)

LFD LS1 superbly transparent line level preamp, excellent condition, grey front panel. £295 (£999 new). LFD Spiroflex 1 speaker cable 2 x 2.5m £40 (£120 new) Tel: 01780 764 149 (Nov/1)

LEAK 12+ matched pair carefully rebuilt offers. Sony Walkman Pro WM-D6C, boxed, unused £210. DNM2A pre-amp, offers. Hawthorne all valve pre-amp £400 (list £1250) Tel: 01442 874 569 (eves) (Nov/1)

TOWNSEND ELITE Rock, Excalibur plus Anex power supply (33/45) £390. Ariston RD11 plus Grace 747 (import) £180. Naim MM and MC boards £135. Tel: 01932 260 069 (Nov/1)

ROKSAN CASPIAN CD player £575. LFD Spiro Link (original 'no sleeve') 0.75M £25. Sumiko BPS cartridge (under 200 hrs £100) Tel: 0161 428 1539 (eves & w/e) (Nov/1)

LEAK STEREO 20, restored end '97, works perfectly £250. Croft "Megamicro" pre-amp, plus separate power supply, works perfectly £250. Kimber Kable 2x3 metres £50. reason for sale, bought Naim. Tel: Brian 01702 344 974 (Southend-on-Sea, Essex) (Nov/1)

QUAD 22 stereo preamp - mint, one Quad II amplifier mint, one bronze Quad ESL 57 in mint condition. All recently checked by Quad factory & unused. Including Heathkit FM tuner OIRO £485. Small Wharfedale speaker used as talkback speaker by John Lennon on "Imagine" at Tittenhurst Park studios, Sunningdale (full provenance available) Offers. Tel: 01923 285 266 (UK) or email: classic@mjq.co.uk (Nov/1)

TANDBERG STUDIO monitors. Floorstanders black ash £100 ono. Tandberg TD 20A open reel tape deck half-track. 15, 7 1/2 ips little used £75. Tandberg TCD 440A cassette deck high quality build & spec. £50. All good condition. Tel: (day) 0171 434 7807 (eves) 01327 871 778 (Nov/1)

MUSICAL FIDELITY XLP and PSU, unopened £200. MF A100 final edition £350. AVI pre S 2000MP £495. Albury 2 M 1008 amps £450 PS Audio 2 C plus (2) £425 and 4.6 pre (superb phono) £250. Gyrodec, QC, Zeta £750. Celestion 600s £375. Mission 780 LS £80. Tel: 01483 284 997 (Guildford) (Nov/1)

LEAK STEREO 20, valve amp, new valves, professionally refurbished, genuine sale to upgrade, can audition. £210. 0468 990 132 (W. London) (Nov/1)

ELECTROVOICE HEAVY-DUTY pressure drivers with horns 250Hz-8KHz suitable for mid-range DIY or PA use £150 / pair. Tel: 0181 672 1636 (Nov/1)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS DAX DAC, Ultra Analogue version with glass optical input £650 ono. Concordant Excelsior valve preamp, with phono input and separate power supply, £450 ono. Lynwood mains conditioner, with two outputs £30 ono. Tel: 01962 851 802 (Nov/1)

PINK TRIANGLE Anniversary turntable & battery PSU. Only a few hours use. Perfect £1295 (£2300). SME V tonearm.. Silver wired. Mint £900 (£1400). EAR 859 amplifier. Single ended triode. Superb. £895 (£1600). Tel: 01379 641 584 (Nov/1)

EXPOSURE X amplifier, phono stage, excellent condition £185. Tel: 01568 615 331 (Herefordshire) (Nov/1)

LEAK TL10 plus preamp (KT61's), Armstrong A10 (EL37's) - complete, original - offers? Celestion Ditton 44's good £200 ono. Deccavolt (Wilmslow) - Decca London ribbon/Volt BM250G - large, heavy, excellent £300 ono. Tel: 01423 504 373 (N Yorks) (Nov/1)

CAMBRIDGE AUDIO CDI audiophile classic (£1500) £300. Kenwood DP7090 CD player £150. Meridian 203 DAC £75. Speakers: Gamma Epochs (£1500) £200. Helius Syrius II, 95dB sensitivity (£2395) £300. Tannoy 625 ALF active subwoofer (£600) £100. Wharfedale Harewoods (£500) £100. Tel: 0181 672 4319 (Nov/1)

POWER AMPLIFIERS. AVI S2000MM monoblocks (150 watts), pair £425 ono. Tel: Mike 0032 2 512 0952 (evenings) (Belgium, but equipment in North London). Wanted: Mint condition Mission Isoflat. £20.(Nov/1)

NAIM NAP90.3 power amplifier. 2 years old and immaculate. Sale due to upgrade. Ideal partner for NAC92 pre-amplifier. £320. Tel: Chris 0181 943 1278 (eves) (Nov/1)

JOHN SHEARNE Phase 2 integrated amplifier, excellent sound. Blue marble finish £290. Tel: 01452 728 362 (Gloucester) (Nov/1)

MICROMEGA SOLO CD player, top loader, sloping front model, 1992, boxed, £550. Tel: 01705 362 775 (Portsmouth) (Nov/1)

LINN KAIRN pre-amp with phono. £595. Linn LK 100 power amp £395. Both mint and boxed. 1st Audio triode monoblocks £495. Radford tuner £80. Tel: 01432 275 203 (Nov/1)

PAIR LINN Keilidhs with granite stands £650. Pair Eikos FRI £550. Quad 606/II (Russ Andrews modified) £400. Passion passive pre amp £450. Pioneer Precision amp £300. Monolith 20/20 speaker cables £170. All immaculate. Tel: 01977 620 558 (Nov/1)

KEF REFERENCE 3 SPEAKERS. Rosetta Burr. £2400 new, accept £1600. Linn Klout amplifier £2400 new, accept £1400. Linn Kairn pre-amplifier, phono output £1700 new, accept £1000. Pristine. Boxed. Tel: 01992 460 831 (Nov/1)

CHORD SPM 1000B power amp, mint condition, 200watt into 8ohms RMS per channel..Cost £2700, Accept £995. Tel: 01634 387 686 (Nov/1)

ORACLE/KOETSU. Oracle Delphi turntable (no arm) £395. Koetsu black/gold special cartridge £375. Both excellent Tel 0181 881 1492 (Nov/1)

KEF 105/3 Reference series speakers, black ash, good condition, boxed £825 ono. JBL 18Ti bookshelf speakers, walnut cabinets, good condition, boxed £195 ono. Exposure XX integrated amplifier, boxed, £425 ono. Tel: Martin 01234 840 840 (day) 01234 713 198 (eves) (Milton Keynes area) (Nov/1)

CHORD SPM 1200 B power amp As new. Only a few months old. Upgrading to Chord monoblocks £2400 ono. Tel: 0181 427 6936 (Nov/1)

ARCAM BLACK Box 50 £195, QED Vector Reference preamp £195, both boxed, excellent condition. Leak Troughline 3 Stereo tuner, superb £135, Troughline 2 mono £65. Soundstyle Tripod, blue £145. Tel: 01978 780 580 (Nov/1)

ROTHWELL VALVE pre-amp can be used active or passive £250. Sugden Optima CD player hardly used/boxed £300. Classical CDs unusual composers/pieces. Tel: 01254 606 272 (Nov/1)

EPOOS ES14 speakers in black ash & Epos stands. Excellent condition £350 ono. Tel: 01773 825 216 (Nov/1)



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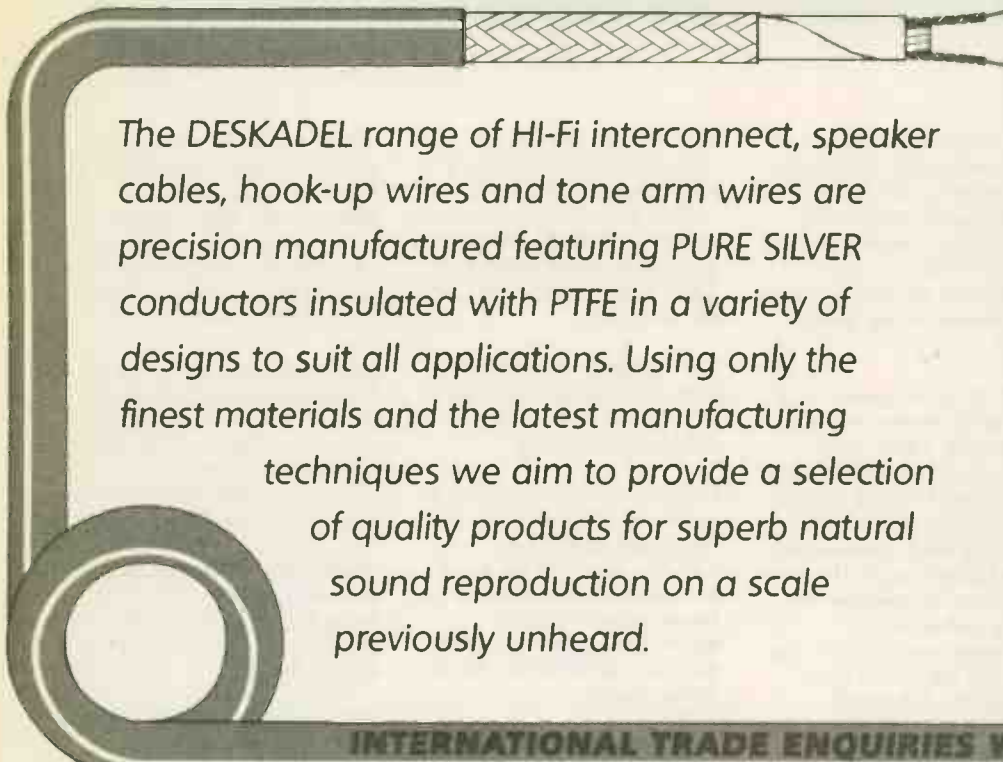
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THORENS TD150 Mk2 £80, Quad FM3 £60, 33preamp £50 both mint, boxed. Leak Stereo 30 (tranny) £35, Akai 4000DS RtoR £80, Pioneer A400X mint, boxed £125. Tel: 0113 216 9896 (Nov/1)

UNISON RESEARCH Smart 845 monoblocks, (£2250), few months use, mint, boxed, (was £3450), unbeatable combination with Quad Electrostatics. Quad ESL57, (£425), as good as you want to find. Tel: 0958 305 191 (Edinburgh) (Jan99/1)

LP12 LINGO Circus Ittok K9 £890. Linn Dirak & LK1 pre amp £250 & LK100 £300. Tel: 01258 458 674 (Dorset) (Nov)

LINN TROIKA, original, needs repair £160 ono. Sound Organisation tables (x2) 4 shelves £65 each. Mana sound frame £65. Target wall shelf £20. Tel: Nick 0113 268 2617 (Nov/1)

ELECTROCOMPANET ECI.2 integrated amp £525, Restek. Sixtant 6 channel power amp £450. Triangle Zephyr II £425. Sequence speakers 300's £100, 200's £75. Micromega Stage one £200. All mint boxed. Tel: 0181 654 9850 (Nov)

QUAD 77 CD player (mains) mint £475. Hart Linsey Hood amp £45. Fons CQ 30 turntable £50. Koss Pro 4 headphones £25. Speaker stands (pair) £25. Tel: 01224 646 473 (Nov/1)

WANTED: AUDIO Supermos 200 power amp. Modules (may consider 300, 500 etc.) may also consider fully built amps, with above modules. Also: Meridian 101 preamp, preferably with moving coil phono stage. Tel: 0161 351 1598 (eves/weekends) (Nov/1)

LOWTHER ACOUSTA cabinets. 1960's pair, walnut veneer and gold cloth. Available either with elderly PM6 drive units at £225 for pair or new PM7C drive units at £350. Tel: 01732 461 038 (Nov/1)

MYRYAD MI 120 amp. Latest spec. boxed, mint (£600 new). Sensible offers please. Cable-talk concert bi-wire, 5m length, (£180 new). Sensible offers. Tel: Peter Owen 01582 467 021 (Nov/1)

ARCAM 7 amplifier bought Mar 97, perfect £150 ono. Also clearance of old audio items incl. Sansui D95 and Trio X9 cassette decks (OTO). Tel: 0151 475 5511 (Liverpool) (Nov/1)

LINN KELTIC active speakers £3900, Linn Klout amp £1595 and Linn LK100 amp £350, all pristine. very happy to demonstrate and install. Tel: Tony 01582 456 137 (Dec/1)

LINN KEILIDH, black, mint £375. Keilidh/Kaber plinths £75. Meridian 566 20bit £550. Rotel phono equaliser £80. Audioquest Quartz 3 balanced (XLR) £110. Atacama SE24 stands £45. Tel: 01793 526 796 (Nov/1)

AUDIOLAB 8000S, 1 year guarantee remaining £480. Project 2 turntable, 2 years guarantee remaining £200. Stands Unique Sound Tower light ash/glass £175. Tel: 01748 832 520 after 6pm or weekends (Yorks) (Nov/1)

LINN WAKONDA phono preamp £370 (£900), Linn LK 100 power amp £270 (£650) both in excellent condition. Tel: Paul 01455 213 406 (Nuneaton) (Nov/1)

WANTED: SONY 557 ESD CD player (8-10 years old model). Must be in good condition. Cash waiting. Tel: 01509 813 251 or 0116 269 3861 ext. 216 (Nov/1)

NAIT 1 original box £100. Garrard 401 original instructions £65. Both excellent condition. Tel: Frank 01531 890 488 (Nov/1)

MERIDIAN DSP 5000 digital loudspeakers in mahogany, Meridian 500 compact disc transport, Meridian 562V multimedia controller including 516mm phono module, Audio Alchemy data stream transceiver. Only sell together. £2900. Tel: Mark 01604 590 069 (Nov/1)

MAGNEPLANAR MGI.C loudspeakers, brown grilles, original packing, excellent condition with spikes, stands and optional active crossover. £500. Rogers LS3/5A loudspeakers, teak cabinets. 15 ohm, very good condition. £175. Tel: 0181 961 0354 (NW London) (Nov/1)

NOTTINGHAM ANALOGUE Space deck £375, with Space Arm £225 and Tracer 1 cartridge £50. Nottingham Analogue Hyper Space Deck £750 with Paragon 2 arm £400 and Tracer 4 cartridge £200. Tel: 0141 578 1205 (Glasgow) (Dec/1)

SONY WM-D6C Professional Walkman including ECM-909A microphone £200 ono (£400). OR Nakamichi 480 cassette deck newly serviced £130. One of them must go. Tel: 0181 637 7045 or 0958 308 358 (day), 0171 228 5052 (eves/wknds) (Nov/1)

LINN KABERS, latest spec. black ash, £775 (new £2000). Mana Reference snelf £210 (new £325). Mana sound shelf £125 (£175). Mana Mini Table £110 (£150). All boxed. and as new. Tel: day 0370 893 531, eve 0118 941 2221 (Berks) (Nov/1)

£1290 (ONO) buys you 1 pair Quad ELS 63 (brown) in sealed boxes following full Quad service and up-grade. Tel. 01205 724 305 after 6pm (S Lincs) (Nov/1)

VAN DEN HUL 'The Source' 1m pair £20. Audio Technica ATHM4A headphones £20. 2x2.5m Nordost Flatline £10. 4x2.5m Gale XL315. The lot £50. 01923 671 984 (Nov/1)

NAKAMICHI RX202 £300 ono. Nakamichi CASE pre-amplifier £200. Power/amp NAD 902, new £150 ono. Russian valve amp, new £400. Luxman receiver £150. Luxman T12 tuner £300. Thorens 125 £100. JBL 4410 £400. Tel: 01494 721 274 (Amersham, Bucks) (Nov)

BARGAIN: REGA ELA 2 floorstanding speakers, latest model, excellent condition, boxed, cost £500 accept £200. Wanted, Snell Type K speakers/stands, LFD integrated zero amp, LFD interconnect. Tel: 01429 429 953 (Cleveland) (Nov/1)

KRELL KAV 300i integrated power amp at £1800. (list £2550). Theil CS5i speakers at £7000 (list £12,000). Both excellent condition. Tel: 0171 624 5266 / Mobile 0410 432 376 (Nov/1)

BEAM-ECHO Avantic SPA-11 integrated valve amp £200. Also pair Lowther PM6C drivers (need re-coning) £80. Sony 3 head cassette deck, excellent condition £85. Tel: Jon 0181 904 8023 eves and w/end (NVW London) (Nov/1)

MERIDIAN 500/563 £1000 ono (£2000). Meridian 541 processor £600 (£1095). Meridian M60C centre £700 (£1125). Meridian M30 active £550 (£995). All in excellent condition and boxed. Tel: Jon 01733 322 334 (Nov/1)

THORENS TD 124 MkII classic turntable in Howland West cabinet. £150 ono. Tel: 01457 820 375 (Nov)

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KEF REFERENCE Model Four - Classic Rosewood £2490, Meridian 500 transport & 566 20bit DAC £1350, Meridian 557 power amp £990, manuals, boxes, etc no canvassers. Tel: 0973 899651 (mobile) / 01622 844556 (home) (Nov/1)

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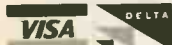
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ADVERTISERS INDEX

Affordable Audio	105	Heatherdale	107	Power Plant	106
Audio Club	32	Henley Designs	52	ProAc	58
Audio Edge	72	Henley Designs	94	Progressive Audio	106
Audio Illusion	94	Henley Designs	76	QED	8
Audio Designs	130	Henley Designs	10	QTA	106
Audio Designs	130	Hi-Cam	102	Replay	36
Audio Illusion	109	Hi-Fi Company	123	Retro Repro	124
Audio Matters	110	Hi-Fi Company	122	Ringmat Developments	52
Audiocom	104	Hi-Fi Corner	112	RJF	110
Audionote	117	Holfi	76	Russ Andrews	44
Audionote	116	Horsham Hi-Fi	108	Sevenoaks	27
Audiophile Furniture	36	Howard Dawson	102	Sevenoaks	26
B&W	IFC	Ian Harrison	130	Signals	109
Cable Talk	106	Jamo	6	Slate Audio	136
CAD	98	Jem Distribution	107	Sonic Link	60
Celestion	18	KEF	16	Sonneteer	110
Central Audio	102	KJ West One	48	Sound Connections	60
Choice Hi-Fi	128	Listen Inn	68	Sound Academy	14
Custom Cables	103	Mantra Audio	105	Sounds Expensive	124
DBF Acoustics	104	Meridian	30	Sounds Perspective	44
Definitive Audio (Notts)	40	Michell Engineering	98	Sussex Surplus	108
Definitive Audio (Brighton)	107	Midland Audio Exchange (MAX)	132	Tag McLaren	22
Definitive Audio (Brighton)	105	Mission	OBC	The Hi-End	101
Diverse Music	124	Music & Video Exchange	100	The Hi-End	100
Doug Brady	103	Musical Images	86	Thomas Transducers	114
Electra	99	NCVF	114	Trichord	40
Electromail	71	NVA	102	van den Hul	52
Elemental Audio	94	Oranges & Lemons	98	Vickers Hi-Fi	40
Emporium (The)	126	Origin Live	114	Virtual Reality	IBC
English Analogue	107	Oxford Audio Consultants	126	Wilmslow Audio	71
Glass Audio	134	Pear Audio	40	Zenteck	60
Grandix	130	PG Hi-Fi	124	Zenteck	36
Halfin	103	Picture The Sound	38		

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