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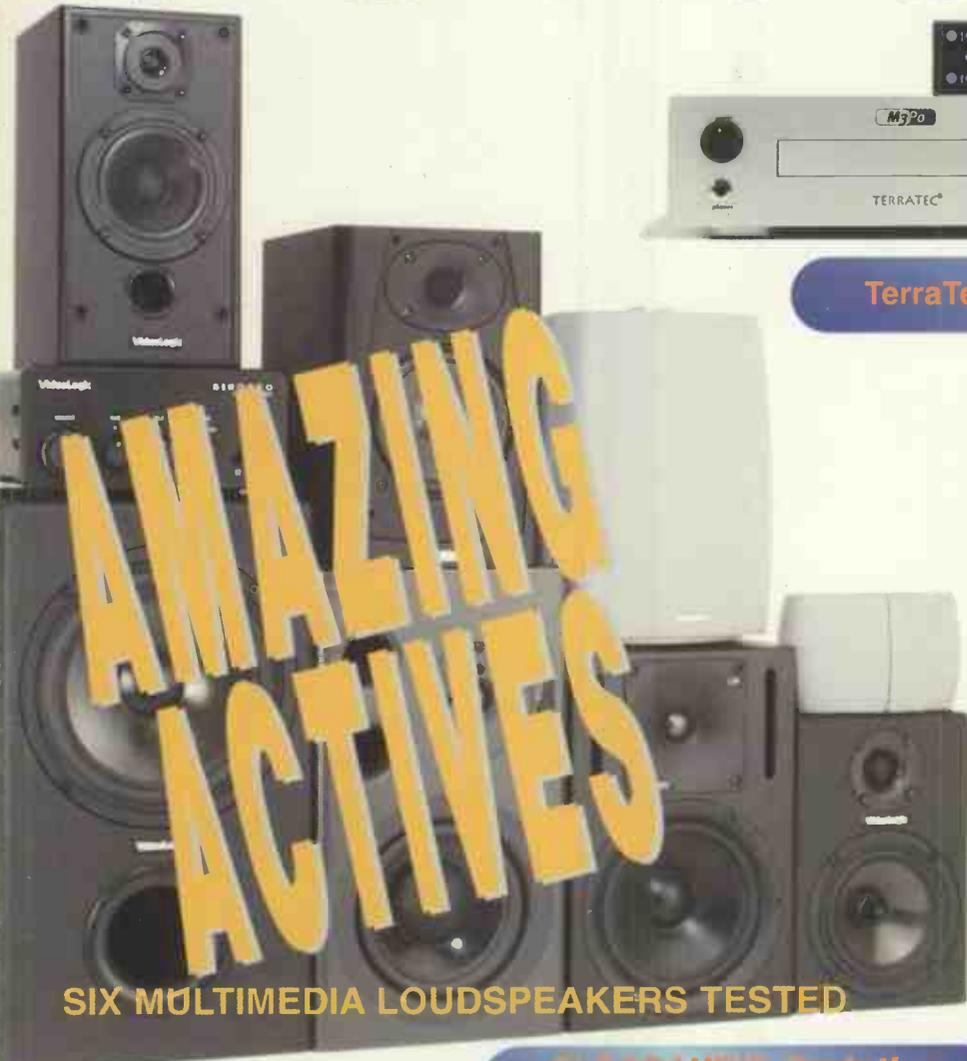
hi-fi

MAY 2000

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**AMAZING
ACTIVES**

SIX MULTIMEDIA LOUDSPEAKERS TESTED



TerraTec M3P0 CD and MP3 player



Roksan's Cinema one and Dolly Digital surround package

Classical Audio Evolution turntable with new Targus arm



- plus
- KEF Cresta 1 'speakers
 - Denon DCM-5000 multi-CD player
 - Mission 780 'speakers
- and
COMPUTER AUDIO
Adaptec Easy CD Creator 4.0
Music Match's Jukebox Deluxe 4.1

MAY 2000



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For the past 18 years the Wharfedale Diamond has been the UK's most popular loudspeaker. In contrast to almost every other speaker manufacturer, Wharfedale designs all its own components and builds almost every part in its own factories.

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Tel: 01480 447700
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HI-FI WORLD
IMEX HOUSE,
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LONDON, NW6 5LF

Web Site
www.hi-fiworld.co.uk

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+44 (0) 1923 270833.
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Private & Trade Classified Ads
+44 (0) 207 625 3134
Fax: +44 (0) 207 328 1844
e-mail: class@hi-fiworld.co.uk

Contact Numbers
Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm

General Editor
Simon Pope
+44 (0) 208 789 7344
edit@hi-fiworld.co.uk

Technical Editor
Richard White
Fax: +44 (0) 207 328 1844
Individual queries cannot
be answered by telephone.

Design & Production Editor
Faiza Chunara
+44 (0) 207 625 3129
Fax: +44 (0) 207 328 1844
e-mail: ads@hi-fiworld.co.uk

Contributors
Jon Marks
David Price
Dominic Todd

Advertising Designer
Faiza Chunara
+44 (0) 207 625 3129
Fax: +44 (0) 207 328 1844
e-mail: ads@hi-fiworld.co.uk

Production Editor/Photography
David Noble
+44 (0) 207 625 3134
e-mail: class@hi-fiworld.co.uk

Sales and Marketing Manager
Amanda Sweeney
+44 (0) 208 864 4760
Fax: +44 (0) 208 864 4780
e-mail:
amanda.sweeney@virgin.net

Accounts
Michael Ogazi
+44 (0) 207 289 3533
Fax: +44 (0) 207 328 1844

Credit Control
Louise Palfrey
+44 (0)1923 270833
Fax: +44 (0)1923 270833
e-mail: subs@hi-fiworld.co.uk

Publisher
Noel Keywood

WORLD AUDIO DESIGN
Technical Manager
Nick Lucas
Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 207 625 8032
wad@hi-fiworld.co.uk

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After many years of faithful service, we felt it was time to give our present globe award system a little spring-clean. With the increasing quality and reliability of products we need a little more scope to honour the kit that really deserves it. For those products which pass through our portals that are firmly rooted between existing categories, we have chosen to instigate the new half globe. This should give us more room to mark fairly the merits of equipment and it should give you, the reader, a better sense of how we feel the products fared against the competition. We've also added a pound sign, which will be awarded when we feel a product is particularly good value for money.

And talking of value for money, it's been an exciting few weeks in the UK world of hi-fi. The recent Bristol show was a great success and proved to the doubters that there's still

plenty of life left in the old hi-fi dog yet. For six quid the good folk of the west country (and much further afield) feasted on the visual and aural delights of many new and innovative products.

Among the stars of the show were Meridian, demonstrating just how gobsmacking a high-end surround sound system can sound; Pioneer were giving the British public a taste of what's to come in the shape of their DVD-RW - the replacement for the VCR? - currently only available in Japan; and Elac demonstrated what they believe to be the most advanced NXT transducer on the market, employed in

their flat panel 'picture frame' model, intriguingly branded with the phrase "I am a loudspeaker".

What was most warming to the old cockles, though, was the relatively large number of younger show-goers present, many of whom had a surprising interest in valve amp kits, not to mention (ah!) vinyl. Happy Listening . . .



Simon Pope

How we test the products

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

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

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



NICE PRICE -
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EXCELLENT -
Superb sound, among the best available



VERY GOOD -
Well worth a listen



ADEQUATE -
Room for improvement



POOR -
Seriously flawed, forget it!



Half globes are added for those products that we feel are between categories

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REVIEWS

AMPLIFIERS

33. . .**Roksan Caspian Surround Sound Processor and Multi-channel power amplifier.**

Roksan claim to have the first truly audiophile multi-channel decoder and amplifier on the market. Simon Pope hopes to find a truly multi-faceted musical performer in this pairing.

LOUDSPEAKERS

11. . .**Multimedia and active 'speaker group test.**

This month we examine six examples of active 'speakers, ranging from budget PC multimedia designs up to expensive, full-blown professional monitors. Do they make a viable alternative to their hi-fi brethren?

25. . .**KEF Cresta 1**



25. . .**KEF Cresta 1**

This is the new baby from KEF. With their solid build and solid engineering, will they prove to be as rivetting as their bigger brother?

37. . .**Eltax Liberty 1+**



37. . .**Eltax Liberty 1**

In this exclusive review Richard White checks out the sonic credentials from one of the surprise successes in the budget loudspeaker business.

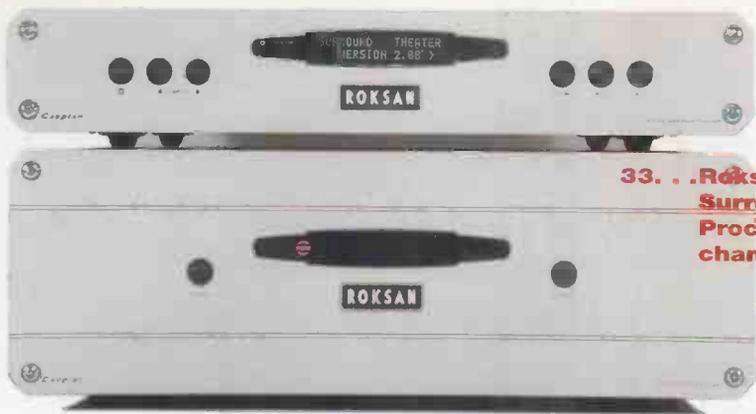
35. . .**Mission 780**

This is the latest stand mount model from the new team at Mission. Richard White assesses whether they can rest on their laurels or not.

CD PLAYERS

23. . .**TerraTec M3P0 MP3/CD player**

This unusual combination player impresses both Noel Keywood and David Price with it's outlandish approach to audio.



33... Roksan Caspian Surround Sound Processor and Multi-channel power amplifier

volume10
issue no3
May
2000

27... Denon DCM-5000 Multidisc player



23... TerraTec M3P0 MP3/CD player



27... Denon DCM-5000 Multidisc player.

With its gargantuan build and HDCD chip, this could be the first 100-disc storage player to merit audiophile status. Will Richard White have enough CDs to fill it?

VINYL

47... Clearaudio Evolution Turntable

Simon Pope digs the black stuff with this stylish combination from Germany. Does it justify the heavy price tag?



47... Clearaudio Evolution

49... Computer Audio

In our three-page monthly round-up of the latest gadgets we encounter an MP3 jukebox, as well as other goodies to make your computer sing!



FEATURES

20... Active speakers

With their wealth of experience and knowledge, the 'World editorial team tell you how to make the most of your active 'speakers in this two-page feature.

32... AudioJumble Report

Resident news hound Richard White travels to Tonbridge in search of bargains. Lucky devil!

39... Olde Worlde

David Price highlights the relative success of Sony's cheapest 'Biotracer' turntable.

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A separate phono stage with its own power supply will upgrade **MASSIVELY** almost any preamp or integrated amp.

Under £400 we offer the **LEHMANN BLACK CUBE** and the **SONNETEER SEDLEY**. Both will amaze you and make the most of eg LPI2, Voyd, PT etc turntables. For the highest level systems we have the **CLEARAUDIO** Symphono and Signature and the **PASS ONO** or **BAT VK-P5** or P-10.

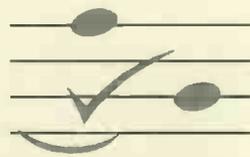
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GLASSY EYED

The Qtrax shelving system apparently created quite a lot of interest when we mentioned it on our Bits and Pieces page a few months ago. One of the most common remarks was "Pity you don't do the shelves in glass."

Qtrax have now prepared a range of toughened glass shelves which are intended to be every bit as strong as the wooden version which we reviewed. The new units share all the 'ironmongery' (aluminiumongery?) of the previous version, including the handy 'cable tidy' feature of the U-section track.

Standard sizes are 600mm by 425mm (24in by 13.5in) which gives plenty of room for manoeuvre. Other sizes are available to order.

Prices for both the beech and maple versions start at around £150 and the glass, with three shelves as illustrated, are from £251.

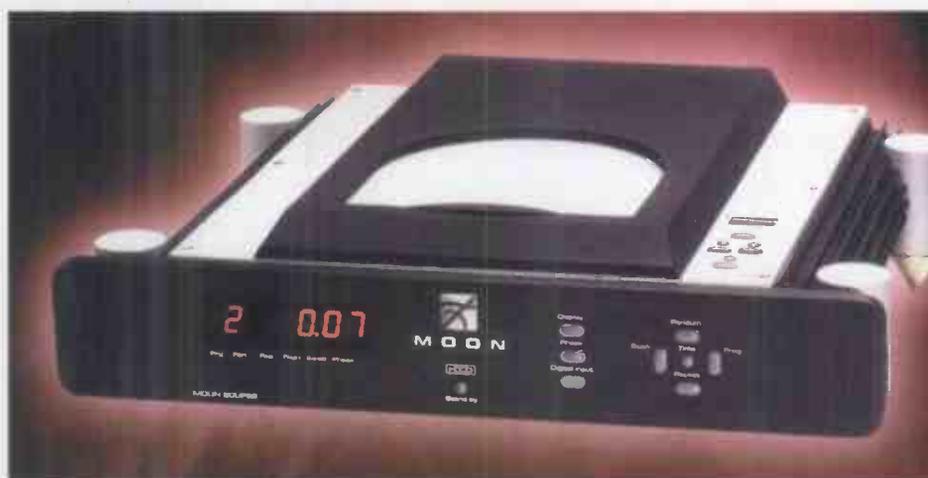
Qtrax
Tel: 01992 551484



ULTIMATE EQUIPMENT

London high-end distributor Ultimate Sonics have released details of their complete list. First up we have Canadian manufacturer SimAudio with their Moon series. This starts at £1100 for the I 5080 integrated and moves up to the lofty heights of £8770 for one W-10 monobloc. In addition to ten available amplifiers there is the Eclipse HDCD compatible CD player at £4160.

Next comes the Jolida range of "affordable" valve products from the USA. This includes ten valve and hybrid amplifiers and a valve CD player. Prices here range from £305 for the JD102B 2x25W hybrid integrated with mosfet output up to £1480 for the JD1000A valve integrated. Also in the range is a remote controlled "vacuum" stereo tuner at £305. Watch this space for reviews!



Ultimate Sonics,
36 Hurstbourne Road,
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EZO K5

£1495



**Home Entertainment
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Upgradable from one to five channels, it uses good, solid engineering to produce a good, solid sound that is alive with detail and a sense of space that will show many a well-respected amplifier a clean set of heels. It also manages to sound more powerful than it actually is, yet does not require the listener to crank the volume to the max to get a decent sound. In short it never draws attention to itself, no matter how complex the sound. - HOME ENTERTAINMENT January 2000

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WHAT HI-FI?

extract from June 1999

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Hi Fi World Feb 98	Outstanding ●●●●
What Hi Fi July 98	★★★★★
Home Entertainment Oct 98	★★★★★
Stereoplay (Germany) Feb 99	Outstanding
What Hi Fi June 99	★★★★★
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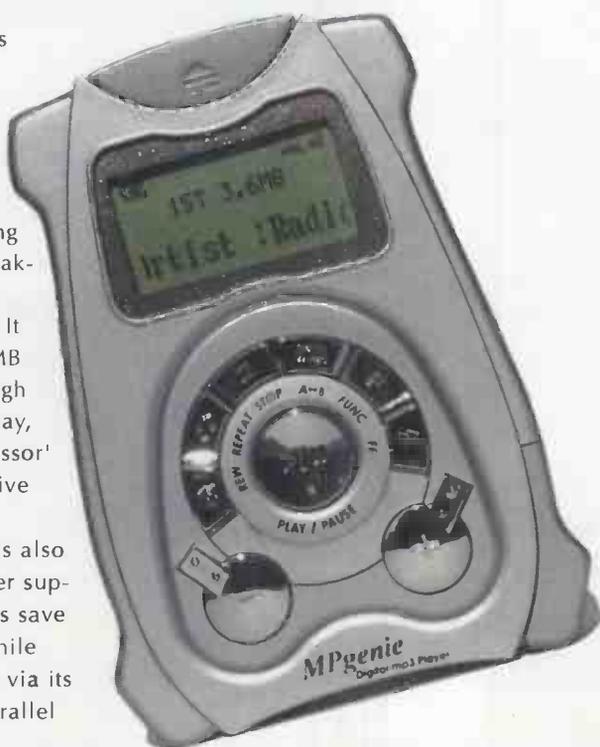
TEAC's CD-R58S is an eight speed SCSI burner with an on-board 4MB data buffer for super-reliable operation. Available to all computer audiophiles now.

TEAC 01923 819630



GENIE IN A BOTTLE

Cybercomp Inc.'s Mpgenie MP3 portable weighs in at only 60g (they're getting ever lighter) and measures a trifling 51x80x18mm, making it one of the smallest around. It comes with 64 MB of memory, a high contrast LC display, '3D-sound processor' and comprehensive programming functions. There's also an external power supply that lets users save battery power while uploading music via its quick ECP-32 parallel interface. One battery operation, ultra low power consumption and a power saving mode give 5-8 hours of use.



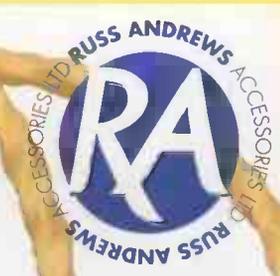
Summer Loving



These colourful chappies are the latest personal cassette players from Panasonic. Ideal for summer, they're available in five snazzy colours and feature XBS bass-boost system and will run for up to 16 hours from a pair of standard batteries. You'll have to run for one though, as they're a limited edition available from certain department stores and Duty Free shops at £14.99.

Panasonic UK,
Panasonic House,
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More Bass More Volume More Music



Internal section showing the unique woven cable construction which effectively removes mains interference

"These products are quite simply bargains at the price. As for my upgrading plans, I don't have any. There is simply no need".

Mr N Gill, London.

"Your mains cables are excellent and have done exactly what you claim of them. So much so that my intended purchase of new loudspeakers has been put off! Indeed to anyone thinking of purchasing or replacing a piece of Hi-Fi equipment I would say: See Russ Andrews first!"

Mr K Brian, Stoke-on Trent.

The Importance Of Mains Quality

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LINN AUDIO KOMPUTER

Linn are on to something very big with their new Kivort audio server. Called a 'pitch accurate concurrent archival and retrieval system', essentially it's a purpose-designed, ultra-high quality audio computer using a hard drive to store and play hundreds of full bandwidth uncompressed CD's and radio broadcasts, or thousands 'when compression is acceptable'. A highly expandable new product, it's designed to complement other Linn KnektT multi-zone and Linn music and cinema components. It can be accessed from a KnektT keypad, or by a touchscreen or via a computer from up to 128 zones in a Linn system. Linn are bullish about the system's sound quality, claiming the Kivort to be the equal of their Genki hi-fi separate but with stacks more flexibility and future potential. At present it could well be the world's best sounding multi-changer!

www.linn.co.uk

ONLINE MUSIC FACTORY

Factory Records boss Tony Wilson, the man who brought you Joy Division, New Order and the Happy Mondays, has announced Music33.com, a new online music portal with the same indie ethos that characterised Factory. "We think everyone is doing it wrong," he told PC Audio, "we can't believe everyone is charging a quid a song when you're removing all the costs." Music33 features high quality MP3 downloads from prestigious labels like Grand Central, Rough Beat, Mud, 3Beat and Blood and Fire, all for just 33 pence a go.



EMI DEAL SHAKES BIZ

EMI is merging with Time Warner to create the world's largest music company, which will own the Atlantic, Elektra, Warner Brothers, EMI, Virgin, Priority and Capitol labels. Uniting artists from The Spice Girls to the Rolling Stones, it heralds a new era of music distribution over the Internet. The deal follows last month's merger of Time Warner with the world's biggest internet company, America Online (AOL), to create a \$300bn media giant, and EMI's purchase of a 50% share in Musicmaker.com, which offers custom compilation CD selling via the Net, last July.

The joint venture will create a music giant venture with the strongest catalogue in the business and the ability to sell it on the Net. The writing is on the wall for traditional High Street-based music CD retailing - last year's online sales accounted for under 0.5% of the global total, but EMI believe they'll rise to 10% within five years. "Do we think the new-media market is going to last forever?", a spokesman said, "I'm sure at some point it will hit stability, but I think that is some way off..."

TO ARMS! TO ARMS!

High end tonearms are not being developed every day anymore, so there's some welcome news from G F C Hadcock: their famous uni-pivot tone arms have had a face-lift for the new century. At the same time, the opportunity has been taken to rationalise and improve the range.

As always, the mainstay of the company remains the GH 228 Export model, with aluminium arm tube, at £390.10. This is substantially unchanged from previous versions but still uses the patented bearing technique upon which all the current arms are founded.

In place of the GH 228 SE (reviewed December 1998) is the GH 228 Super, which now boasts a chrome-plated bearing housing and counterweights instead of the plain brass ones of the original. Van den Hul silver wire remains standard for this model at £639.20.

Hadcock's latest development is the new GH 242 Special Edition (£689.73), which has a slightly longer arm-tube than the 228. This has permitted the use of an alternative optimisation of the tracking geometry which, in tandem with the extra mass of the seamless stainless steel arm, is intended to improve significantly the performance of this new model. Again van den Hul silver cartridge wires are standard, as is the smart new plated bearing housing and weights. In addition, the new 242 is supplied with a 'directional' balanced interconnect of good quality.

G F C Hadcock
Tel: 0208 688 6565

NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

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

NAD S500 CD player

This stylish customer is one of the Danish giant's Silverline products. We test it out next month to see if NAD can cut it in the high-end category.

Final Electrostatic Loudspeakers

These are a "hybrid" design from Holland. Will their performance match their minimalist stylish looks?

Hadcock GH 242 SE

A new arm from one of the old-established firms is always worth a look. Does the new GH 242 unipivot follow worthily in the footsteps of the well-known 228? Find out next month.

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If you're thinking of treating yourself to some hi-fi, or maybe splashing out on home cinema, you owe it to yourself to check out **Bartletts' Buy It Now! Sale**. The deals are amazing — and unrepeatable, so call now unless you want to miss out. The **Buy It Now! Sale** ends at 6pm on Saturday 29th April — so there's no time to lose.

Please mention Hi-Fi World when you call.

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*Due to restrictions imposed by Marantz and Arcam, their products are not available by mail order

HYPHER ACTIVE



For a breath of fresh air the Hi-Fi World team put on their 'active' caps and bring you the low down on six pairs of powered 'speakers, ranging from multimedia designs to fully-blown studio monitors.

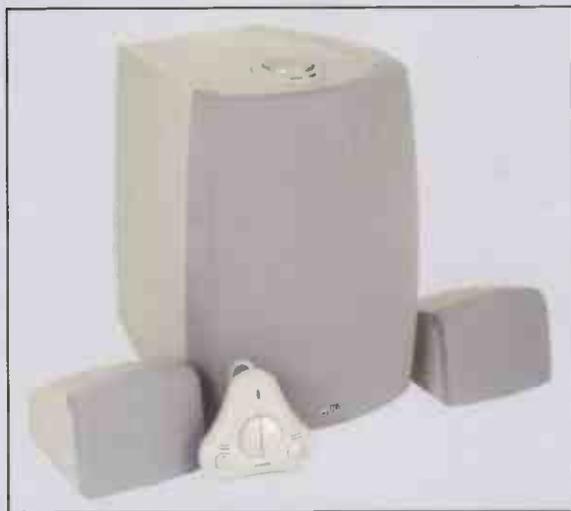
We thought it was time for a different angle on this month's group test, so we return to an area of hi-fi that's always interested us - activity - actually it's more of a group 'review', as the prices differ so greatly it's difficult to compare. In the past we've often dabbled in professional and multimedia gear and found that they can fare just as well with domestic consumer products as they do with equipment they were

conceived for. So we've gathered in six pairs of the best small active 'speakers around. We'll give you our opinion on each model - how it performs, how it compares to similarly-priced "hi-fi-only" models and assess its value for money?

The sonic advantages of active speakers at their best are many. Tighter and more punchy bass is the overwhelming feature and there's also that open and detailed midrange and overall clarity.

Also, what are the practicalities of 'going active'? For example, interconnects, often regarded as the simplest of problems to solve, can become a nightmare, and do you necessarily need a pre-amplifier? We'll guide you through the minefield of problems you could encounter with our usual expertise and knowledge. You never know, you may be bitten by the active bug yourself!

PHILIPS DSS 330 £63



The Philips set-up is in the now-classic "sub-set" style so beloved of multimedia 'speakers. This is undoubtedly a budget product, so any comparison with Videologic's similar design would be a bit foolish.

You know what market this product aims for when you spot the branding on the packaging "digital sound - CD quali-

ty". There is a 25W powered subwoofer and two 12.5W satellites powered by three class D amplifiers. They are truly multimedia 'speakers designed for use with Windows 98 and featuring Universal Serial Bus connection that "digitally" controls the 'speakers from your PC. For our purposes however, a simple CD drive with jack connections was adequate to give a purely sound-based overview.

You musn't expect a sophisticated sound from a plastic moulded 'speaker system for £60, and sure enough there are characteristics here that don't excatly merit praise, such as a slightly "quacky" sound, probably caused by the lightweight construction. However, there are also plus points to be found. Firstly, it's quite an achievement for Philips to be able to sell such a product

for what is, you have to remember, very little money these days. £60 in the world of hi-fi barely buys you a decent interconnect, or perhaps half a metre of audio-ophile mains lead!

There's a certain amount of boom and tizz about the whole operation, but a decent sound stage (actually more of a 3-D effect) is achieved, as is a good frequency spread with good recordings. The downside is that poppy guitar tunes with a lot of midrange sound compressed almost to the point of a mono tranny radio. The sub does a good job with Philips economic limitations on the product, however. Good depth is achieved, albeit with the boomy nature you'd expect at the price which creates an exciting, if slightly ploddy, sound.

This isn't a hi-fi or audiophile product, and Philips make no claim that it is, but it's better than a lot of the multimedia competition or reproduction systems supplied with the vast majority of computers.

VIDEOLOGIC SIROCCO SPIRIT £140



Last year Videologic introduced their £200 Sirocco active multimedia loudspeaker system to great acclaim. Radically different to its rivals, it was genuinely serious about reproducing music, and to this end used hi-fi quality

Audax drive units and decent audio electronics. The Spirit is the stripped down version, minus the sub-woofer, selling for £139.99.

The package comprises a pair of two way speakers 144mm wide by 274mm high, very solidly built at a total of 5.9kg.

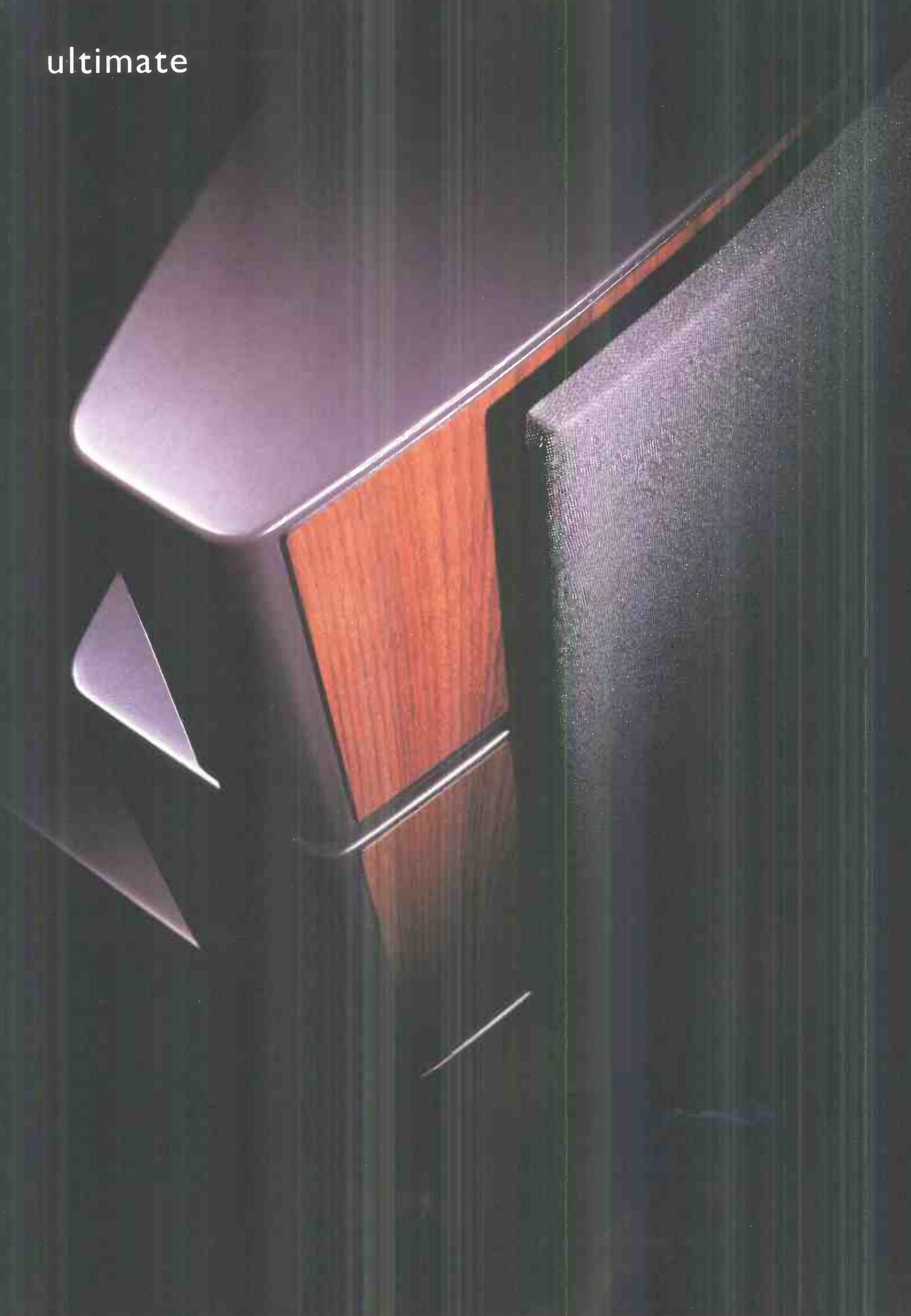
Instead of the usual tone controls the Spirit uses a Quad-style dual shelving filter with 'attitude' control. There's also a sub output on the back panel, for those seeking extra welly. Inside the right speaker is a four channel 50W RMS amplifier (one channel per drive unit) sporting a toroidal transformer. It features comprehensive protection circuitry,

and the two line level RCA phono inputs can be run together, allowing you to listen to two sources simultaneously. There's also a neat single cable wiring arrangement to minimise the hi-fi interconnect spaghetti syndrome!

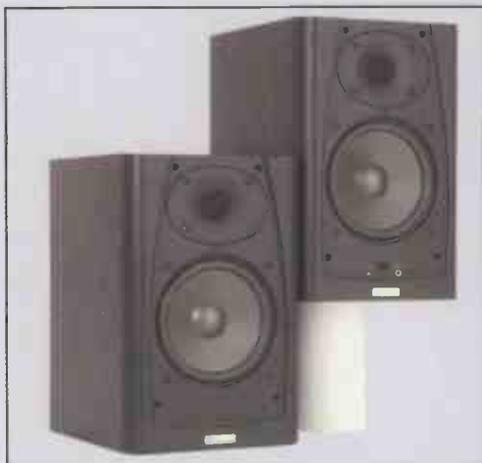
You need to place the Spirits close to a back wall on rigid stands (I used Atacama SE24s), run them in well and discard those horrendous speaker grilles, which are about as acoustically transparent as a wet towel! This done, they sound sweet, musical, refined and show not a touch of harshness. In absolute terms they lack dynamics - the amp section feels more breathless than the original Siroccos - and have loose bass and typically vague budget speaker treble. But they work great within their limitations, which aren't so apparent thanks to the Spirits' involving, musical demeanour.

Their superb value is demonstrated in the way they wipe the floor with price rivals like Roland's MA150U - the Videologics seem happier with all types of music and can drive surprisingly large rooms with no apparent signs of distress. A super package then, compromised only by the brilliance of their bigger Sirocco brothers which cost a mere £60 more.

ultimate



JAMO CS5 £200



tem of a 'master and slave' - one loudspeaker (master) houses the amplification, volume control and sockets, and the other (slave) has a fixed cable that plugs into the master. The amplification consists of two dual 20W amps and all the electronic assembly is surface mounted, showing that Jamo consider these a serious proposition and no token gesture. Unlike some other multimedia-style actives, the CS5s actually look like hi-fi 'speakers' rather than accessories for a PC.

The CS5s are described by Jamo as "high-fidelity multimedia PC 'speakers'", but will fit in easily with stereo hi-fi equipment or even surround applications (surround sound and subwoofer sockets are fitted). They feature the usual active multimedia 'speakers sys-

We have a fairly chunky little cabinet made from 16mm chipboard with a sandwich-constructed front housing a 4" bass/mid and a 1" tweeter covered by honeycomb-like foam. A reflex port sits at the rear.

When it comes to listening, the CS5s are very exciting customers. They have

the classic active characteristics of a fast and upfront sound. Rock and dance music is pushed out with a powerful rhythmic punch (remember, 20 active Watts is different to the sound through passive 'speakers'). Bass response is solid, not overtly deep, but controlled and fast, and whilst the treble could be a little subtler, it's not as fierce as some sounds emitted from certain active monitors. They're not as detailed as more expensive 'professional' monitors, but this is to be expected. However, they can hold their own with many budget hi-fi bookshelf models. They are ideal for someone who wants a good and exciting sound for relatively little money. They're easily linked up to a front end player via a pair of phono connectors, and Bingo, you have a perfectly acceptable sound without the hassle and cost of an amplifier and 'speaker cable.

VIDEOLAGIC SIROCCO PRO £550



gle 235x420x370mm sub, and the 204x86x340mm amplifier weighing 6.5kg in total. Construction is sturdy MDF for the speaker cabinets, but their crackle black finish isn't really up to class standards. The amp boasts 100W RMS of power and a toroidal transformer complete with 40,000 µF of smoothing capacitance. Features include volume, sub volume and tilt controls, sub bypass, source selection and digital source selection (coaxial or optical) switches and a buffered analogue output on the rear panel for standalone DAC operation.

The Pros required very careful siting to give their best - the problem is that the subwoofer doesn't integrate with the satellites well, leaving a gap in the upper bass where the sub stops and the satellites start. You can get round this by ramming the satellites against a rear wall and moving the sub forward and up off the ground. Judicious use of the tilt and sub controls can then do the final trimming.

Properly set up the Pro sounds very special, with a cavernous soundstage and oodles of detail. Treble is impressive - not the most extended but open and sweet

without a touch of metal dome syndrome. Midband is light and airy, proving the joys of doing away with large speaker cabinets, and dynamics are strong, if not class leading. Rhythms are extremely well conveyed, with fast attack transients and little overhang. Interestingly, the way they combine such speed with a soft, warm tonality is eerily reminiscent of Mission's HDA-coned 752s, another Hi-Fi World fave.

The onboard DAC was a nice surprise - it's not the most expressive of performers but was impressively smooth and detailed, and quite beguiling over extended periods of listening. It married very well into the whole package and made for an extremely enjoyable listen. The onboard amp has stacks of power and can drive quite a large room to surprisingly high sound levels without break-up. I really like the Sirocco Pros - set them up carefully and you get a fantastically open and musical sound with VideoLogic's characteristic sweetness and refinement. They're the best multimedia speakers I've heard to date - so they should be at around £550 - and can run leading mid-price hi-fi designs frighteningly close for comfort!

How about a multimedia monitor system with a built-in 24bit, 96kHz oversampling DAC and superb quality Audax High Definition Aerogel drive units for 549.99? Factor in a high quality sub, 100W RMS amplifier and a standalone operation mode for the DAC (meaning you can use it as an offboard hi-fi DAC too) and you've got an impressive package.

Build is excellent, with the two 100x136x74mm active satellites, the sin-

statement



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Alesis M1 £550



In the world of active studio monitors it's rare to find a solidly built product such as the Alesis M1s at the reasonable price asked for them. We've actually encountered these before in a separate test and realised with hindsight just what a good buy they are. Although this pair cost less than one Genelec monitor there

is little difference in the weight of each 'speaker. The M1s use a basic 5" driver coupled with the defining feature of a "professional" speaker - the ubiquitous dome tweeter. Connections to the monitors consist of either a 3/4 'jack or an XLR plugged into a universal socket at the rear of the "speaker. Also found round the back is a volume control which means that a pre-amplifier is optional. However, to gain the optimum performance I put to use the excellent volume pot found in the Creek OBH-12 passive pre-amp.

You are hit with an immediately powerful and clear sound that's very much in the tradition of the active sound. Very fast and controlled bass, immense detail in the midrange and a treble that's bright and very revealing. The treble through the dome tweeter is, to British ears, a little bright perhaps. I say to British ears because the ear of your average fussy anglo-audiophile is tuned to a much

smoother and more rolled-off sound than that of our European counterparts. Especially, for some reason, the Germans, who favour an exciting and bright sound. Germany would like the sound from the Alesis - as indeed would many Brits who haven't been indoctrinated with the 'smooth is good' philosophy.

Playing a well-recorded rock album will soon have you air-guitaring all over the room with the attention given to all-out attack from the M1s. Similarly, an electronic dance track will have you scratching your air-turntables with the bass control, or a transparent classical piece may find you thumbing through the pages of an invisible score and conducting an imaginary orchestra. This - strangely - is what some will find is the problem with this kind of sound. Although wonderfully detailed, they can sometimes make listening simply too much like sitting an aural examination!

GENELEC HT206 £700 each (£1,400/pair)



The Genelecs are the big boys of the group. They're not cheap, not very light, and not particularly attractive, but they're very serious products indeed. Genelec, founded in 1978, hail from the barren land of Finland and specialise in active studio monitors to the extent that they now have no less than seventeen models. Although primarily designed for professional use, they have

also realised the potential in marketing their equipment to the consumer market, so good ol' phono connectors can be used as well as XLR plugs. Such is the technical expertise applied to these 'speakers that the "quick setup guide" consists of two pages! It also helps if you have a PhD in Applied Physics to get your head around the instruction manual.

What makes these stand out from the rest of this group, apart from the price, is the attention to technological detail found inside each of the weighty cabinets. Each driver is directly coupled to its own power supply and is protected by its own circuitry. The active crossover operates at low signal levels to apparently stabilize performance and each model has its own EQ in the form of adjustable filters. Once all the information has seeped in and you've set them up as suggested, you'll realize that all that work was worth it, as they sound excellent.

Designed to be used with some form of pre amplification (no volume control is present), we put them into action with the help of Creek's OBH-12 passive pre-amp. Cranking up the volume pot resulted in a remarkably clear and well balanced sound. Some pro monitors can be unpleasant listening, but these, more than most deliver a sound that can be likened to that of high-end hi-fi, but at a mere fraction of the price. Yes - like most pro monitors - the sound is very neutral but it's by no means sterile. They're incredibly fast and have life and excitement, if maybe a tad dry. If you listen to rock or dance music you could well find them a revelation. Bass is deep and powerful yet supremely controlled and this is partnered by a sweet and ungrating treble, a clean and open midrange and gobsmacking imaging. Investing around £1,500 in a pair of these and a passive pre-amp such as Creek's could well give you a new perspective on that beast (and sometime Charlatan) we call hi-fi!



**Phillips
DSS 330
£63**

Phillips Centre
420-430 London
Road
Croydon
CR9 3QR
Tel: 0181 689 2166

WORLD VERDICT



Not exactly hi-fidelity but a sound product that's good value for money when used as a computer application.

Measured Performance see page 111



**VideoLogic
Sirocco
Spirit £140**

VideoLogic Ltd UK
Home Park Estate
Kingslingley
Hertfordshire
WD4 8LZ
Tel: 01923 560511

WORLD VERDICT



Placement sensitive, but a superb package that's excellent value for money.

Measured Performance see page 111



**Jamo CS5
£200**

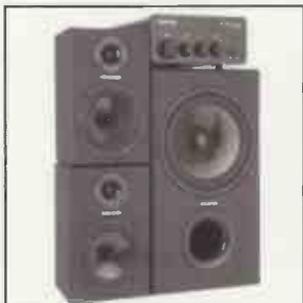
Jamo UK Ltd
Oakfield Park
Bilton Road
Rugby
CV22 7AL
Tel: 01788 556777

WORLD VERDICT



Reliable little 'speakers that deliver a real punch, but not up there with the best hi-fi offerings at the price.

Measured Performance see page 111



**VideoLogic
Sirocco Pro
£550**

VideoLogic Ltd UK
Home Park Estate
Kingslingley
Hertfordshire
WD4 8LZ
Tel: 01923 560511

WORLD VERDICT



Can run leading mid-price hi-fi designs frighteningly close for comfort!

Measured Performance see page 111



**Alesis M1
£550**

Sound Technology
17 Letchworth Point
Letchworth
Hertfordshire
SG6 1ND
Tel: 01462 480000

WORLD VERDICT



A quality active speaker with excellent detail and power, but can be tiring after prolonged listening.

Measured Performance see page 111



**Genelec
HT206
£700 each**

C.S.E.
Unit 9 Centre Park
Holdings
The Airfield
Tockwith
York
YO5 8QF
Tel: 01423 359054

WORLD VERDICT



Excellent attack, clarity and detail make these small 'speakers hard to beat at the price. Professional monitors with a distinctly high end hi-fi sound.

Measured Performance see page 111

ACTIVE ADVICE

Hi-Fi World's editorial team club together to bring you their thoughts and ideas on going active.

Since high fidelity's inception there has always been a gaping chasm separating the worlds of professional and consumer audio, but we here at this particular mag like to think we're doing our bit for inter-audio world peace. Professional sound engineers invariably spend their working days stuck in front of many thousands of pounds worth of audio equipment. The last thing they wish to do when they finally get back to their abodes at some ungodly hour is to put on some music and listen with the intense concentration of the fervent audiophile. It's understandable, after a long day at the office, do accountants get home and study pages of numbers? Consequently most engineers don't really give two hoots about hi-fi and audiophiles either look on professional equipment as something designed by a cynic that should stay in a studio. Or they treat it with reverent ignorance, thinking that if professionals use it, it must be sacred and therefore far too good for the front room of a bungalow. Both these schools of thought are unfounded.

Most active "professional" monitors are targeted towards domestic installations as well, be it stereo or multichannel, home studio or hi-fi. Even if the manufacturers don't want them used with hi-fi (a bit daft, because a sale's a sale, is it not?) they can often sound as good as most hi-fi 'speakers. On the more sophisticated pairs you'll even find EQ filters (yes, basically tone controls - do I hear a cry of disgust from the committed audiophile?) should the up-front nature of the beast become a little too much.

The simple act of using stereo interconnects from a source player into a passive preamp (there are a couple of decent ones on the market from Creek and Rothwell) and then connecting this to your pro monitors with longer interconnects will result in a sound (in many cases) that's fast, clean and exciting; deep, powerful and open. If you need jack or XLR connections, hi-fi cable companies such as the Chord Company will knock

you up a made to measure set for very little extra money. Remember also that you can cut out the cost of a power amp this way - a minimum of maybe £300. So if you fancy something different from your usual passive boxes and feel the go "professional", give a pair of actives you may just get hooked!



QUALITY INPUT:
audio inputs for your average "pro" active

PC or not PC?

For most hi-fi lovers, the biggest deterrent to buying multimedia speakers is that they're not designed expressly for hi-fi. Therefore, so the reasoning goes, they can't possibly even be worth an audition. This perception has stuck since the dark days of the late eighties when the first examples came out, small active designs used by students to beef up their cassette walkmen. Next came computer multimedia speakers boasting massive power outputs ("180 watts mate!"), which were no less awful to look at or hear.

Now though, things have taken a turn for the better. There's a real need for people to listen to high quality audio in small spaces, or in rooms where a separate amp and 'hi-fi' speakers are impractical. Factor in the explosion of decent MiniDisc and MP3 portables and quality computer soundcards, and suddenly they begin to make sense.

As a result, a number of manufacturers with previous hi-fi and pro audio experience have stepped in to fill the gap - NXT (Mission), Sony, Yamaha and Roland to name but a few. And rather than being cynical cash-in jobs, some of these have proved stunningly good. Even so, the traditionally sniffy hi-fi brigade have sniffed on regardless, refusing to even contemplate the possibility of a multimedia speaker being as good as, or better than their 'purist' designs.

Let's shatter some myths: First the one about 'multimedia speakers all being built badly' - some are, some aren't, just like hi-fi speakers! Then there's the 'multimedia speakers all sound forward and aggressive' one - well some designs use identical drive units to hi-fi designs, some even better, some use worse - depends on the design. Finally the 'multimedia speakers are full of compromises thanks to their intended, non-hi-fi applications' one. Our answer to that is: ever pulled apart a pair of £150 hi-fi speakers?

There are very good reasons why multimedia speakers, if done properly, should sound better than conventional hi-fi designs. Take VideoLogic's £200 Sirocco for example - it uses Audax drive units as good as any £200 passive hi-fi speaker, yet comes with a five channel amplifier (complete with beefy toroidal transformer) - one channel for the sub and one each for the left and right woofers and tweeters. That's right, it's active - in the best traditions of the Isobarik PMS, Meridian M1 and ARC101 or yore it filters first and amplifies later. The result is remarkably good sound for the money.

HI-FI or LO-FI?

Time to leave your preconceptions at the door and do some listening, which is precisely what we've done. To give you a gauge of the quality of some of these babies, last summer we decided to pit an NXT X-Space 2 system against my own Mission 752s. The Missions, if

you remember, got a rave review in Hi-Fi World a few years back and although discontinued now are still as good as anything around their £500 price point.

We took a line out from a valve preamp to the NXTs, and connected the Missions from Musical Fidelity XA-200 power amps plugged into the preamp's second line out. We played a host of music on vinyl and CD, from the Stone Roses to Herbie Hancock and both systems were meticulously set up. You may be surprised to learn that the NXTs were streets ahead of the Missions in terms of clarity, imaging, speed, midband detail and room driving ability. Only in the low bass and high treble did the Missions beat the NXTs, otherwise sounding fat, bloated and boxy! Then, the addition of a REL subwoofer to the NXT system sealed the Missions' fate! We've also found Videologic's Sirocco range of multimedia speakers capable of spectacular, giant killing feats.

The trick is to audition as many designs as you can and bring in your own source - there's no point standing in a shop hearing them through a twenty quid

computer soundcard. Once you've bought the system you want, don't just assume they'll work well out of the box - like hi-fi speakers they need careful placement, especially if there's a sub. Even contemplate hi-fi stands like Atacama SE24s if

you feel that isn't defeating the object of buying multimedia speakers in the first place.

Blu-Tacking them to stand tops or desktops will really solidify the sound, and if the drive units' screws or Allen bolts are visible, giving them a sturdy tightening up won't hurt either. As with hi-fi, run them in properly, keep them on all day to get the amp circuitry warmed through, clean the contacts with isopropyl alcohol as a matter of course and spin a demagnetising disc through them once in a while, like Densen's DeMagic. This done, you'll find your multimedia speakers really start to sing.



NXT's X-Space 2: a flat response?

MULTIMEDIA LOUDSPEAKER TECHNOLOGY

Don't be blinded by the apparent complexity of these loudspeakers. Putting an amplifier in a loudspeaker to power it, removing the need for an external amplifier, does little to change the laws of physics that constrain loudspeakers.

Let's take an example. Large volumes of air must be moved to produce deep, powerful bass. You need a big cone in a big(ish) box - there's no escaping this. To get big bass without cluttering a desk a single subwoofer in a separate box can be put on the floor, but it raises other problems. One is phase matching, suffered by Videologic's Sirocco Pro. The subwoofer must be placed a few feet from the satellites - not close up - and in the same vertical plane, our measurements showed, to avoid boominess and disjointed bass. Philips (and Mission with their superb X-Space) avoid this by using faster crossover rates to lessen overlap interference.

Philips DSS330 subwoofer is light and compact and can be put just about anywhere. With "600W of PMPO" (Philips Marketing Person's Overstatement) you

might think it goes super-loud, since most people equate power with loudness. The bass driver is small though and bass from it sadly feeble we found. Philips handbook more realistically claims just 25W is available to drive the subwoofer and 12.5W to each satellite, painting a slightly different picture from the 600W figure on the box. How reality sets in!

Subwoofers do allow small satellites to be put on a desk, but they introduce other problems that, whilst not insurmountable, compromise sound quality one way or another.

Only the Philips' DSS330 and Videologic's Sirocco Pro had on-board convertors that could accept a digital signal. The other five relied on the soundcard's analogue signal. Cheap cards for games may well sound a little worse than a good on-board convertor, but don't expect big differences. Analogue connection is simple and the potential benefits of digital connection are minimal. Philips provide on-screen tone and volume controls, but these are commonly available with sound-cards in any case.

Cone materials are important, especially in close proximity satellites. Old technology paper and plastic cones have

problems. Paper is light but inconsistent in its properties, poorly damped and subject to breakup, producing a raspy and peaky sound. Plastics are heavier, well damped and smoother sounding, but often a bit quacky and dull too. Modern composites like carbon fibre and High Definition Aerogel are consistent and light, giving improved transient response, together with smoothness and low coloration. Close-up listening to small satellites highlights their innate quality, making choice of cone material important.

A pair of small, passive hi-fi loudspeakers, like Tannoy Mercurys or Wharfedale Diamonds, driven from a 30W hi-fi amplifier, say an NAD, offer equivalent or better quality than the loudspeakers we tested, for around £200. Subwoofer problems don't exist, cone materials are more advanced, and cabinets larger internally because there's no amplifier hogging space. Today's hi-fi loudspeakers measure flat, just like the expensive actives we've tested, so they're equally accurate. The main attraction of active loudspeakers, subwoofered or otherwise, is that they're space saving and inexpensive as an overall package.

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EASY AS MP3

It's finally here - TerraTec's M3PO is the first hi-fi CD player that also plays MP3 music files. David Price and Noel Keywood listen in.

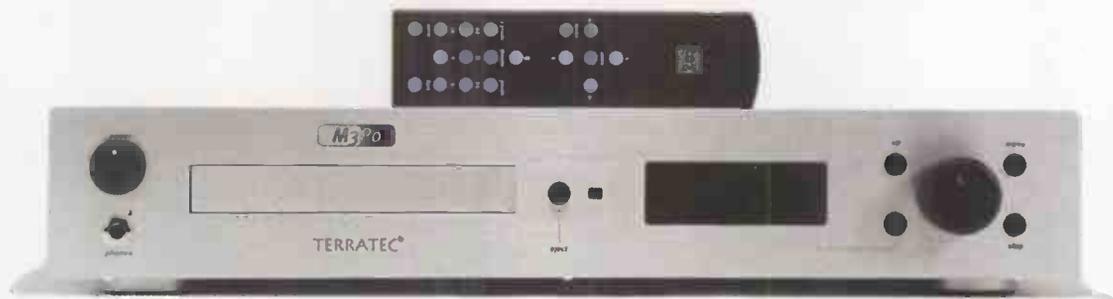
What you're looking at here could well be the future of music. It's easy for journalists to make grandiose statements like that, but if you've been following the goings on in the music business over the past twelve months, with all the mergers and strategic alliances designed to let them distribute music over the Net, this suddenly looks

because PC CD drives are asked to work at far higher speeds with more rigorous error correction.

The MP3 decoder is simply a hardware version of what every new PC bought around the world now has in its Windows operating system, an MP3 player and CODEC. As we've said before, the latter is vital to the quality of sound you can get

to it via the PC's native ISO9660/Joliet and FAT16/32 file systems. Fill this hard disk with MP3 music files (ripped from audio CDs to it in your PC) and you've suddenly got a massive amount of music available.

Despite its obvious flexibility it's easy enough to use, its ergonomics little different to a hi-fi CD separate, and the modus



very plausible. MP3's here to stay whether we as hi-fi enthusiasts like it or loathe it, and this product is something that could well speed its ascent.

Instead of using a standard audio CD transport, TerraTec's M3PO has a computer CD-ROM drive inside, plus a hardware MP3 decoder tacked onto the circuitry in addition to standard 16bit PCM DACs and digital filtering. The CD-ROM drive idea isn't particularly new - several high end British hi-fi manufacturers have used them in their standalone CD transports for years now. Indeed many believe the quality's actually better than a standard Philips CDM12 (or equivalent) hi-fi mechanism,

from MP3, but as the TerraTec supports all MPEG audio bit rates, scan rates and variable bit rate streams (from 8-48 kHz, 8-320 kbps), it is likely that the much loved Fraunhofer CODEC is there in hardware. What's also there of course is the standard PCM digital audio DAC which plays both audio CDs and the decompressed MP3s - the quality of this is only ascertainable by listening!

The M3PO's killer feature isn't just its dual standard CD/MP3 facility, but the fact that you can connect it up to a standard 3.5" AT-bus IDE PC hard drive housed in a special installation slot. The TerraTec's operating system will then talk

operandi not unlike a computer MP3 player like Music Match Jukebox. You just load a CD - either a normal audio disc or MP3 data CD - and the machine spins round to find out what you've fed it. It then displays a 'file' list and you simply select and play the track from the index displayed on the front panel.

The M3PO also comes with several special playback modes, including the usual shuffle play, and offers variable playback speed without affecting pitch. The player saves track lists in its internal RAM, and its operating system is upgradeable at a later date simply by inserting a special CD-ROM upgrade disc into the transport. **DP**

What a fascinating device! It's a pity TerraTec's M3PO didn't measure too well. Sound quality reflected its problems. The player has a forward upper midrange that projects vocals strongly. Macy Gray's dusky voice was lifted from the mix of 'I Try', pushing forward with clarity. But clarity soon became a slightly forced, nasal brightness. The M3PO's sound lacks warmth and body, due to the slow bass roll off this player suffers. Deep bass was obviously restrained, although quite tight and tuneful all the same.

In terms of sound quality the M3PO was nothing to write home about, but I

still warmed to its wacky character and abilities. It ignores the table of contents (TOC) of an audio disc for example, playing any music 'file' it finds. In this respect it behaves like a computer CD drive rather than an audio CD player; it is not necessary to close off a CD-R/RW recorded on a computer for this player to see its contents and play all tracks. Since it also plays MP3s I found I could throw any of my many test recordings into the player and get it to play every track, unlike a conventional CD player which only sees the TOC.

The M3PO is a computer boffs play-

thing. It's spin-wheel interface is bananas in my view, but serious anoraks will love it. If you're into burning your own CDs and fed up with the sniffy reception given them by an audio CD player, the M3PO will be just the ticket. There's a strong whiff of things to come here. The M3PO is an imaginative and exciting product. **NK**

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SMOOTH AS A BABY'S...

Simon Pope spends some time with KEF's new baby in the the Cresta range.

It never ceases to amaze me that with every new month comes another new budget 'speaker with increasingly impressive build quality. Are we soon to see a £25 "entry-level" standmount 'speaker with a solid platinum cabinet, "Tiffany" proudly stamped on the side, with cones crafted from the tail fins of mermaids and dome tweeters knitted from Dodo nests?

If I'm honest with myself, probably not, but the latest bookshelf 'speaker from KEF is almost as impressive. This baby is only 295x170x180mm but manages to weigh a not-unhealthy 4Kg. This is due to the commendably sturdy and thick cabinet (with its classy rounded-off edges). The drive units consist of the same 1" silk dome that's found in the Cresta's bigger brother but it's partnered by a 4" bass/mid driver that KEF felt better suited the cabinet's dimensions. They also feel it integrates more smoothly with the tweeter. Round the back we have one pair of 'speaker terminals and a reflex port, sensibly-sized to help deliver enough bass from a 4" bass unit!

In a world where budget hi-fi now means something that invariably takes your eyebrows off it's good to hear something that's smooth and a little sophisticated. Firstly let me say that your house/flat/shed won't crumble to the ground like the walls of Jericho with the amount bass delivered from a 4" driver. So if your one of those types that favour bass above anything else, the Cresta 1s may not be your particular brew. It may not have ultimate depth, but what it does have, however, is wonderful smoothness and a tune to it! They sound equally good placed virtually anywhere, but ideally favour positioning near to a wall to compensate for that lack of low bass.

Once playing they deliver a very

smooth and commendably flat response that suggest no tweaking has taken place to boost either end of the frequency spectrum. Consequently you get a 'speaker that plays CD or records as close to how they came out of the mastering studio as your going to get at this price. As I mentioned earlier, this is a welcome change.

Because of this, to get the Cresta 1s



ultimate performance, an open and spacious recording with a good frequency range will impress. With Stravinsky's Rite Of Spring on Reference recordings the Cresta 1s displayed a good sense of space and air, with the recording's deep sound staging not suffering. Bass drum thumps were clean and fast and treble was smooth and as sweet as candy. Some of the intricate detail found in this recording can often only be recognised by more expensive gear than the Crestas, but they did commendably well picking out the page turns and bow sounds from the string section.

Paul Weller's Stanley Road and

Everything But the Girl's Temperamental demonstrated the excellent hold that the Crestas have over vocals. Voices are delivered with control and delicacy, never sounding rough or strained, unless of course its Michael Bolton or Billy Corgan from the Smashing Pumpkins you're listening to! Imaging in the Paul Weller album was magical, as the studio effects flitted from left to right, and extreme panned guitars accompanied from the sidelines.

These are exceptionally gifted 'speakers when put in the right environment, ie. close to the wall in a smallish environment and pretty damn good put anywhere else for that matter. If you like your listening hard and fast, however, give them a listen, but you may plump for something else. Although having said this, they will play exciting music with sprite and electricity. If, on the other hand classical or vocal-based rock and pop is your bag, or you favour a 'speaker that you listen to music through rather than dance around in front of, I urge you to give them a bash.

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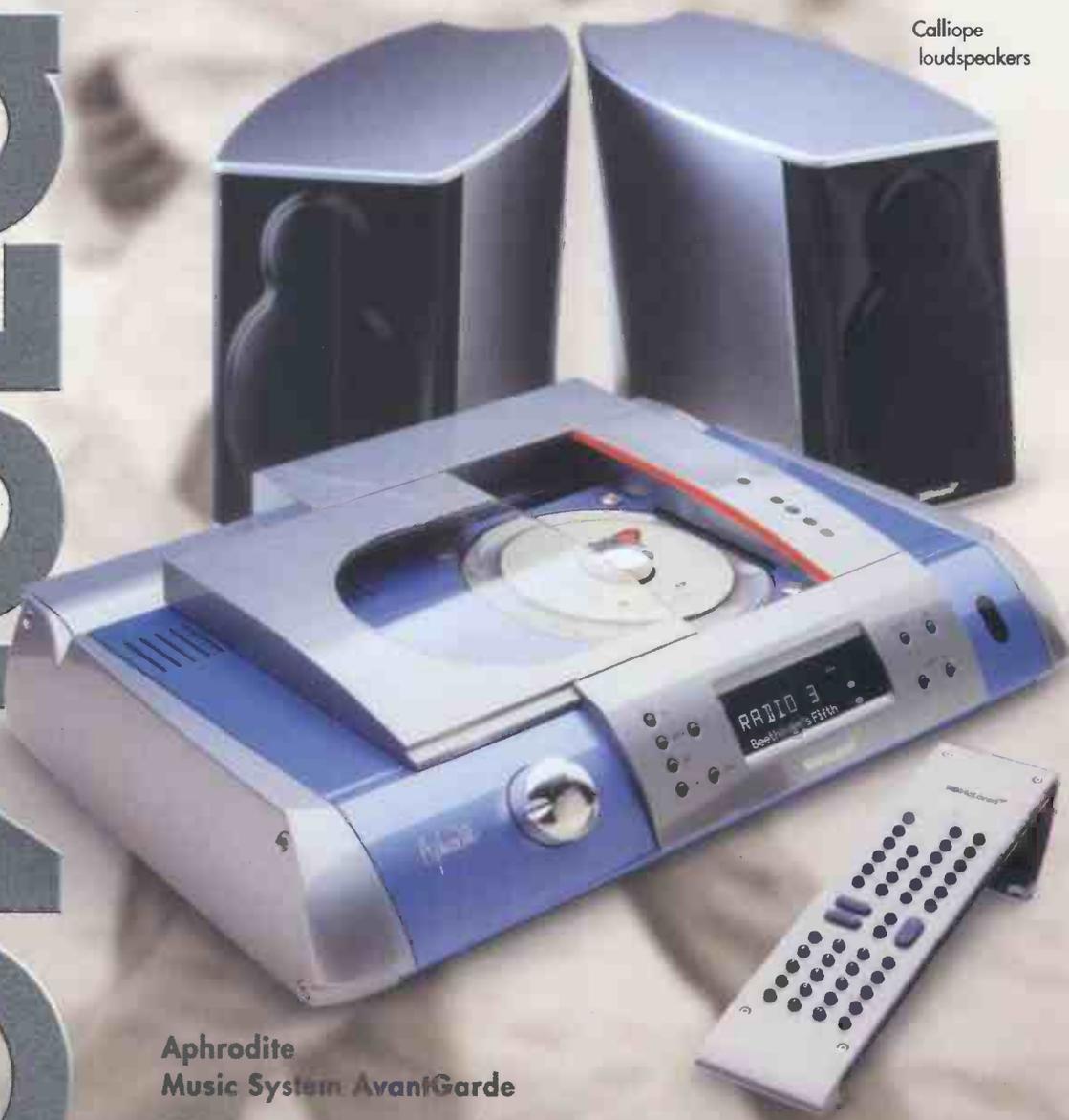
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Hundred & Thousands



Intrigued by the idea of never needing to open a 'jewel case' again, Richard White takes a tour of Denon's DCM-5000 hundred CD player.

It sounds a bit like one of those inescapable juvenile riddles: What do you get if you cross a CD player with a juke-box and a slide projector? The answer is not 'a ten-foot pair of shears' nor yet 'a woolly jumper'. Properly speaking, nor is it The Denon DCM-5000, yet there are elements of each in its design.

The applications of such a device need a slight re-assessment of the usual approach to playing a CD. Assuming that you possess fewer than one hundred CDs which you wish regularly to play, the DCM-5000 does away with all that 'opening the box, opening the machine, closing the machine, play' caper. Instead, your hundred best tune-fuls reside permanently on a rack within the machine - this is where the slide projector aspect comes in - and are accessed by mechanical means as and when required. The advantages of such a device are readily apparent; the disadvantages lie in the fact that the sleeve-note booklets still need to be somewhere (Denon provide a case for these) and that, carried through to its logical conclusion, a separate machine is required for each additional hundred discs.

Let's assume that you have fewer than a hundred discs; how does it work? Step one is to open the International Rescue door at the front and withdraw the CD carriage. This moves on smooth bearings and is held in its working position by a spring clip - it does not directly correlate to the familiar function and mechanism of a CD tray. With the carriage out, your CDs are loaded into the rack, which is numbered for quick reference (slide projector again). It does not matter if you

leave gaps in the sequence; perhaps you may choose to reserve certain sequences of numbers for certain types of music as a memory aid, for example.

With the CDs loaded into the rack, the carriage is pushed back until it latches, and the door closed. At this point the machine performs a quick medley of its ample stock of mechanical noises, whilst the display assures you that it is performing a 'disc sense'. This can take some seconds but eventually the display will show the first disc available, be it 1, 6 or 99. Once this 'default' disc is found, the usual display information is given (number of tracks, duration etc.) and if the disc is an HDCD, a beacon will light on the front panel.

From this point on, it is possible to use the DCM-5000 in exactly the same way as a standard player: skip, pause and cue controls are all as normal. So far this may seem a lot of palaver to achieve the same result, but we have so far barely scratched the surface of the Denon's capabilities.

At any point while playing, the next record can be cued. On reaching the end of one disc, the next begins playing automatically. By either pressing the jog dial on the machine, or else operating the remote, this process can be carried out immediately without waiting for one disc to end. So far so good, but by using the extensive programming options, it is possible to identify and 'bookmark' your entire collection and play according to this schedule.

Let's suppose that you have spent an evening programming in the DCM-5000's internal 'catalogue'. Once this is done - a one-off chore, by the way - you are in a

position to instruct the machine to play, say, all your Rolf Harris tracks in one glorious Feast of Reason. Similar choices are possible by using the 'Best Hits' feature, indeed if round-the-clock rocking is your thing, the Denon offers some very versatile facilities. Although my mind begins to boggle at this, it is possible to daisy-chain more machines for ever longer output programmes.

Similarly, specific programmes of individual tracks can be set up. A caution required here is that these programmes operate by rack number rather than by catalogue, so if you've swapped the discs around a bit, you might get some intriguing results.

Having given an extensive, though not exhaustive run-down of the DCM-5000's abilities, the question arises: is this a domestic device or is it really for hotel lobbies, shopping centres and the like? As far as sound is concerned, Denon have manifestly not neglected quality in the rush for features. Both ordinary and HDCD discs are relayed with a proper high fidelity. This being so, many may find this a convenient way of instantly accessing their CD collection, albeit at a price.

Denon DCM-5000 £1500

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TONBRIDGE

LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

Richard White counts his pennies at February's Tonbridge AudioJumble.

I used to think it was de rigueur for it to rain for an AudioJumble, but this year's event proved me wrong. For once at least the sun was doing its best to shine, which is no mean trick if you happen to be anywhere near Tonbridge leisure centre. As is common with such places, most of the leisure seems to be of the enforced variety, with gaggles of skinny kids with half-broken voices dodging their bikes and skateboards among the dispirited visitors to the chain-store chemists next door. A trip to the chemists is not really my idea of a Sunday treat. Mark you, it was the day after Valentine's day, so maybe the town had such a good time the day before that it was inclined to drag its heels a little on this particular day.

It's not a day of rest for the eagle-eyed reporter, however. Having managed to arrive earlier than usual, I flashed my Hi-

problem boils down to a simple case of supply and demand. Time was, for instance, when old Garrard transcription decks could be treated as rare and important artifacts of a vanished civilisation.



For the man who has everything.

The fallacious idea that 'what has valves is good' has taken a similar knock recently, as well. Perhaps too many Tripletone integrations had been palmed off on the unsuspecting for this particular myth to survive long - I don't know, but as I made this particular mistake a few years back, I sincerely hope so!

For whatever reason, I have been finding audio jumbles much more worthwhile recently. Prices for good stuff have come down to reasonable levels, out-and-out rubbish has been skipped, and perhaps the whole scene has calmed down a bit. We don't want audio becoming like the used camera game, with manufacturers producing 'collectors editions' by the tens of thousands just to bolster the market a bit, although photography always was expensive, compared: in the late fifties, the price of a Rolleiflex would buy four or five good quality amplifiers, so perhaps these things start as they mean to go on.

The stall-holders this year managed to present a well-balanced mixture of old and getting-that-way: rubbing shoulders with the inevitable TL12+es and Quad IIs

were some very tempting cassette bargains. As this format dies out as far as new manufacture is concerned, now is the time to snap up some high quality machines before they become either too old or too rare.

Having been fractionally mean about old Garrards earlier, I must say that there were some very shiny examples for sale this time. Prices for these seem to be about £125 without plinth, although naturally a scoot round under the tables would have unearthed some cheaper ones.

Now too is the time to snap up gramophone records. The armageddon of ditched collections shows signs of receding and, once the squillionth copy of Enigma Variations c/w Grieg's Piano Concerto has been weeded out there remains some very good stuff at (at present) arm-twisting prices.

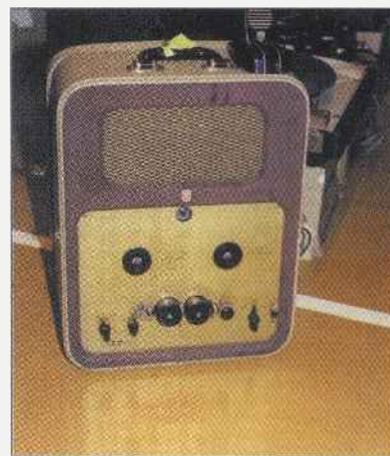
Tired but happy, I made my way out via the café. A sip of my tea reminded me that not everything in this world is getting



Classique's thought-transference experiment.

Fi World card at the entrance table, murmured "Press", was told "Same to you" and trotted into the audiophile's equivalent of Aladdin's cave.

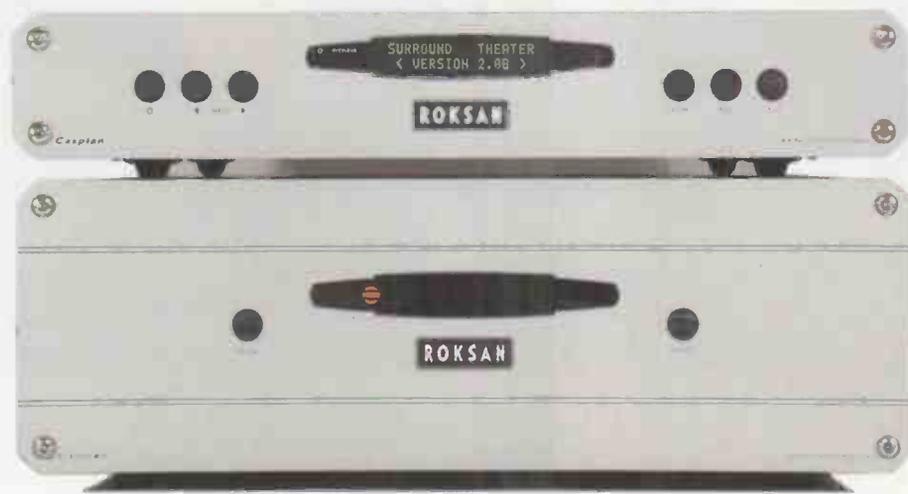
This particular cave was well-filled this time and it was obvious that audio-jumbling is getting its second wind after some of the reverses it's suffered over the past year or so. Much as I hate to admit it, the



Of course it's portable - it's got a handle!

better and better. On the other hand, looking at my bargains and reflecting on the enjoyable afternoon I'd had, you can't have everything. I look forward to the next time.

GET YOUR ROKS OFF!



Simon Pope discovers whether Roksan's solid audio pedigree gives them the edge in the thriving multi-channel market.

The Roksan Caspian Digital Surround Sound Processor and multi-channel power amp represent the company's first foray into the rapidly developing world of audiophile multichannel (yes, there is such a thing).

The Caspian power amp (also available in four or three channel at £100 less per channel) and Dolby Digital/DTS processor are housed with the usual stylish minimalism of the rest of the Caspian range, but the DSP has a very natty transparent remote that incidentally provides a test tone for checking that you have connected the various loudspeakers correctly.

The front panel of the DSP consists of a simple display window and six symmetrical buttons for simple tasks such as input selection, power and two channel/multi-channel selection. Anything more serious, such as 'speaker balance, is dealt with by the remote. Round the back of the DSP is a veritable feast of sockets. These include 5.1 channel analogue inputs which allows the decoding process to be by-passed, and the use of the unit as a preamplifier if your DVD player includes either Dolby Digital or (much rarer) DTS on-board decoding. There are also three more sets of two-channel analogue inputs. Rounding off the collection are a tape output and 5.1 analogue output, one coaxial digital out, two coaxial digital inputs and an AC3/RF input for laser disc players.

Starting the listening with one of

Denon's Ambience discs in Dolby Digital, the immediate effect was one of power and clarity in abundance. Using the analogue inputs (using the DSP as a preamp) the organ of Bonn Minster, with Markus Karass at the keyboard, developed into a beast of immense power. The overwhelming sense was one of space. With no alteration to rear or centre 'speaker levels, a vast expanse was created, so much so that I almost felt as if I was in the Minster itself and could lean over for a quick splash from the font.

Next into the Sony DVP-S725D was Lyle Lovett's now classic DTS 5.1 channel album, Joshua Judges Ruth. This, unlike many DTS titles, is specifically mixed for multi-channel sound and, boy, can you tell! When the backing vocalists are trying to climb into your left ear from behind, you know the recording intends to let you know as much!

Once the initial "corr!" factor has struck home with this recording, you can settle down and listen to the music on it, which to be honest, comes second to the sonic fireworks, in my opinion. However, the Caspian pairing delivered the effects with aplomb. The second track, Church, with the gospel choir backing tunefully from the rear, was crisp and detailed, with Lovett's voice focussed perfectly at the centre to the rear of the soundstage. Again the predominant feature of the sound was the clarity with which Roksan obviously

pride themselves. The one difference I found in the Caspian compared with their two-channel brethren was that they sounded, to my ears, more 'digital'. OK, so these multi-channel recordings are emphatically digital in sound, but with bog-standard CDs in stereo, via analogue connections, there was a certain compression to the sound, a minimal effect but nonetheless present.

These are two very fine pieces of electronics that will deliver multi-channel sound with electrifying precision, detail and power. Since they also double up as a high quality two-channel audio pre/power - and at a sensible price - it could be argued: what else do you need?

Roksan Caspian DSP/Multichannel power amp
£1295/£995

Roksan Audio Ltd
Unit 6, Northfield Ind Est
Beresford Avenue
Alperton, Middx.
HA0 1NW
Tel: 0208 900 6801

WORLD VERDICT



Equally talented with both multi and two channel sounds. A great buy.

Measured Performance see page 111



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"The hardest thing here is to express just how good this system is. I have heard systems in excess of £40,000 which exhibit only fractional amounts of this cleverly-matched outfit's musical dexterity"

Alan Sircom HFC

Definitive Audio Starter System 1995

"A real sonic beauty. A very potent and cost effective route to audio nirvana"

Paul Messenger HFC

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source		
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Wilson Benesch Full Circle - 0.5 tonearm, Goldring Excel	£1500	£2600
Linn LP12, Avondale PSU	£400	£1300
Helios Stargate CD player. Brand new, boxed - fabulous.	£2250	£2900
Audio Note Dac3 Signature	£1300	£2850
amps		
Jadis JA80 monos - boxed, perfect.	£4000	£10000
Cary 300 SE1	£2250	£4000
Cary 805 50w SE Monos	£3900	£8500
Audio Innovations Series 1000 Silver monos	£900	£2250
Audio Innovations Series 800 Mk1	£350	- - -
Audio Innovations Series 800 Mk3	£430	£1000
Audio Innovations Series 800 Anniversary	£700	£1550
Audio Innovations L1 Preamp	£200	£375
Audio Innovations Series 500 integrated	£475	- - -
SJS Arcadia 300B Single Ended - 18watts	£4000	£6500
Border Patrol PSU - MB + Standard	£400 (€600)	£700 (€1000)
Art Audio Symphony 300B Single Ended - New	£2100	£2500
Art Audio Diavolo SE integrated - chrome/gold	£3500	£4500
Musical Fidelity A2 - ex dem	£250	£800
speakers		
Living Voice Auditorium - American Walnut	£1000	£1500
Snell Type K Mk1, Type J MkII (x2), Type E MkII	£400 / £600 / £800	

Our stock of part exchanged items is constantly changing. Most items come and go before they can be included in these monthly ads. Call for specific requirements.

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MISSION POSSIBLE

Mission have crammed all their know-how into the 780 bookshelf 'speaker. Richard White hopes not to self-destruct in ten seconds.

Loudspeakers are inclined at the present to fit themselves into ever smaller confines; there is a limit to how far this process can be carried out before the sound (the ultimate factor, after all) suffers. Mission's 780 bookshelf units have wisely not gone to extremes in this instance. Measuring a comfortable 11in by 6.5in by 10in (hwd) without grilles. The grille material is stretched over a moulded plastic frame somewhat reminiscent of a fencing mask. Despite this analogy, the overall appearance is smart and workmanlike, with the 5in bass-mid driver provided with a phasing plug attached to the magnet core. Both the bass-mid and the 1in cloth domed tweeter are firmly fixed into the profiled plastic sub assembly which constitutes the business part of the front baffle. An unusual point is that the tweeter is below the main driver; were it not for the keen styling things could look a little topsy-turvy.

I let the Mission settle down for a day or two before giving them the third degree. The information plate on the back recommends amplification power between 50W and 200W - a clue that the 780s are not going to be the most sensitive of beasts. Once the warm-up was over, straight in at the deep end with the Minnesota Orchestra's no-holds-barred recording of Stravinsky's Firebird Suite - an old World favourite which takes no prisoners!

First impressions were of a very civilized 'speaker; the sheer amount of bass-end information on this Reference Recording CD can incite boom in the most innocent-looking cabinets. I was pleased to find that the swamping tenden-

cies of the unfettered orchestral bass drum were held in check, allowing plenty of the intricate woodwind detail to float through. Difficult instruments such as the bass clarinet and the cor anglais were reproduced clearly and naturally, indeed, as a general



mark, the 780s seemed keen to let everyone have their say. One small cloud on the horizon was that, although the 'speakers gave an almost self-consciously controlled account, some of the unusually wide dynamic range of this record was a little compressed.

Leaving the Twentieth Century to its own devices, I called up The English Chamber Orchestra with Haydn's Sinfonia Concertante and Violin Concertos. I was surprised to find that, although the 'speakers gave an invariably civilized account of the orchestra, the sense of dynamic compression was, if anything, more marked than it had been with the Stravinsky CD. Haydn's use of solo versus concerted strings, particularly when the latter are backed up by percussion, hints that he expected plenty of contrast in these pieces. The Missions rather reduced this

effect; a very musical performance but with a sense of hanging back somewhere.

A taste of the eighties on the radio, Miss Fine Brown Frame, funk'd its way into the cobwebby corners. With a minimum of acoustic watts to play with, the Missions delivered a plentifully driving sound. Nor were the subtleties of the synthesizer embellishments missed out; the multi-tracked vocal too was recreated with pleasing intensity and detail. With the amount of compression in habitual use on commercial stations, it is difficult to pronounce on the exact dynamics, but given the date of the recording, I'd guess the track was mixed with reflex boom-boxes in mind. Mission's approach was different and more musical: the electric bass had actual notes to play and the insistent kick-drum remained a beat rather than a splurge.

These 'speakers certainly need the Watts to give of their best, but they reward with a distinctly controlled output. Dynamic range may disappoint in the long run, but they give a thoroughly musical time of it on the way.

Mission 780 £300

**Mission Ltd
Stonehill
Huntingdon
PE18 6ED**

Tel: 1480 451777

WORLD VERDICT



A civilized 'speaker with a well-controlled and musical sound. Not the ultimate for dynamic expression, and a little power-hungry.

Measured Performance see page 111



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How much should you expect to pay for a loudspeaker? It's a question with the same sort of logic as 'how long is a piece of string?' - there is no satisfactory answer. Many people are rightly wary about the budget market. Notice the vocabulary as well: 'the buyer on a budget' means 'poor' or alternatively 'cheap-skate'; 'budget bargain' is 'inexpensive' or 'value' but never 'cheap'. Let's take a look at Eltax's latest cheap 'speakers for the penny-pinched.

For a start, the Liberty 1+ (£99.99) are solidly constructed little boxes made from 18mm MDF and tastefully covered with a carefully applied wood-look substance. The front grille has a styled bulge in order to clear the main driver - why not simply make the whole grille larger? - which is a 5in unit with convex roll surround. Slightly overlapped by the trim of the bass-mid, the soft dome tweeter is mounted on the vertical axis; a simple and well-tried arrangement. As might be expected

Later on in the programme, I was surprised to hear the assuredly not bass-heavy harpsichord booming a little. I came to the conclusion that placement of these 'speakers is of some importance.

Experimenting a little, I discovered that with the 'speakers on the floor, the reflected port output was inclined to hoot a little. I don't by any means denigrate the Eltaxes on this account - it's just something which needs bearing in mind. Opting at last for the high-and-dry placement, the over-emphasis disappeared, leaving the 'speakers giving of a very neutral best



What A Liberty!

Richard White takes a canny look at Eltax's latest budget loudspeaker. How does it feel to owe so little for so much?

with a cabinet only 11in by 7in by 9in (hwd), the rear-mounted port is long - about five inches - in order to give maximum air load to the main driver; the usual swings-and-roundabouts part of reflex designs. Un-gold plated terminals, mounted on a strong plastic plate, provide secure anchorage for single-wire loudspeaker leads.

Having established that the Eltaxes will not disgrace the domestic environment, I propped them up on a couple of listening height stands and gave an attentive ear.

Eager to try out my newly over-hauled Troughline tuner I tuned to Radio 3 and was rewarded by some Dowlandesque music and a rather insipid treble trilling on some nonsense about 'Whelk come my luff or air var'. At first, I was inclined to put this down to the loudspeakers, but on the vocalist being announced as the ever-lovely Emma Kirkby, I realized that they had relayed the full value of the performance with very little added or taken away. These were but early days, however, for the Liberty 1+ but did at least give a good idea of their accuracy on chamber music.

on the remainder of the broadcast.

Having carefully set up the Liberties to obviate problems with the ports' output, I tried them with the well-known Germani performance of the Widor Toccata, with the thirty-two foot reeds growling away in the bass. Having set them such a tall order to fill, I was pleased with the result the Eltaxes summoned up. It would be idle to expect a bookshelf loudspeaker to shake the floor, especially with fundamentals in the 40Hz range; nevertheless they gave a very well-balanced performance; if the deep bass rolled off somewhat it did not swamp the treble detail with which this record is brimming. All-in-all a welcome surprise.

I am stressing the natural sound of these boxes but, of course, there is an awful lot of non-acoustic music out there. A quick sortie into XFM produced a Smashing Pumpkins track with a knotty conglomration of phased guitar sounds, plus a cymbal-happy drummer. The Eltaxes left the very deliberate distortions still sounding musical, indeed it was possible to hear what was being waa'd and when. For a track that seems to have been

recorded in someone's garage, this is a result.

Having lived with these loudspeakers for a while, I am still trying to evaluate their low price versus their very satisfactory performance. They are not Richter scale movers, but they do provide a very musical sound with a wide variety of styles. Is there such a thing as a 'bargain de luxe'? If there is, these are it.

Eltax Liberty 1+ £99.95
Eltax UK
4 Warren Yard
Wolverton Mill
Milton Keynes
MK12 5NW
Tel: 01908 226464

WORLD VERDICT

An astonishing natural sound for the money. Well-balanced in all directions.

Measured Performance see page 111



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BIO Technology

David Price looks at the cheapest of Sony's legendary 'Biotracer' turntables, the PS-X600.

There are no two ways about it - Sony were plain bonkers when they came up with the Biotracer tonearm back in 1979. Ridiculously complex and hard to build, they must have sweated blood trying to get the darn thing to work properly. But, to their eternal credit they did, and the PS-B80 was the result. A gut wrenchingly expensive product, its £800 selling price was far higher than a contemporary Linn. It simply couldn't compete with the best of British in sound quality terms, and duly got a panning in the hi-fi press.

Actually a very clever beastie, it offered fully automatic operation, intelligent repeat modes, record size and speed selection, plus forward and backward cueing at the touch of a button. This was all made possible by the Biotracer arm's electronic motion detectors, motors and microprocessor brain. Lateral and vertical sensors passed signals to tiny linear motors controlling the arm's motion, while tracking weight and side-thrust were continually monitored and corrected. As if this wasn't enough, the system also electronically controlled subsonic damping too!

The result was a supremely user-friendly disc player with great ergonomics. Placing a disc of any size on the deck's large platter, pressing 'Start' and watching the arm glide decorously across to the cue-in point, moving back a little to correct itself if need be, was a joy. The only trouble was that, in the case of Sony's new baby, the best things in life were most certainly not free. What was needed was a smaller, cheaper, second generation Biotracer deck - enter the PS-

X600.

With a price of 'just' £180 it was a veritable bargain by the standards of its predecessor. Yet they hadn't skimped on the build, and the little deck was far heavier than its diminutive size suggested. Its composite plinth sported four adjustable, air damped feet which did the job of isolation far better than they had any right to. At the front of the deck was a row of metallised, touch-sensitive controls offering power on-off, speed selection, repeat and cueing facilities. Little red legends lit up to denote speed, repeat and quartz lock operation.

The 1.6kg alloy platter sported a decently supportive rubber mat with slats

around the inside of the platter, feeding a tape head. The head read the pulses, allowing the X-tal lock to know at exactly what speed the platter was running all the time. This was a very clever system, but not strictly a Sony innovation - Denon had come up with the idea some five years earlier.

In use, the PS-X600 was a gem. The automatic tricks were smooth as silk and in a completely different league to rival 'fully auto' non-Biotracer designs. Tracking was impressively secure, and the deck worked well with a wide range of moving magnet and moving coil cartridges. Tracking force could be adjusted with complete safety while a record was playing. Bias was a function of the Biotracer system and thus set automatically anyway.

Even by today's standards this odd little Sony turntable is a capable performer. It's quite up to, say, Rega 3 standards and in many ways better. Speed stability is excellent, giving a solid, confident and musical sound, with remarkably few signs of any particular problem areas. Only when you put it against the big guns do you realise how lightweight its bass is, and

how the midband is a touch splashy and vague.

These days there aren't many PS-X600s around, so pay between £50 and £100 for a minter. Parts availability isn't great so if the Biotracer arm goes wrong - unlike Steve Austin - we cannot rebuild it. The good news is that build quality is exceptionally high - so there's no reason why you shouldn't get many more years' use out of a well preserved specimen. If you're looking for a classy automatic to take the load off your high end belt drive, then this is the one.



cut into it for the deck's photoelectric disc sensing mechanism. At the rear of the plinth was a raised pillar into which a light was set, which not only ensured reliable disc size selection, but gave some useful extra illumination for cueing.

The drive motor was Sony's superb brushless, slotless linear direct drive unit - not in one of its most torquey incarnations but nevertheless able to whip the platter up to speed in under half a revolution. It was quartz locked, naturally, and used a pulsed magnetic thread running

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

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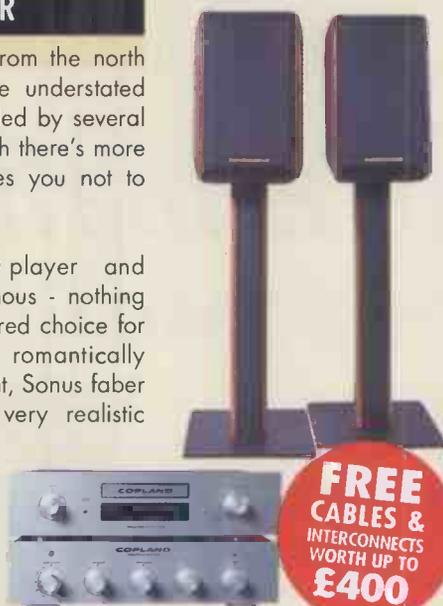
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LETTER OF THE MONTH

GETTING STUCK IN

First of all thanks for a great mag - It's the only down-to-earth, non-bombastic Hi Fi monthly that doesn't at the same time go to the opposite extreme. My question regards DIY 'speakers versus their mass-market brethren.

A few years ago, inspired by HFW, I designed and constructed myself a pair of loudspeakers using Audax drive units - in particular the HT170F0 fibreglass-coned bass/mid and TW025M0 tweeter. Now I know the Audax HT series with their stamped steel chassis don't sound nearly as good as their die-cast equivalents, but to me these 'speakers worked wonders for my system. Total cost circa £230.

About 18 months later, in a fit of pique, I decided (don't ask why) that they needed altering. I trashed the nice piano black 18mm MDF cabinets and replaced them with slightly smaller cabinets made of 15mm chipboard (yes, you read correctly) finished with sticky-back vinyl pretending to be black marble. Total cost of that? About fifty dabs. Whilst I would like to erase this atrocity from my past, I'm afraid I cannot. I now have a pair of 'speakers which do admittedly sound quite good, but which look, well, let's just say "very eighties".

I desperately want a pair of decent-looking 'speakers. What I need to know is, should I bite the bullet, nip down the road and buy a set of wonderfully-finished (and well reviewed) Eltax Symphony 6's at the knock-down price of £150 or should I spend another £100-odd quid getting properly made MDF cabinets done by someone who knows what they are doing? If so, can you recommend any firm in particular or would the local cabinetmaker do as good a job (obviously I have a design prepared).

Thanks for any advice you can give.

Bruce Leyden, Edinburgh

First, there's not much wrong with the Symphony 6s, especially as they are now long enough in the tooth to have lost some of their brightness. I'm afraid I have no idea whether or not you'll be reading this in time to buy the pair you've seen but if you are, I would slightly query the price - the 6s are four-going-on-five now; the reduction over the original price doesn't seem that much to me.

Your home-made loudspeakers sound 'interesting' to say the least. I know it's not invariably the case but in many instances 'the best' drivers do not yield the best results so don't be too self-conscious about the lower specified Audaxes. From my own experience at audiojumbles, I'm often staggered at the execrable cabinets in which manufacturers mounted good units. Whitley Stentorian were masters at this,

especially with their rather fetching cambric bass cones, for which they used to sell cabinet kits seemingly made of balsa and hardboard. Wharfedale's excellent Super 8 used to find itself in some odd places as well; even the Tannoy dual-concentrics suffered from some very wobbly joinery over the years.

In any case, chipboard has its uses, especially for knocking something up to try it out. If you haven't tested the design you're thinking of, this might still be an avenue: another layer, say some veneered plywood, properly glued to the chipboard carcass (if it works) will give a double benefit. Not only will it have cost less than the full-thickness material but also cabinet resonance is better suppressed by two glued layers than by one thick piece.

I'm not sure that £100 will get you very far with a professional cabinet maker - I'm willing to stand corrected but I would guess that your bill could easily be twice this. Many timber merchants offer a cutting-to-size service at so much per cut. Having tried this, I haven't found the cost to be exorbitant and the edges are dead straight! This method obviously demands butted rather than mitred joints but given the strength of modern wood glues, I wouldn't worry over-much.

Perhaps on balance you may wish to zoosh down the road for those Eltaxes but remember: it's the principal of the thing! RMW



Results like this aren't easily achieved at home!

A LITTLE HARSH

Dear Hi-fi World,

I find that some of my CDs (pop CDs mainly) have got a sharp top end which make listening fatiguing at times. Do you have any ideas to remedy this problem? In my opinion, a simple solution would be to tweak the top end a little using tone controls. My amp does not have them so I was thinking of using a MF X-Tone to do this when listening to these CDs but I cannot find any dealers who sell them. Would a change of speaker cables and interconnects improve things?

If so, what would you suggest? Preferably, I would like to keep my set up as it is but I don't mind suggestions of better components. My setup consists of a Cambridge Audio CD4SE, Denon PMA-350SE amp, ALTO II DIY speakers from South Coast Speakers, Audioquest Topaz interconnect and Ixos Gamma 6003 speaker cables.

Khairil Osman,
ko99r@ecs.soton.ac.uk.

Rather than the equipment being the problem, I think you could merely be suffering from CD-itus. Pop CDs as you rightly notice can be a tiresome lot. Recordings are now mastered at increasingly high levels. These types of recordings can be very mid-heavy and the lack of a wide frequency range results in a compressed letterbox of sound that can be really hard work! The same effect can also be found in classical vocal and piano music.

I'm led to believe that the X-tone, unfortunately, has been discon-

tinued, and not that many were actually made. It seems that the hi-fi lover regards any kind of EQ as an impurity. Which is, to a certain extent, codswallop, because many studio recordings are badly EQ'd and need a helping hand when played at home.

*As for alternatives, there's basically nothing like it on the consumer market. If a second-hand one doesn't appear in our classifieds, short of draping wet towels over the speakers (not really advisable) there's not that much that can be done. Maybe turning to smoother cables such as Chord Company's musical Chameleon interconnect could ease the pain a little. Failing that, dig out your old turntable, or buy a new Pro-ject Debut. You may find the brittleness would have miraculously disappeared, as long as you have the records, that is! **SP***



**MF's X-Tone -
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VARSITY BLUES

As a first year student without mega rich parents to bleed money from, I had to buy my system second hand. It's probably total crap compared to some of the stuff in your magazine. Stuff which, incidentally, I covet like a mad thing filled with the dreams of the dispossessed.

Anyway the system is. Musical Fidelity Elektra E1 amp, Marantz CD 67 SE and Tannoy Mercury M2s. The interconnect is a no-name black thing with gold plugs which have tarnished and the speaker cable is Gale Electronics XL315.

I live in halls so I have to keep the volume down. The problem is that at low levels I get no soundstage at all just left/right and no depth. On my favourite music - 20th century classical like Stravinsky and Berio - it sounds totally lifeless. Is it my ears, my perception, or the way equipment is designed and manufactured? Why is it that only with the volume control up at around 11 or 12 o'clock does the sound come alive? What can I do? Being poverty stricken I have no more than £30-£50 to spend.

Terry Vaughan
Didsbury
Manchester
M20 2ST
e:terryv@lycosmail.com

Although us audio journalists are very quick to applaud the merits of various "sound stages" in equipment, we are also quick to forget that quite often it is the recording that will demonstrate the sound stage rather than an amp, 'speaker or CD player. The sound staging of your system is often only as good as it is on the recording. Taken it as read that the recording's good, in general you tend to find that excellent sound staging is usually found in more expensive or high end gear.

In your case, though, things could maybe be finely tuned by investing in a new pair of interconnects. And as you've written a well-constructed letter that's been published, you can have a pair on us!! You could also play around with varying the space between your 'speakers, or toe them in a little as this can sometimes make a slight difference. You can therefore spend your £30-50 in the Union bar!

As far as the 11/12 'o clock question is concerned, it depends how much of a headbanger you are, but seeing as you listen to Berio, that's irrelevant. The E1 will deliver 30W per channel, which should be enough to drive the Tannoys but you may indeed have to crank up the volume a tad to achieve a decent level. I'm in total sympathy with you in that music needs to be played at a certain level to involve you more, which unless you inhabit a crofter's cottage near Glencoe can sometimes bit of a problem with modern living. Just ask my neighbours.

SP

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21st CENTURY TAPE HISS

I have a lot of off-air concert tapes, mostly recorded in the late 70's and early 80's on to C120 cassettes, and would like to make them more permanent by putting them on CD. I'm getting some high frequency interference and the odd click (it sounds like a Dolby tape being played back without Dolby but worse and I don't use Dolby!) when I play the newly recorded CD. The music seems to save OK as a .WAV file on my PC's hard disk and even seems to playback OK from the hard disk.

I'm using a SoundBlaster 16 soundcard in a 233MHz PC with 32Mb of RAM. The CD-RW is a new Yamaha 8x4x24 device. I've noticed the same problem with a tape recorded off air via the analogue line out from my Sky Digital receiver. I'm using Adaptec CD Creator version 4 which was bundled with the Yamaha.

Do you think it's a multiplex - type problem? I've tried dropping the digital sampling resolution when recording onto my PC from 48k stereo to 22k but the problem persists. A diagnostic walk through would be appreciated and including exactly which boxes to check and uncheck when setting up to record as a .WAV file. Please help before my concert collection unravels, fades or snaps completely!

Mike Robinson, via email.

First thing to do is click on the speaker icon in your Windows tool bar to call up the Volume Control. Go into OPTIONS/ PROPERTIES and select 'adjust volume for recording'. Click all the boxes in the 'show the following volume controls' and you'll get a big row of faders appear. Make sure LINE is selected, and all the other inputs switched off. Likewise, on playback, mute everything except LINE.

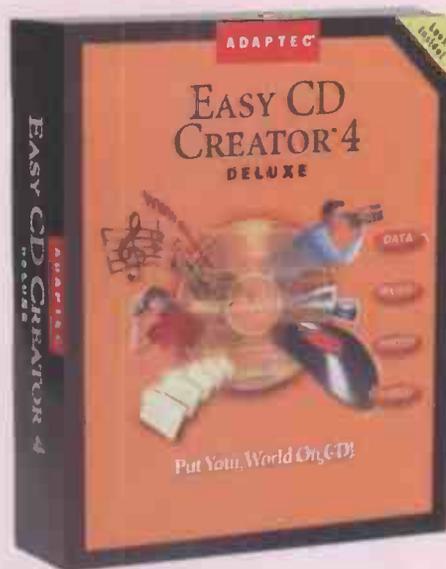
Next, record your tape with sound recording software, ensuring the level is set correctly. Refer back to Windows' recording volume control and the LINE IN fader to set this so the signal only occasionally goes into the red. Ensure also that you're recording at 16-bit, 44.1kHz - you don't say why you chose 48kHz but it's always best to keep all audio in the computer to CD's own sampling rate if you're going to subsequently burn it to CD - sample rate conversion degrades the sound and could actually be introducing the digi-noise you're getting. Next go to CONTROL PANEL/ MULTIMEDIA/ AUDIO PROPERTIES and

check the preferred device is your SoundBlaster for both recording and playback. Don't forget to reboot if you need to make any changes.

Then make your recording. Is there any noise when playing through your soundcard? Try taking the soundcard's LINE OUT into your hi-fi just to check what's really going on. If you do get a noise here, your soundcard could be faulty.

If you're not getting any noise yet, check your CD burner and software are installed correctly. Go to CONTROL PANEL/ SYSTEM/DEVICE MANAGER, find your Yamaha and click on it. If Windows reports 'this device is working properly', it at least means it's correctly installed. Next go into EZCD settings, and check it's configured for your Yamaha CD-RW. Insert a high quality (Sony, Philips, TDK etc.) CD-R blank into the Yamaha - CD-RWs or cheapo CD-Rs sometimes play up or don't work on some audio CD players very well. Go into EZCD CD's record options and check it's configured to close the session when it's finished, and that it's working in Disc-at-Once mode. Track-at-Once introduces annoying two second gaps between tracks and clicks too.

Burn at 1x speed, and listen to your CD - if you're still getting noise then the problem has to be down to a hardware fault. As you've eliminated all the software/ operating system variables that cause the problem, it's now a matter of substituting as many bits as you can (soundcard, CD-burner and even motherboard) to find the offending article. DP



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Parallel EXISTENCE

Simon Pope digs the groove with something snazzy from Clearaudio.

A grey and rather drab exterior can often conceal a host of high end audiophile components that sound just grrreat, but look like a wet Sunday afternoon. Then there's the opposite. A high-tech visual delight that will wake you up, make your morning espresso and do everything else under the sun - except play music the way you want it. Then you have that comparative rarity; something that looks so cool it has your pals purring, that also happens to include excellent engineering and the ability to make music. Enter Clearaudio's Evolution turntable, with parallel-tracking Tangent arm and Sigma Moving Coil cartridge.

The Evolution turntable is the next step up the ladder from the Solution. It has a more traditional turntable shape than its three-legged cousin and stands on three large machined stainless steel spikes. A bubble spirit-level is built in, and a hole is cut into which fits the heavy motor complete with resplendent blue power light. The rubber belt then wraps around the frosted plastic platter from the 33/45rpm motor pulley to complete what is a simple but effective way of revolving the vinyl. Things start to look a little more complicated when you look at the arm. A solid Dural base supports the perspex frame which in turn supports a tensioned steel cable. Along this runs the carriage for the cartridge. It all seems very complicated and precarious at first, but is in practise a piece of cake and not as delicate as it looks. The only task you really have to face is setting the tracking weight. Once this is completed by adjusting the counterbalance to the rear of the cartridge you're ready to rock 'n roll.

Using this set-up really brings the

sense of ceremony back into audio. You have to swing the whole arm up 90 degrees until it safely clicks to put on the record. Pulling out a small metal button allows the arm to be lowered again and a



small lever atop the arm lowers the cartridge to the record accompanied, let's hope, by an inky black silence before the music starts. A bit of a palaver? Perhaps, yes, but it's quite enjoyable in a snobbish high-end sort of way!

Hardly Rock 'n Roll, but equally musically involving is a record I have of pieces for 'cello and organ expertly executed by Ofra Harnoy bowing with Michael Bloss on the pipes. This is a warm recording in a spacious ecclesiastical acoustic. The 'cello refrained from sounding scratchy and the organ had both depth and delicacy. I almost forgotten I was reviewing, which doesn't happen very often!

Changing tack to test out the Evolution's grip on rhythm, I lowered the Sigma onto Talvin Singh's Traveller from the album OK and was treated to some of the best sounds ever to grace my portals. Through the 'speakers came a deep and low bass that shook my bones coupled with an exciting, rhythmic kick that soon had me gyrating in my listening chair - full marks in the involvement stakes.

This Evolution is not a cheap option - the whole shebang will cost you just the right side of £3000, but it looks and sound so good that you can almost forgive the outlay. It plays records in a way that reaffirms my opinions on the sound of vinyl.

Clearaudio Evolution turntable £1095
Clearaudio Tangent arm £1175
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STRAIGHT TALKING!

Parallel tracking arrangements have a history dating way back. The theory is simple: the needle tracks radially in exactly the same way as the cutter did - tracking error 0°. The difficulty lies in making carriages and tracks which do not contribute more friction and consequent groove damage than the $\pm 2^\circ$ error typical of a 9" pivoted arm. Cartridges commonly have an axial tolerance of a least $\pm 3^\circ$, so in practice a parallel tracker needs an uncommonly low friction co-efficient to justify the extra complications.

WORLD VERDICT



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Measured Performance see page 111

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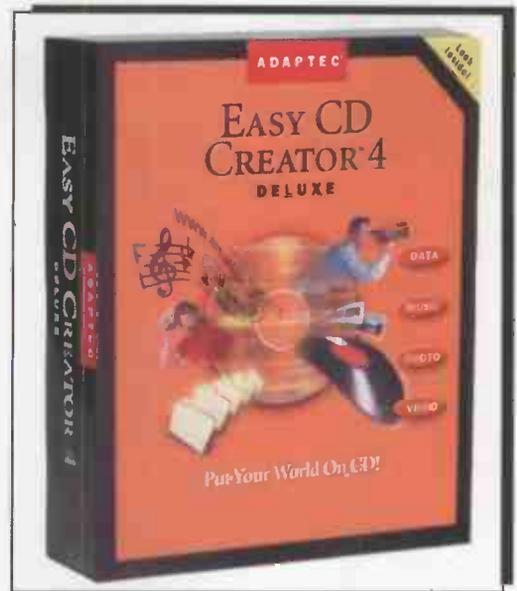
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EASIER DOES IT!

Adaptec's Easy CD Creator 3.5 was a good but not perfect package. Adaptec have replied with version 4.0, which promises a number of improvements. David Price investigates...



Adaptec's Easy CD Creator was one of the first 'CD authoring' packages around, and for a long time pretty much had the market to itself. But now the competition's hotted up, and Adaptec have returned with EzCD 4.0 which positively bristles with new features. Most significant is its MP3 compatibility - now you just drag'n'drop your MP3s to EzCD 4's file menu, click 'Create CD' and within minutes it has converted them to PCM and burned them to a blank CD-R or CD-RW. This is an unbelievably useful feature, so much so you wonder why they didn't think of it earlier.

EzCD 4 can also access the CDDB online Disc Recognition Service, which identifies the CD you're copying, goes on to the Internet and downloads all the artist, album and song information for you automatically, then writes them to your CD (providing your burner supports CD Text). You can also manipulate the tracks by adding special effects and custom spacing between songs. And after you've burned your CD, there's the new Jewel Case Creator for designing custom CD labels. Last but not least is the free Liquid Audio player which lets you download high quality music from the burgeoning Liquid Audio site. This is predominantly a pay-to-download music, but the quality (both sonic and artistic) is high and there are plenty of freebies too. For those looking for new music, or just having trouble getting hold of the stuff you already like, this is useful.

In use EzCD 4.0 is a major improvement on 3.5, which did the job of burning CDs well enough but wasn't the breeze to use its name suggested. My main problem

with it was the 'wizard', which as any Windows user (you poor troubled soul, you) knows, is Big Bill's term for a program within a program that steers you through the process of doing whatever it is you need to - like installing new hardware for example.

When you clicked on EzCD 3.5, it would load up and launch the wizard automatically. The problem was that the darned thing used to obstruct you from doing anything you wanted to, if you didn't want to burn a CD at that very moment. It was a pain in the parallel port, and about as magic as a match trick. Now though, as soon as EzCD 4.0 has loaded, it goes straight into the main program and lets you get on with what you want to do. True, it does interfere a bit, in the form of an animated cartoon character, but you can despatch the little cyber pest with one click of the mouse, never to be seen again. And once told to get lost, he vacates the space with satisfying speed, almost as if he knows he isn't welcome anymore.

To burn a CD then, you just select the files (.WAV or MP3, or any combination thereof) you want to burn in the FILE WINDOW, drag them down to the CD WINDOW, and click on CREATE CD. You then just select the speed and you're off. If you want more control you can click on DETAILS (just as you would with, say, Dial Up Networking) and choose Disc-At-Once, Session-At-Once, Close Session, and so on. Overall, it's far easier and less fussy than EzCD 3.5, and a joy to use.

Unlike its predecessor, I can unreservedly recommend Easy CD Creator 4.0. If you simply want to burn CDs - as

straightforwardly as you'd switch your video on and off - this is definitely the one to go for. But there are now some rivals which offer various options and possibilities, at the expense of ease of use - check out our website at www.hi-fiworld.co.uk/caw for details.

Adaptec Easy CD Creator 4.0 £49
www.adaptec-europe.com

4 BETTER- EzCD 4's improvements in full:

- MP3 support
- CDDB online music database access
- Gap Edit control (sets gap time between tracks)
- Track Transition Effects (fades in, out or crossfades between tracks)
- Spin Doctor (now rips .WAV to MP3)
- CD Text compatibility
- Digital Audio Extraction engine features improved jitter correction
- Liquid Music Player
- Free MP3s included
- Jewel Case Creator has better templates and label support
- Web-Check-up (auto updates EzCD patches and drivers from Net)
- Windows 2000 support

WORLD VERDICT

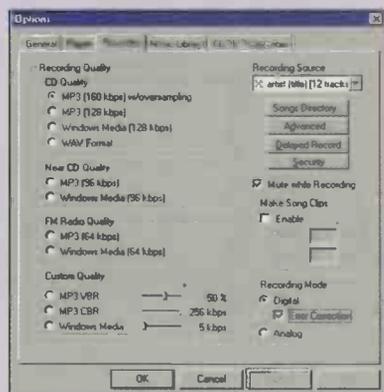


Big improvement on 3.5 with MP3 and better user interface. Super general purpose.

MP3, unmatched

David Price reckons MusicMatch's latest Jukebox Deluxe 4.1 is a veritable milestone in MP3.

M P3 is getting ever more popular and the choice of free music now available on the Net would boggle even the mind of Einstein. The problem is that few pieces of software have so far really got to grips with this confusing little file format. This is where an all-in-one package such as Music Match Jukebox comes in. Instead of having to use separate rippers and players (as has been the case until recently), you can record MP3s, playlist them and play them in one go. It's the computer audio equivalent of an all-singing, all-dancing stack system instead of a pile of temperamental hi-fi separates. The problem of course is that, as we all know too well, all-in-one stack systems sound dreadful because their insides are the cheapest their manufacturers can get away with. Funnily enough,



this has also been the case with MP3 systems too. . .

This is because existing all-in-ones like Jet Audio have used poor MP3 CODECs. Some - like the Xing - are fast but sound nasty. Others like Fraunhofer's are slower but give superb sonic results at the top 256kbps rate - easily as good as the best FM radio or MiniDisc. Until now, if you wanted hi-fi MP3s you had to download and manually install the Fraunhofer CODEC yourself. This was a right pain, so thank heavens that Music

Match Jukebox 4 comes with it pre-installed and ready to go! This means MMJ not only offers an integrated recorder (ripper), playlist and player, for maximum ease of use, but state-of-the-art



coding and decoding for the best possible sound.

San Diego-based Music Match Inc. have been making MP3 software for several years now, and claim to have been co-developers of MP3 technology. They're certainly a big name in computer audio, but I can't honestly say I've been impressed with their earlier products. So it was all the more pleasant to find that MMJ worked without a hitch. It installed itself faultlessly, found the directory on my hard drive where I keep my MP3s, defaulted to that and built a playlist all by itself in under a minute. Ripping music CDs was simply a matter of putting one in my CD drive, clicking on the tracks I wanted recorded onto my hard drive as MP3s, and pressing the RECORD button. MMJ duly started digitally extracting and compressing the music (far faster than real time) and added it to the Library window. MMJ will record from any source connected up to your Windows system, so if your soundcard has an onboard analogue-to-digital converter you can rip your vinyl or tape collection too. Pressing the NET MUSIC button will get you online (provided you've got an Internet facility), open up a special mini web browser and take you to its home page (www.musicmatch.com) where you can find loads of new MP3 music. As far as I'm concerned, you can forget all the online trickery - it's nice to have but what counts for me is sound quality and ease of use. On both these issues Music Match

Jukebox Deluxe is excellent. I can think of no criticisms, other than an Easy CD Creator-style CD burning option would make it the most complete package you could want - but I guess you can't have everything. Overall, if you want to get into the weird and wonderful world of Internet music, or just to rip some top tunes for listening while you work, this is the one to have.

Music Match Jukebox Deluxe £39.99

Koch Distribution 01256 707767

FEATURES:

- Music Library Database, sorting by preference, genre, mood, artist, track & title, plus individual track search facility.
- 5x digital audio extraction and 256kbps (max) MP3 ripping using Fraunhofer Advanced engine.
- Digital signal processing including defeatable multi-band equaliser, normalisation, fade ins, fade outs, clipping.
- Line in recording from external analogue line level source, with twin RCA phono-stereo minijack connection cable.
- Free product CD including 50 free MP3 songs and one free software version

WORLD VERDICT



Superb sound, impressive flexibility and tremendous ease of use make it the best all-in-one MP3 package around at present. Heartily recommended.

THE NEX GENERATION

It's still early days for MP3 players, and each new one seems a major advance on the last. So how does Frontier Labs' NEX measure up - latest and greatest or just another also-ran? David Price finds out.

It's been fun watching MP3 portables evolve. The Diamond Multimedia Rio PMP300 was the first to reach British shores and was a fascinating if crude portent of things to come. Then came its imitators, and then came the Rio 500, complete with nearly all its predecessor's bugs ironed out - the first true second generation machine, you could say. Where then does that leave the NEX? I found it to be an interesting mix of the two. In some respects it's superb, in others not so hot. Here's why.

My biggest reservations about MP3 walkies to date have been [1] variable sound quality and [2] limited playback time (i.e. only 32MB of flash memory). The others, ranging from poor ergonomics and iffy build to short battery life and

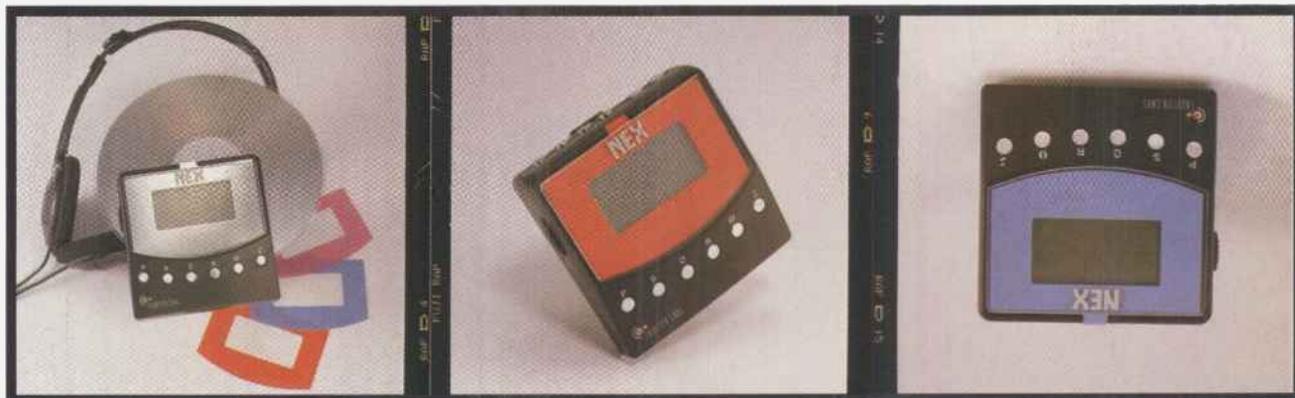
portable in a direct A-B.

Special EFX's 'Masterpiece', a nice slice of drum'n'bass-infused jazz fusion sounded sweet, warm and musical. It was an involving performance that really seemed to communicate the emotion of the song, rather than just its mechanics. By contrast, the MD walkie sounded less confident and more aloof. True, the NEX doesn't have the beefiest analogue output stage in the world - bass was a tad lightweight - but overall it played music like no other MP3 portable, Rio 500 notwithstanding. I've heard.

Big thumbs up then if sound quality is your bag, but elsewhere the NEX doesn't score quite so highly. Although the smallest (69x69x21mm) and lightest player I've come across - it makes the likes of

rows of six small silver buttons aren't the easiest way to find your way round the player's numerous functions!

In other respects the player is truly impressive - the packaging is great, with a neat little slip case, combined user manual and set-up CD (which installed faultlessly) plus a freebie MP3 CD from Riffage.com. There's also the fact that its display is backlit, the parallel port transfer system was reasonably quick, battery life is better than many (and from just one AAA cell) and the supplied headphones are better than most rivals (not difficult, admittedly). Factor in the supplied Music Match Jukebox 4 (complete with superb sounding Fraunhofer CODEC) and its low price (\$179.99 US inc. carriage from Frontier Labs' secure site, delivery in



dodgy software, are important but ultimately what matters most is the ability to play music out in the field.

The NEX addresses my big two gripes superbly. It comes with 64MB of flash memory as standard, giving around half an hour of top quality (256kps) music (or much longer if you don't mind a slight sonic drop), and for longer listening times you can add another 32MB later. It also sounds great - as good as, if not better than the new Rio 500. True, the analogue output stage isn't as beefy as, say, the jazPiper, but put through my reference hi-fi system it positively sang with 256kbps, Fraunhofer encoded MP3s. To my ears, it even bettered Sony's latest £200 MD

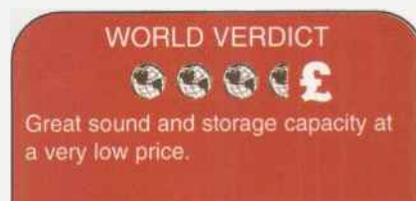
the jazPiper and Rio look ridiculously big by comparison - its quality of finish doesn't inspire confidence. Although it sells at a bargain-basement price, I'm not convinced how well it will stand the sort of day-to-day punishment that MP3 walkies get. Likewise the NEX Manager isn't the most robust around, and unless you follow the user instructions to the letter, you get worrying error messages. When I tried to download two tracks simultaneously, which it seemingly permits, I eventually got a 'player error' warning. Frankly, the NEX deserves a slicker software interface. Final gripe are its ergonomics, which aren't quite up there with BMW dashboards in the easy-to-use stakes - two

3-7 days), and the NEX is the one to choose if sound per pound is your number one priority.

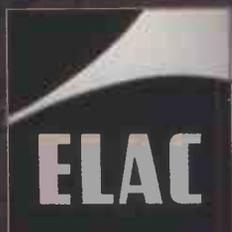
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NOW IN THE UK FOR THE 1ST TIME

It wasn't one of Britain's cutting edge audio outfits that dreamt up the innovative M3PO CD and MP3 player we've reviewed this month, but German company TerraTec (www.terratec.co.uk). Good on them. I have been suggesting to UK manufacturers for some time now that they take computer audio seriously, but there's been little response. No MP3 players, few multimedia loudspeakers and certainly nothing as imaginative as the M3PO. The audio business seems reluctant to embrace computer audio, so the dynamic computer business looks set to embrace it instead.

I like TerraTec. Their handbook talks enthusiastically about the LP right alongside geek talk about *Fraunhofer engines (Fraunhofer Institute, www.iis.fhg.de/amm/techinf/layer3/layer3faq), 3.5in ATAPI IDE hard drives and the ease with which you can whip said drive in and out of your player, as if this is as easy as finding your way to the local.

I love it. The reason is TerraTec obviously see MP3 as an enthusiasts playground, de-commoditising (I'll explain this ugly but useful word in a minute) audio in a new and intriguing way.

The Japanese commoditised audio some time ago. By this I mean they turned it into a simple commodity purchase, where buying criteria are basics like price and features. A microwave is a commodity, so is a TV. It's difficult to make an argument for quality with a commodity.

The LP was never commoditised and nor could it be with any ease, being too crude and variable a technology. It took care and attention to get the best from it and, no matter what you did, vinyl never would submit fully to science. Granted, record players were a nightmare for the man in the street but if you could get past bouncing the stylus terminally in the run-in groove then you were in business. I run a Garrard 401 turntable mounted on a Bastin plinth, on which sits a glorious 12in SME312 arm fitted with a Goldring 1042 cartridge.

Playing through our own KLPP1 valve phono preamplifier this setup easily outperforms CD as a source. I use CD because I have to, and because it is convenient.

The Compact Disc was fully commoditised from the outset. Every part of it was carefully designed, completely understood and therefore perfectly controllable. A pinnacle of technology, it promised a great leap forward in sound quality. In reality, like all commoditised audio, sound quality took a back seat to convenience and facilities. It never was very good, still isn't and with the right measuring equipment, it's easy to see why. But that's another story. My point is, CD has always been a closed system that's resistant to modification and improvement. Now that CD players

refuse to play computer discs they are starting to look more restrictive than ever.

I make the distinction between open and closed systems for two main reasons. Closed systems are unable to evolve through research and development. They protect a monopoly position and tend to nurture this behaviour. Compact Disc is restrained by a raft of patents held by Philips and Sony. The distinction between computer and audio CD-Rs exists only to protect music business royalties. It too is restrictive and confusing for consumers.

There are good arguments in favour of royalties needed to fund original research or intellectual property. In my logical moments I fully support them. But I also have a gut feeling that there's something deeply flawed in all this.

Computer audio is bringing back the interest factor to hi-fi and, by de-commoditising it, will stimulate development. People now have computer discs to play, compiled at home. Unlike a CD player the M3PO will play them as well as audio discs. It doesn't care about open sessions with no Table Of Contents or closed sessions with one, nor about normal audio files or MP3s. Add in the fact that you have a comprehensive array of programmable functions and the option of a hard disc to store music and here you have a radical product, a mould breaker.

The M3PO offers a glimpse of what is just around the corner. It's a crossover product that brings a much needed breath of fresh air from the fast moving computer world to the stagnant and restrictive world of traditional audio. Perhaps soon we will have DISC players and recorders rather than CDs. They could feed MP3 out to docking MP3 recorders, hook up to computers via a USB or Firewire link and offer de-commoditised sound quality that's a true advance on LP, rather than the step back CD gave us. I hope Britain's hi-fi manufacturers will be there. ●

(* Contrary to current belief, MP3 does give good quality when properly encoded using a Fraunhofer engine)

” The M3PO offers a glimpse of what is just around the corner. It's a crossover product . . . from the fast moving computer world.

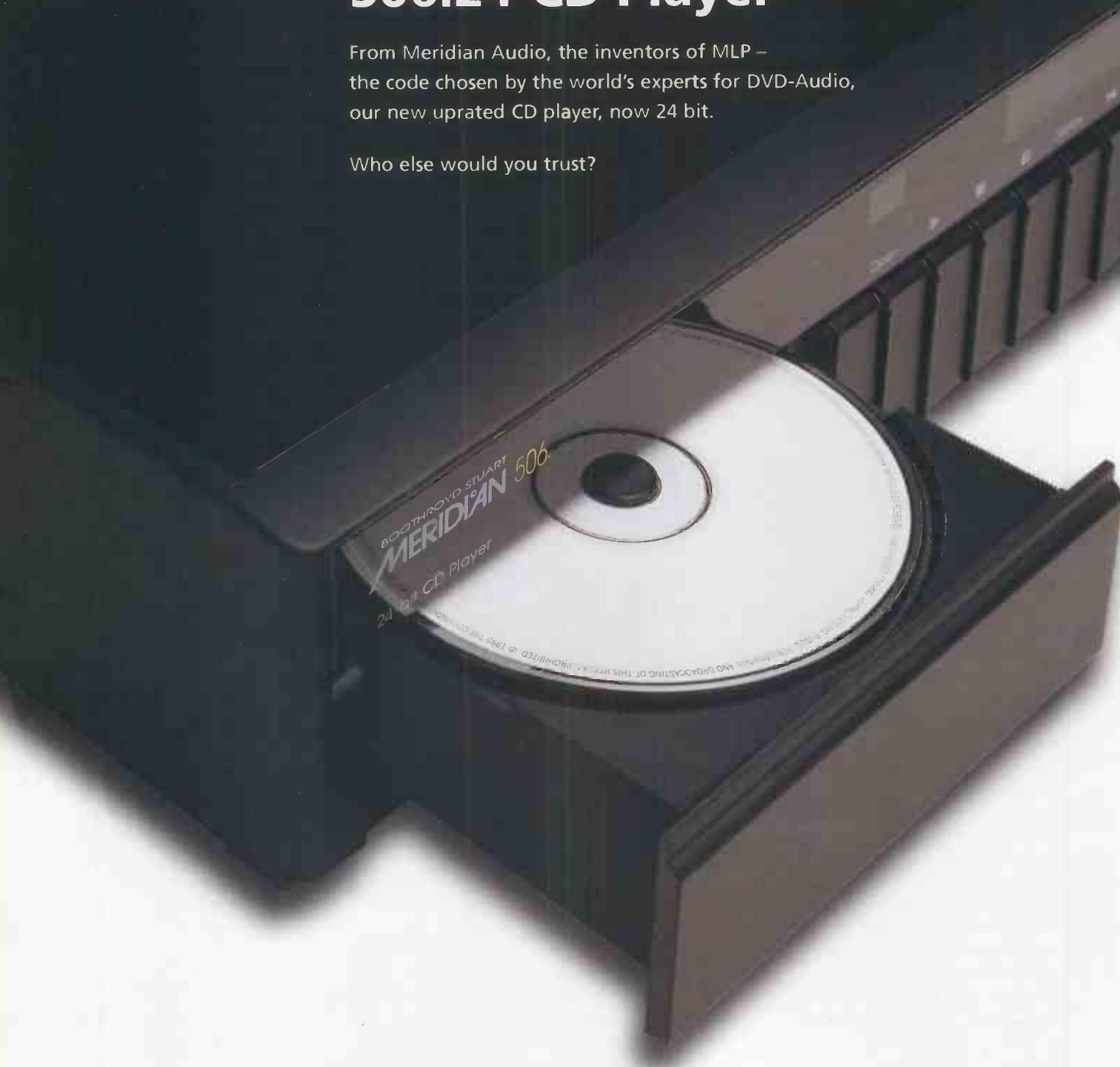


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Much as I am loathe to admit any drawbacks to life in the fair land of Tooting ('Just A Good place To Live . . .'), it must be admitted that the absence of a valve shop sometimes mars the otherwise idyllic prospects here.

Contrary to what many transistorised scoffers are inclined to believe, a valve is inherently quite a reliable device: in the course of some thousands of hours' use it may very well lose some of its lustre but absolute failure is rare. Thus the temptation to keep the things on past their true retirement date is strong. After all, when you are considering output valves (usually four at a time for push-pull stereo) the costs soon mount up. Double triodes for the phase-splitter

and driver sections have become considerably dearer recently too.

Consequently I had let a 6SN7GT work on too long; the background paper-tearing noises were becoming less intermittent and then the left-hand amplifier began a series of audible complaints and then shut up shop altogether. For a 'lay' valve user the situation would be an irritation; for a hi-fi reviewer, a failed amplifier is akin to Napoleon's running out of pile ointment on the eve of Waterloo - downright painful and potentially catastrophic.

Hence, as I remarked, my lamentation about Tooting's lack of a valve shop (For American readers, I should perhaps clarify that the many nearby 'tube stations' are not the same thing at all). Not so long ago there were still adverts for 'television and radio' suppliers in the local paper, but now you can search the Tooting Bugle from end to end without finding anything of the sort.

Indeed, much of the modern retail trade is less than helpful. The intake of breath through pursed lips followed by the inevitable "you won't get them anywhere" must choke off hundreds of potential enthusiasts in every field, including audio, every day. It isn't that the 'advice' proffered is meant to be dis-

couraging; being put into plain English it simply means "I don't know". There is no shame in not knowing - where the trap lies for the unwary is in the knowing air with which this lack of knowledge is clothed.

For instance, the other day, whilst having a tyre changed on my car, the fitter inflated the tyre to pressure before the wheel was replaced on the vehicle, in the avowed belief that pressure was independent of load. When I let out a few pounds to correct the over-inflation, I was told that my gauge was obviously wrong. If I hadn't known, I'd still be driving about with all the dubious benefits which having one wheel eight pounds over-pressure confers. What can I know?

” There seemed to be nothing available in the world in space to help me get off the ground with the hi-fi hobby except misinformation.

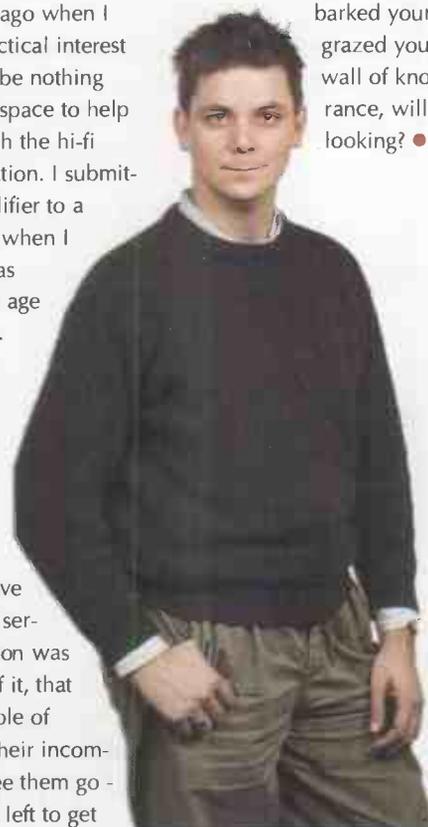
It was the same years ago when I was starting to take a practical interest in hi-fi. There seemed to be nothing available in the world in space to help me get off the ground with the hi-fi hobby except misinformation. I submitted an old transistor amplifier to a repair shop and was told when I collected it that "there was nothing we can do" - old age was to blame, apparently. Having nothing to lose, I opened up the box and removed the plug-in circuit boards. Putting them back again obviously must have refreshed the edge contacts because the amp gave another eighteen months service before further attention was needed. Come to think of it, that shop closed down a couple of months ago . . . despite their incompetence, I was sorry to see them go - soon there'll be nowhere left to get

even the wrong answers any more. This often happens; a little radio spares shop in Wimbledon closed down shortly after I'd found it because a rent increase had suddenly wiped out any possibility of a trading profit. Next, a local electronic repair shop sported its shutters for the last time about a fortnight before I decided to enquire after really decent AF oscillator. Conspiracy theories on a postcard, please.

In the absence of shops and knowledge, you have to be lucky. With my valve crisis I was fortunate; an advertisement in a World Supplement caught my eye: 'Langrex Supplies - suppliers of selected valves to the quality' or something like that. The address was Croydon. For an inhabitant of London SW, Croydon is very nearly civilization. A quick trip in the car and all was rosy again. 'Open to callers' or 'trade counter' is almost a shop, so 'shops' can still be found if you look hard enough.

I say you have to be lucky, but on second thoughts I'm not so sure: adverts in magazines are there for all to see; the internet is (I guess) brimming with pointers; a trip to an audio jumble will help you in any direction for the sake of a polite question or two. The question is -

having stubbed your toes, barked your shins and grazed your knees on a wall of knowing ignorance, will you still be looking? ●



Richard White

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With maybe a few exceptions hi-fi retailing is nothing like fashion, mobile phone or car sales. This may seem a fairly obvious statement yet, by and large, hi-fi retailers have total autonomy of the brands they chose to stock. With the exception of Sony centres and - to stretch the term hi-fi somewhat - Bang and Olufsen, a hi-fi retailer is free to pick and choose. This means that whilst those other retailers may have to stick it out when their affiliated manufacturers aren't flavour of the month, you hi-fi dealer is free to drop and collect hi-fi brands at will.

It is for this reason that a consistency of decent products and, hopefully, good reviews are forthcoming. The make or break time for most manufacturers is between September and February - the hi-fi season. Get a product well developed, into the dealers and well reviewed before this time and the financial rewards should prove handsome.

So, with four long months to go here are, with the help of my trusty crystal ball, my tips for the movers and shakers of the first season of the naughty noughties. The loudspeaker market is always especially vulnerable to market whims. It may come as a surprise to some pundits, but I really don't see flat technology 'speakers making a great impact - at least not this year. Wharfedale and Mission's NXT designs have already been on the market for nearly a year now, and have still yet to ignite the public imagination. So, if it's to be a box 'speaker, then which one? Well, after a few low spots in the mid-late nineties, both Tannoy and KEF appear to be in fine form to reap the rewards of the next spree. Tannoy's new MX range and the ever increasing Cresta range from KEF both look set to become big sellers. Don't rule out Mission or Eltax though. The former of these has recently undergone a management buy-out and will be keen to boost a brand' which already boasts a fine reputation. Seeming to have come from no-where the Danish company Eltax has produced

some particularly decent 'speakers over the past few years and can boast a handsome market share thanks partly to selling through high volume retailers such as Dixons and Richer Sounds.

Predicting a winner in the amplifier market isn't so easy. There doesn't seem to be a "killer" budget amp of the Pioneer A400, or Kenwood KA3020SE ilk around at the moment. Last season was very much Rotel, NAD, Arcam and Musical Fidelity's. So far we've seen little that looks likely to change the status quo this time around. In the sub £400 market there appears to have been a move away from the bare bones design of amplifier. Tone controls are, once again, acceptable on an amplifier seek-

” The make or break time for most manufacturers is between September to February - the hi-fi season.

ing budget audiophile stardom. This allows amps such as the feature packed Marantz PM1000 series a big slice in one of the most highly contested areas of the market. Don't be surprised, however, to see Sony, Pioneer, Technics or Kenwood revealing something special before autumn. Further up the market place, Arcam will be keen for their new range of metal fronted amps to win back some lost sales to Musical Fidelity's X-range. Having received negative feedback from reviews and buyers alike for their rather plasticity front panel designs, Arcam's rather candid response is the FMJ range. FMJ standing for Full Metal Jacket! If nothing else, Arcam certainly can't be accused of not responding to public demand.

Last season saw the up lift in DVD sales that many had expected. Oddly enough CD player sales appeared not to be

effected. Perhaps this was because the top selling models were mainly from companies such as Samsung, Panasonic and Sony; companies more renowned for their video technology rather than their hi-fi separate ranges. From a retail point of view, it did appear as though, in the main, customers were buying DVD to complement their VCRs rather than as a CD replacement. However, with a new range from Pioneer and new models from respected hi-fi brands such as Denon and Marantz, the CD market will surely feel the pressure this season.

Is there anyone who can reign in Sony's continuing dominance of the MiniDisc market? It would appear not. Although we've seen a handful of new products, most manufacturers seem content (most probably because of the licensing costs) to leave Sony to it. CDR continues to make solid progress, although this has to be a dead format as soon as a universal recordable DVD format is arrived at; so it looks safe for a good few years yet!

With so much activity within the hi-fi industry it's hardly surprising to see hi-fi retailing conducted the way it is. May the best man win, just so long as next year it's someone else!●



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KITS HAVE NEVER

KIT88 VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT & KaT88 VALVE POWER AMPLIFIER KIT

Here is the amazing KIT88. The circuit is similar to that of the ever popular KEL34 with a few changes to incorporate the Tesla, JJ branded KT88 power tetrode. This is a pure Class A push-pull design providing 36 watts into an 8ohm load. Gary Devon has come up with a gem of an output transformer (E/I). Combined with the KT88 it offers a virtually unmatched result for a valve amplifier. Frequency response measured 11Hz to 75kHz, separation 71dB, noise 98dB, sensitivity 400mV and distortion 0.03%. "As valve amplifiers go, the KIT88 is one of the best measured performances I have ever come across", says Noel Keywood. Jon Marks says, "The KIT88 pulled a series of surprisingly fast, meaty basslines out of its trickbag when dealing with Suzanne Vega's Nine Objects Of Desire album. As if this wasn't enough, the mid and treble were nice too -

THE KaT88, THE POWER AMPLIFIER VERSION OF THE KIT88



£425

NEW!

£440



cymbals had a deliciously natural, golden shimmer without sounding soft, and vocals were extremely transparent and crisply defined. KIT88 didn't hang around when it came to exploiting the virtues of its four output valves on numbers such as 'Leaves' and 'Suspect Sustain' from Cirrus' Land's End Jazz CD. Saxophone had a wonderfully smooth, realistic character, and acoustic guitar mixed speed with harmonic richness to very impressive effect. Asian Dub Foundation and Moloko showed no sign at all of the sluggish, woolly bottom-end and poorly-delineated bass beats that most valve amps are to blame for. Which makes the KIT88 an all-round, high-end bargain." Weight 16kg, external dimensions with valves are 30mm(w) x 300mm(d) x 190mm (h).

KEL34 E&I VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT

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

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

HD83 VALVE HEADPHONE AMPLIFIER KIT

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

KEL34 Facelift - if you want your KEL34 to look like the KIT88, this is what you need - £75.00

KEL34 Upgrade Kit- with a superb Panasonic volume control, stargate electrolytics & paper in oil capacitors and fast recovery diodes.

£175

£315



KEL80 MONOBLOCK AMPLIFIER KIT

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

£590 A PAIR



K5881 MKII VALVE AMPLIFIER KIT

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

£395

MKII with SRPP input



BEEN SO GOOD!

KLS10 HIGH TECHNOLOGY COMPACT MONITOR



Our mini-marvel uses an Audax carbon fibre bass/midrange unit, married to the world's most advanced tweeter, the piezo-electric gold dome HD3P from Audax. KLS10 offers high performance from a small package. The main 'speakers are designed to work alone, or with a dedicated subwoofer to extend their bass. Alone, they are suited to near-wall mounting and can be tuned by port adjustment to suit personal taste and location.

They are easy to drive and need just 30-60watts. KLS10 is unique. Technically advanced, yet compact and relatively inexpensive. There is little to match it.

Sensitivity 89dB 1W/1m, 15mm MDF, internal volume 9Ltrs, external dimensions 19cm(w) x 31cm(h) x 23cm(d).

DRIVE UNITS & CROSSOVER KIT £394.00
DRIVE UNITS ONLY £358.00

KLS10 GOLD SUBWOOFER



£149.95

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

DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT £149.95
DRIVE UNIT ONLY £71.00

KLS9 TWO WAY FLOORSTANDER



£230

Here's a storm for you - KLS9, with its BB4 alignment bass cabinet and Audax High Definition Aerogel 8in bass/midrange unit. Designed by Noel Keywood to possess optimal bass damping and a clean step response. Aided by a teensy bit of bass lift, KLS9 really thunders; it will re-arrange your furniture. But it does not waffle, falling silent when there's no bass in the music. Aided by a high power 1in fabric dome tweeter, KLS9 is detailed, evenly balanced and images superbly. It is an easy 12ohm load and is 88dB sensitive. For amps up to 60W. Easy to build and great for beginners. Internal volume 70Ltrs, 18mm MDF external dimensions 25cm(w) x 93cm(h) x 40cm(d).

DRIVE UNITS & CROSSOVER KIT £230.00
DRIVE UNIT PACK £160.00

ALL NEW SERIES II MODULAR PRE-AMP KIT

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The PRE-II is a valve pre-amplifier with six inputs, tape monitor and two sets of output sockets. It utilises a high quality line driver transformer and x4 gain.

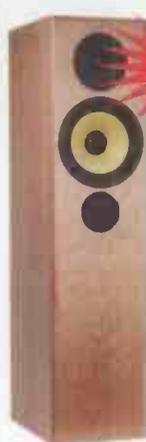
The PHONO-II is a dedicated valve phono stage that incorporates a step up transformer for MC users.

Finally, PSU-II is a power supply unit that feeds both the PRE-II and PHONO-II.



Read Part One in the DIY Supplement No. 51, banded to the June 2000 issue.

KLS12 TWO WAY FLOORSTANDER/STANDMOUNTER



£175

KLS12 is a versatile budget loudspeaker that delivers fine sound quality at a low price. It utilises Audax's HT210F0 woven fibre glass cone, mid/bass unit, beautifully married with the TW034X0, 34mm diameter doped fabric dome tweeter. Noel Keywood says, 'The KLS12 is a transparent, vividly detailed transducer with fine projection. It has tight well defined bass, which means it is best positioned close to a rear wall. Vocals possess a clean outline with an intense clarity.' At 89dB the KLS12 is easy to drive, thus, it is suitable for 20W and upward power amps. Internal volume = 34.1 litres standmounter external dimensions = 58cm(h) x 24.2cm(w) x 34cm(d) floor stander external dimensions(with sand filled space cavity) = 58cm(h) x 24.2cm(w) x 34cm(d)

DRIVE UNITS & CROSSOVER KIT £175.00
DRIVE UNIT PACK £100.00

KLS3 3 WAY CARBON-FIBRE DRIVER LOUDSPEAKER



£350

KLS3 uses extremely light and stiff carbon-fibre cone drive units for a fast, accurate sound. A dedicated 4inch carbon-fibre midrange drive unit provides the clean, smooth and detailed midrange characterised by superb projection. Its high 90dB sensitivity and near flat 8ohm impedance make it one of the easiest loudspeakers to drive. An ideal loudspeaker for high-end valve amplifiers. 25mm MDF, internal volume 60Ltrs, external dimensions 26cm(w) x 100cm(h) x 35cm(d).

DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT £350.00
DRIVE UNIT PACK £230.00

KLS8 TWO WAY HIGH SENSITIVITY

With a sensitivity of 94dB, KLS8 needs very little power. Its 10in. professional bass driver and horn loaded tweeter give it a BIG sound. Ideal for low power amplifiers. Internal volume 50.5Ltrs, external dimensions 29cm(w) x 65cm(h) x 36cm(d).

DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT £260.00
DRIVE UNIT PACK £175.00

KLS3 GOLD MK II



£575

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KLS3 Gold uses the latest version of Audax's innovative oval gold dome piezo electric tweeter, giving it the sweetest and most extended treble. Married to a 4in. carbon fibre cone midrange driver for neutral and clear reproduction, and a powerful 8in. bass driver for superb depth, this is our top-of-the-line reference 'speaker. Sensitivity 90dB at 1W/1m, 25mm MDF, internal volume 60Ltrs, external dimensions 26cm(w) x 100cm(h) x 35cm(d).

DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT £575.00
DRIVE UNIT PACK £450.00

Upgrade your KLS3s to Gold status. Includes latest oval gold dome piezo tweeter and all components.

£330

KLS7 2 WAY CARBON-FIBRE DRIVER FLOORSTANDER

Compact and affordable two way reflex loudspeaker. KLS7's slim dimensions make it easy to accommodate, but it uses top quality carbon-fibre drivers, so performance isn't compromised. An audiophile bargain. Sensitivity 86dB at 1W/1m 12mm MDF, internal volume 18Ltrs, external dimensions 15cm(w) x 80cm(h) x 22cm(d).

DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT £195.00
DRIVE UNIT PACK £110.00

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THESE ARE EXPERT KITS, NOT FOR THE INEXPERIENCED. YOU MUST BE ABLE TO SOLDER AND READ A CIRCUIT DIAGRAM. THE VALVE KITS CONTAIN LETHAL VOLTAGES. WE CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY ERRORS ARISING FROM THE CONSTRUCTION OF THESE KITS.

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Kit88 Valve Integrated amplifier kit (without valves).....	Kit88-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£325	£275
KaT88 Valve Power amplifier kit (with valves)	KaT88-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£425	£365
KaT88 Valve Power amplifier kit (without valves)	KaT88-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£310	£265
HD83 Valve headphone amplifier kit.....	HD83-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£175	£150
KEL80 Valve Monoblock Amplifier kit (with valves).....	KEL80-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£590	£500
KEL80 Valve Monoblock Amplifier kit (without valves).....	KEL80-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£520	£445
KEL34 E&I 40W push-pull integrated amplifier	KEL34 E&I -K240/120(with valves).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	£315	£270
KEL34 E&I (without valves)	KEL34 E&I -K240/120(No valves).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	£270	£230
KEL34 E&I Transformer set (1 main & 2 outputs).....	KEL34 E&I -K240/120(T. set).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	£130	£110
KEL34 E&I Output Transformer (pair)	KEL34 E&I -K240/120(OPT).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	£80	£68
K5881 MkII 20W push-pull valve amplifier	K5881-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£395	£350
WAP surplus toroidal valve mains transformer	TRANS1	<input type="checkbox"/>	£31	£21

LOUDSPEAKER KITS

KLS12 2-way fibreglass driver standmounter/floorstander loudspeaker				
Drive Units + Crossover kit etc	KLS12-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£175	£150
Drive Units	KLS12-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£100	£85
KLS11 3-way aerogel standmounter loudspeaker with piezo gold tweeter				
Drive Units + Crossover kit etc	KLS11-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£595	£505
Drive Units	KLS11-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£470	£400
KLS10 2-way carbon-fibre standmounter loudspeaker with piezo gold tweeter				
Drive Units + Crossover kit etc	KLS10-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£394	£343
Drive Units	KLS10-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£358	£311
KLS10 SUBWOOFER Drive Unit + Crossover Kit etc	KLS10-SubC	<input type="checkbox"/>	£149.95	£130
KLS10 SUBWOOFER Drive Unit.....	KLS10-SubD (1 x HM210Z2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	£71	£61
KLS3 3-way carbon-fibre driver floorstanding loudspeaker				
Drive Units + Crossover kit etc	KLS3-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£350	£300
Drive Units	KLS3-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£230	£200
KLS3 Gold 3-way carbon-fibre driver floorstanding loudspeaker with piezo tweeter				
Drive Units + Crossover kit etc	KLS3-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£575	£500
Drive Units	KLS3-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£450	£392
KLS7 2-way carbon fibre driver floorstanding loudspeaker				
Drive Units + Crossover kit etc	KLS7-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£195	£170
Drive Units	KLS7-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£110	£95
KLS8 2-way high sensitivity standmounting loudspeaker				
Drive Units + Crossover kit etc	KLS8-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£260	£225
Drive Units	KLS8-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£175	£150
KLS9 2-way HDA driver floorstanding loudspeaker				
Drive Units + Crossover kit etc	KLS9-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£230	£200
Drive Units	KLS9-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£160	£140

AUDAX DRIVE UNITS

Carriage and packaging please add £0.00 for one unit or a tweeter pair, otherwise add £15.00 for 2-6 units
 * Not applicable to overseas prices

High Definition Aerogel Drivers

3inch midrange, 93dB	HM100Z0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£35	£30*
4inch midrange, 92dB	HM130Z0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£47	£40*
6.5inch bass/mid, 91dB	HM170Z0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£53	£45*
8inch bass, 91dB	HM210Z0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£64	£55*
10inch bass, 90dB	PR240Z0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£76	£65*

Carbon Fibre Drivers

4inch midrange, 90dB	HM130C0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£41	£35*
6.5inch bass/mid, 90dB	HM170C0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£47	£40*
8inch bass, 90dB	HM210C0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£58	£50*

Paper Cone Drivers

10inch paper cone bass, 95dB	PR240M0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£67	£55*
13inch paper cone bass, 97dB	PR330M0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£147	£125*

Fabric Dome Tweeters

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25mm 92dB for 3 way systems	TW025M1	<input type="checkbox"/>	£16	£14*
25mm horn loaded 97dB	PR125T1	<input type="checkbox"/>	£25	£21*
34mm 93dB - powerful sound	TW034X0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£26	£22*
Oval Gold Piezo electric dome tweeter, 89dB	HD-3P	<input type="checkbox"/>	£130	£110*

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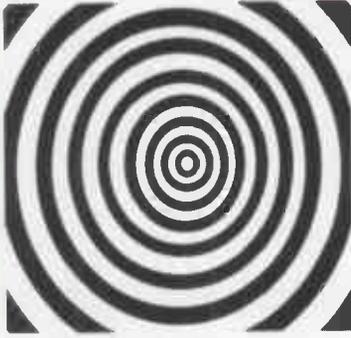
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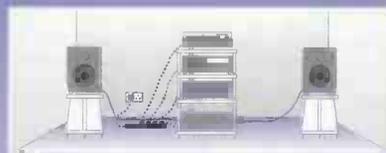
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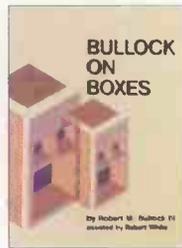
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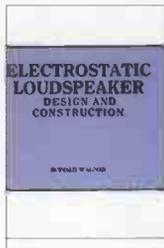
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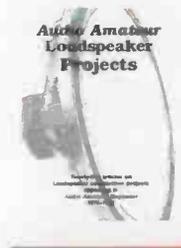
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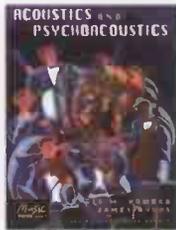
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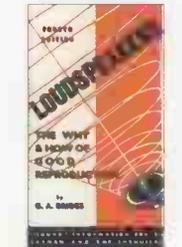
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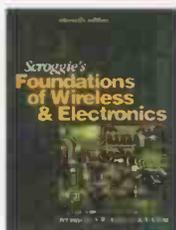
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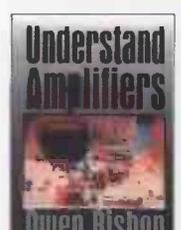
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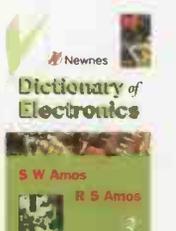
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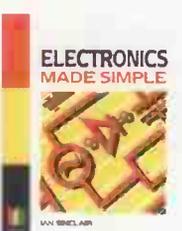
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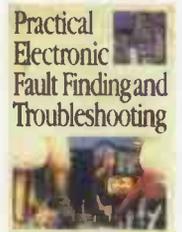
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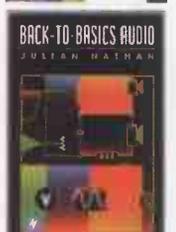
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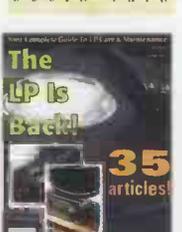
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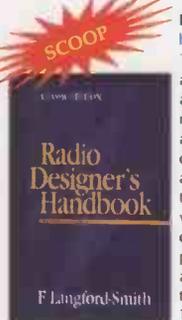
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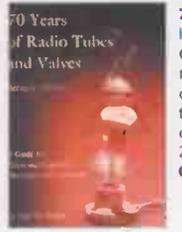
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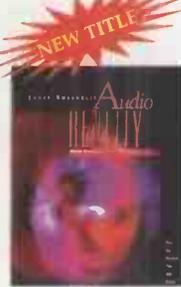
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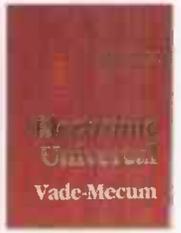
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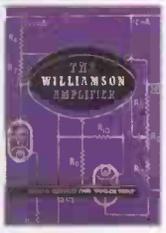
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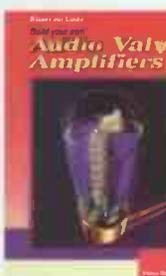
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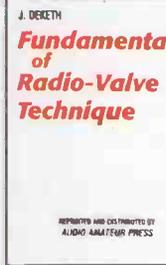
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For more information, contact Tech-Link at Units 1/2, 76a Farley Road, London, SE25 6NX. Tel: 0181 771 8388. Fax: 0181 771 1840.

TEAC 5 Marlin House, The Croxley Centre, Watford WD18 8YA. Tel: 01923 819630. Fax: 01923 236290. Teac has already established a virtual world-wide dominance in the manufacture of precision cassette decks and digital storage products and the company is now turning its attention to its core hi-fi and audio related products. The Tokyo Electro-Acoustic Company (hence TEAC) was formed in 1956. Over the years TEAC has produced some of the world's most outstanding recording equipment, including many excellent affordable home cassette decks (one which the name TEAC became almost synonymous) and by the time of the dawn of the digital age at the beginning of the 1980's it was internationally acknowledged as a world leader in audio technology with a string of high fidelity firsts to its name. 1997 saw a significant turning point for TEAC with the launch of a superb new mini-system, a newly developed VRDS mini CD player and a British designed CD player.

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Buying Guide

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

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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

Under £300

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

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Heybrook Heylette



Mission 772

Billy Vee

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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

£300-£799

Alesis M1 (active)	£549	Jul 99	Almost worthy of domestic bargain status, the M1s lack just a little smoothness and finesse.
Arcaydis AS2	£700	Oct 99	Quality drive units give smoothness, detail and imaging. Require hefty amplification and finish could be better.
Arcaydis ASC	£399	Jun 99	The ASCs have natural warmth and good imaging. Inclined to be a little power-hungry.
B&W CDM1SE	£600	Apr 98	Tuneful and confident, these 'speakers are well suited to Pop and Dance music.
B&W DM305	£350	Mar 97	All the ingredients for listening fun are in the DM305. Overall presentation could be more cohesive though.
B&W DM602 Series 2	£300	Aug 99	A fair design that needs partnering with smooth amplification in a well-furnished room.
B&W P4	£600	Mar 95	Good-looking solid 'speakers with great spirit and tenacity but with a dry treble. Not fans of classical music.
Blue Room Minipod	£400	Jan 97	Arresting style allied to an engaging sound makes the Minipods attractive. Best with smooth amps and source.
Castle Avon	£699	Dec 96	Taut, dry bass and lucid midrange but need matching to warm ancillaries to avoid sounding bright.Castle
Castle Harlech	£799	Aug 96	Bass power and extension will impress but overall sound is uneven and rather sterile.
Castle Inversion	£425	Aug 99	Unusual styling will polarize opinion, but sonically the '15s are fair performers. Imaging could be better.
Castle Kendal	£450	Mar 98	The Kendals have great clarity but need coupling to warm ancillaries.
Castle Severn II	£579	Jul 98	Apart from some hardness in the tweeters, the Severn 2s are accomplished all-rounders.
Charlo Hiper 1	£399	May 95	Music makers through and through with a great feel for rhythm and dynamics.
Charlo Lynx	£549	Apr 99	The Lynxes are superbly built but their rising bass and treble suit home cinema more than hi-fi.
Dali 450	£700	Feb 96	A powerful and rich sound from these competitively priced floorstanders makes them worth a recommendation.
Epos ES12	£495	Oct 96	Strong, punchy bass allied to detailed and articulate midrange and treble.
Heybrook Heylios	£339	Mar 97	The Heylios stand out for their bass depth, dynamics and sound staging. Overall balance prefers Classical to Rock.
Heybrook Heylo	£389	Oct 95	Posses a neutral, fast and dry sound. A good match for soft sounding systems.
Jamo 307	£300	Apr 95	Delicate, detailed sound, albeit with rather imprecise imaging. Will work well on a bookshelf.
JPW ML910	£300	Nov 97	The 910s aren't perfect but make music fun. Quality, power and extension, the Millenniums are worth a listen.
JPW Ruby 2	£395	Oct 98	Once allied to warm electronics, the Ruby 2s mix insight with plenty of involvement.
Kef LS3/5A	£599	Jul 95	Partnered with the Rogers AB1, this is a substantial marriage.
Kef Q35	£350	Nov 97	Very accomplished midrange and treble but the dry in the bass. For Rock fans the upper bass speed is appealing.
Kef Q55	£499	Aug 97	The Q55s look rather expensive at £500 with their 'boom and tizz' presentation.
Kef RDM1	£499	Oct 97	The RDM1s soundstage well thanks to their Uni-Q drivers. Can be uninformed because of a lack of scale and impact.
Linn Tukan	£389	Dec 95	Highly musical standmounters that give similarly priced floorstanders a great deal to worry about.
Meridian A500	£750	May 95	Very polite and many will appreciate their civility. Deep powerful bass.
Mission 733	£300	Apr 95	Captivating floorstanders that bring music to life - what good hi-fi should do.
Mission 773e	£400	Nov 99	Nicely engineered slimline model. Some sonic trade-offs with the compact size.
Mission 734	£430	Sep 95	Engineered for low price and showroom appeal rather than absolute sound quality.
Mission 751Freedom	£350	Apr 97	Charming little stand-mounters with a sweet, warm, musical sound.
Mission 752 Freedom	£578	Jan 97	Dynamic, punchy, and musical yet refined like few at the price. Bass lacks a little depth.
Mission 774	£500	Feb 99	With the right ancillaries, the 774s have a clarity and lack of colouration still rare at the price.
Mordaunt-Short MS251	£300	Nov 96	Sweet sounding metal dome tweeter although the dry bass and rather plasticky midrange work against it.
Musical Technology PM15	£474	Jan 99	Sophisticated, neutral sound and fine musicality put the PM15s near the head of the class.
Near 10M	£500	Jan 96	A thin and hard sound but precise with it!
Neat Critique II	£445	Jan 99	Deserving 'speakers with good looks and build. Can fail to shine with over-polite equipment.
NHT 1.3	£389	Aug 95	Very crisp sounding 'speakers best suited to smaller rooms.
Opera Mini	£300	Nov 99	A mini 'speaker made for music. Well built and versatile. At worst, ponderous, at best, immense.
Opera Prima	£495	Feb 99	The Primas offer a taste of the high-end at a sensible price. They are more fans of Classical than Rock though.
Ortofon ConCorde 6	£329	Oct 95	Good value floorstanders with clean enjoyable sound - not quite supersonic, though.
Polk PSW150	£500	Jul 97	The PSW150 adds depth to a system but can sound obvious at times.
Proac Tablette	£600	Aug 98	Amp-sensitive and slightly boxy in the lower treble, the ProAcs are still highly musical.
REL Q Bass	£350	May 96	Needs care in setting up but this subwoofer offers serious quality bass for not a lot of money.
REL Q100E	£500	Apr 98	Another capable sub from REL that boosts bass and improves sound staging.
Rogers AB 1	£499	Jul 95	When used with the Kef LS3/5a this sub delivers the goods, beyond a doubt.
Roksan RokOne	£595	Feb 97	Musically involving 'speakers that many will enjoy, but a little unrefined at times.
Sequence 400	£329	Apr 96	Good at orchestral scale but coloured in the midband.
Soundcraft Absolute 4P	£799	Oct 97	The Absolute 4Ps excel in all areas except for the rather bright, hard treble. Bass is exceptional.
Spendor 2030	£599	Jun 96	Smooth and coherent in their delivery with deep and taut bass extension. Not the most spacious sound.
Systemdek 165	£400	Feb 96	Dry and clean sound, but can become hard and confused when pushed.
Tannoy Precision P10	£300	May 98	Though very even in their performance, the P10s lack ultimate clarity and punch.
Tannoy Profile 633 plus	£300	Nov 96	Weighty bass and rhythmic detail work well on dance. Less satisfying with classical music. Firm imaging.
Tannoy Revolution r2	£350	Oct 99	Lively and exciting, will appeal to many. Solid build and confident sound makes them well worth the money.
TDL RTL 4	£650	Feb 95	Easy going with plenty of detail and timbral richness. Better with classical fare.
TDL T-line 2	£550	Jan 97	Midrange and treble have good tonal colour, detail and speed. Bass is slow and blurred.
Technics SB-MO1E	£400	Nov 99	Punchy and dynamic, yet refined. In a small environment, these highly detailed 'speakers are excellent.
Technics SB-M300	£350	Nov 95	A great sound with solid bass from a compact and well priced 'speaker.
Technics SB-M500	£450	May 96	Clean, dry and taut with good imaging and sound staging. More neutral than Mission's 752s but less euphonic.
Titan Mini T2B	£600	Dec 99	Heftily built standmounts with terrific punch and attack. The metal drivers might make classical a bit harsh.
Triangle Comete TZXe	£475	Jan 95	Quite pleasant, inoffensive sound but others costing less can offer more.
Wharfedale Valdus 500	£300	Oct 95	Good for adding scale and power to a weak system or budget separates.
Yamaha MSP5	£449	Jun 99	Ruthless to poorly-produced material and can sound cold, but their detailing is impressive.



JPW Ruby 2.



Opera Prima

Prices shown are those at the time of review

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Naim NAC 72 Pre Amp (2YR Warranty) . . (767.00)	£569.00	TAG 100P Power Amp (2YR warranty) . . . (1099.00)	£799.00
Naim NAC 102 Pre Amp (2YR warranty) . (1110.00)	£835.00	TAG 125 Mono P/Amps pair (2Yr G/tee) . (2398.00)	£1999.00
Naim NAP 140 Power Amp (2YR warranty) (793.00)	£589.00	Pioneer 515 DVD Player (NEW) (399.00)	£299.00
Naim NAP 180 Power Amp (2YR warranty) (1122.00)	£839.00	Roksan Attesa CD Player S/H (1390.00)	£549.00
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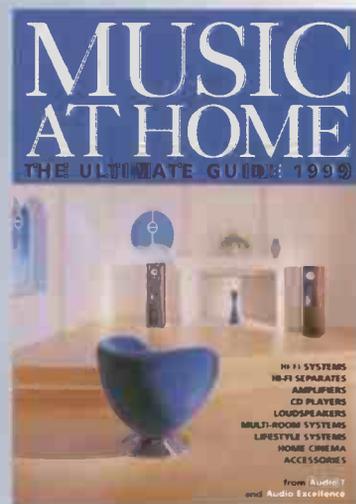
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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

£800-£1499

Acous.Precn Elkos RF1	£800	Nov 99	Bass-light, but excellent in every other area. A sub is on the way. Very revealing of ancillary components.
Audonote E	£1450	Mar 95	Big, bulky and ultra-sensitive with quick pace and a well balanced sound, but not without flaws.
Audiovector M1 Sig.	£1479	Aug 98	The M1 Sigs may be a little laid-back, but they have a pleasant and involving sound.
Audiovector M2	£1499	Jun 98	The M2s are marred by a boom 'n' fizz presentation that suits Heavy Metal but not much else.
B&W CDM7	£999	Feb 98	With warm ancillaries the CDM7s produce a weighty, open sound. Bass could be faster.
Castle Howard S2	£1099	Mar 96	Fantastically deep and tight bass but some treble sharpness requires careful matching.
Celestion A2	£1499	Jun 98	Focus is not a strength, but bass extension and even tonality are. Metal tweeter can be bright.
Chario Academy One	£1199	Dec 95	Musical realism and a great real-wood finish make these 'speakers enjoyable, if not perfect.
Diapason Karis	£1250	May 99	Small cabinet precludes the deepest bass, but a sweet little act for all that. Seriously imaging abilities.
ELAC Jet 310i	£800	Jul 99	Lovely fast, clear sound majors on musicality. 10 year guarantee too.
Epos ES22	£1185	Jun 98	Aside from a slightly cool balance, the ES22s shine. Dynamics, bass depth and control are tops.
Event 20/20BAS	£829	Sep 98	Warm, detailed and well-endowed in the bass, the Events lack only a touch of overall control.
Harbeth DPM1 Active	£849	Sep 98	Now HHB's Circle Actives, these loudspeakers mix the best of pro and domestic to produce first-class results.
Harbeth HL Compact 7	£1329	Jun 96	Dry and analytical but truthful with it. A first class monitor ideally suited to acoustic or classical music.
Harbeth HL K6	£975	Dec 96	Clean, musical and classy - Harbeth have done themselves proud again!
KAR Torino	£895	Jan 97	The Torinos' stylish sound won't shame any system. That powerful bass does need space to breathe properly though.
Kef Reference 1	£995	May 95	Beautifully fluid and integrated mid band and treble but can be slow, with a little loss of bass control.
KEF Reference 2	£1499	Jan 95	Handles rock and classical with equal aplomb, with the ability to reproduce detail that flummoxes many other models.
Klipsch Heresy II	£1150	May 99	Horn and infinite-baffle hybrid with power to spare. Phasing and frequency accurate beyond belief.
KRK V8	£995	Sep 98	Ultra-detailed and revealing, the V8s are true pro more than domestic transducers.
Magneplaner MG 0.6 SE	£1370	Mar 95	Very clear detail and separation, but just fails to produce a fully 3-dimensional sound.
Magneplaner MG12/OR	£1200	May 99	Lightness of touch, dynamics and clarity in trumps. Needs powerful amplification for 77dB/W/m. Not a valve 'speaker.
Mirage 8901	£1075	Oct 95	An easy going, open and natural sound makes the mirages an attractive proposition.
Mission 754 F5	£1299	Sep 96	Articulate and informative sound with fine imaging and tight, deep bass.
Mordaunt Short 860	£1450	Dec 95	Fast, tight and informative, but a poor tweeter casts a grey shadow.
Musical-Tech. Falcon	£955	May 96	Give a big sense of scale on rock and jazz but not subtle and even enough for the critical classical listener.
NEAR Soundmast	£1199	Aug 95	An interesting, musical floorstander that's good value even at this price.
Origin Live Sovereign	£1225	Jun 98	The OLs have transparency and detail in considerable amounts. Bass can be loose though.
PT Ventricle	£896	Aug 95	Smooth and refined floorstanders that some listeners will find captivating.
QLN Signature	£1499	Mar 96	Super sound staging, openness and detail. Well worth seeking out.
REL Stadium 2	£995	Aug 95	Excellent bass performance means that this subwoofer is no toy.
Roksan Ojan 3	£1000	Jan 98	Unusual 'speakers with great rhythmic capabilities and bass. Could be more transparent.
Ruark Paladn	£1099	May 95	The Paladins possess a detailed and expansive soundstage but also a rather dry character
Spendor 2040	£899	Oct 96	The tweeter works well but a recessed midband and one-note bass are the Achilles heels.
Spendor FL8	£1275	Jun 98	The FL8s are warm, mellow performers which prefer Classical to Rock.
Tannoy D300	£1000	Apr 97	Impressive bass extension and control go hand in hand with precise imaging to make the D300s a snip at £1000.
Totem Model 1 Sig.	£1250	Sep 97	Good but the move from standard to Signature has taken speed and punch out of the Model 1s
UKD Callas Gold	£995	Jun 96	A rich and open sound, extremely musical if not strictly accurate. Great bass extension for their size.
UKD Divina	£1390	Jun 95	Not the most neutral 'speakers but they are extremely smooth with an overall coherence to the sound.
Veritas 7	£1000	Jun 99	The Veritas 7s combine neutrality and detail with fluidity and sophistication.
Zingali Concerto .1	£1100	Dec 99	Beautiful cosmetics but poor frequency balance. May be a partner for a subwoofer; otherwise too bass-light.



Klipsch Heresy

£1500-

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



Jamo Concert 8.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Billy Vee

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Integrated £ Year Verdict

under £300

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

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Audio Analogue Puccini.

£300-£799

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

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Integrated £ Year Verdict

£1500-

Audionote Soro Se	£1999	Mar 95	Needs the right loudspeaker but a good musical presentation is in there somewhere.
Copland CSA 14	£1099	Apr 96	A sweet and subtle sound. Fine midrange; transparent and open with vocals.
Densen DM 10	£1299	Jun 95	Dual mono construction gives strong stereo separation. Brutal resolution of detail but not the clearest ever.
Exposure Super XV	£800	Oct 95	A stringy-sounding transistor amp for rock. Build and finish could be better and price lower.
Gamma Rhythm	£2499	Jul 96	Partnered with sensible loudspeakers of good bass depth, the Rhythm is capable of impressive performance.
Lavardin IT	£3200	Apr 99	Has clarity in spades and an extremely rare tonal purity. Outclasses many transistor alternatives with ease.
Mcintosh MA6800	£3735	Sep 95	A mighty confection of power, facilities and style, and it sounds good to boot.
Musical Fidelity A1001	£2499	Jun 98	Awesome power and seismic bass. A very good all-rounder with super-clean sound.
Musical Fidelity A300	£1400	Oct 99	High power integrated with phono. Exquisite manners and power to spare. Sets new standards at the price
MVL Integral A2	£850	May 99	An excellent performer with any music. Adept at handling subtle details. Difficult to beat at the price.
Papworth MVH-200	£1200	Jun 99	Very solid, enjoyable amp but not the smoothest top end or the most open sound-staging.
Shearne Phase 2	£800	Apr 97	Even-handed performer deals confidentially with music regardless of genre. Not as smooth as the best.
Sonic Frontiers Anthem	£1295	May 98	A characteristically competent and musical integrated. Prefers fairly efficient loudspeakers though.
Sonneteer Alabaster	£900	Oct 97	Excellent high-end integrated with a real love of music and plenty of poke.
Teac AB X10	£1000	Sep 95	Very strong all round performer with excellent build and finish. Verging on the expensive though.
Unison Res. Simply 845	£2950	Mar 98	Allied to all the right 'speakers will handle all musical genres with smoothness and power.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Pre-amps £ Year Verdict

Under £300

AMC 1100	£150	Mar 99	Tone controls cannot be defeated and the sum total is a little metallic but value in spades.
Creek OBH-11SE	£199	Apr 99	A very lucid, natural headphone amp which scores as highly on acoustic and Classical as it does on Rock.
Creek OBH-12	£200	Jul 98	Only poor cosmetics mar the Creek. Sonically it's a gem.
Moth 30 Passive	£149	Mar 99	Won't win prizes for best build but a flexible effort for a passive. Somewhat dry presentation overall.
Musical Fidelity X-Cans	£130	Mar 98	If you haven't yet experienced the world of quality headphone listening, the X-Cans is the way to start.
Musical Fidelity X-Pre	£200	Jan 98	A smooth, sweet and musical performer.
Musical Fidelity X-Tone	£120	Mar 99	Easy-to-use stand-alone modern tone control with subtle effect. At present deleted, worthwhile 2nd hand.
Project 7	£259	Feb 95	Immensely enjoyable and listenable, a rare mixture of sophistication and fun.
Rotel RC-971	£150	Mar 99	Five line-level inputs and tone controls make for flexibility. Partnered by the RB-971 power amp, good value.
Technics SU-C1000MKII	£299	Apr 98	Needs slightly more taut bass and a less grainy midrange to bring it up with the best.



Musical Fidelity A300

£300-£799

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



Croft Epoch Elite

£800-£1499

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

£1500-

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



AMC 2200

Power amps £ Year Verdict

Under £800

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

Power amps £ Year Verdict

under £800

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

£800-£1499

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

£1500-

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

CD Players £ Year Verdict

under £300

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

Prices shown are those at the time of review



MVL A2+



Focusrite Red 5

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CD Players £ Year Verdict

under £300

Goodmans GCD90K	£70	Aug 99	Portable. A secure performer thanks to its 20 second anti-shock system. Sound quality good.
Grundig CD3	£240	Sep 94	Great for simple Jazz and Folk, but soft bass slows things down.
JVC XL-V230	£157	Jan 99	Slightly muddled in the bass, the '230 isn't the most rhythmic of players.
Kenwood DP-3080/II	£180	Feb 98	One of the best budget all-rounders there is. A shade treble-heavy.
Kenwood DP-5050	£250	Aug 93	Waffly bass and enthusiastic treble mean the Kenwood prefers Classical to Rock.
Kenwood DPF-3010	£180	Jan 99	A fine performer. Lacks only some of the spirit of its predecessors.
Kenwood DPC-395	£100	Aug 99	Portable. Has build and appearance on its side but not the greatest sonic performer in portables.
Marantz CD-63	£249	Jun 94	Upholds the Marantz tradition of lively CD players.
Marantz CD-67	£270	Nov 96	Fine vocal projection and treble. Bass is deep if not that tight.
NAD 510	£200	Oct 95	Hard to criticise at the price, with a typically smooth, fluid NAD sound.
NAD 522	£170	Jan 99	Warm and smooth, this is a cultured player. Can be over-civilised at times.
Panasonic SL-SX410 port	£100	Aug 99	Portable with limited dynamics but nonetheless musical and finely detailed.
Philips CD721	£130	Feb 96	Not the most accurate machine, but holds its own at the price.
Pioneer PD-103	£140	Feb 95	Rolled-off treble limits detail. Light bass retains foot-tapping ability.
Quad 67	£?	May 93	One of the top players at the price with great speed and grip.
Rotel RCD-940BX	£230	Oct 94	Controlled and invigorating player albeit a touch sterile.
Teac CD-P3450SE	£200	May 97	Refuses to become flustered. Can lack emotion as a result, though.
Teac CD-P4500	£249	Nov 92	Like many of its contemporaries, the Teac is too smooth to shine.
Technics SL-PG490A	£100	Jan 99	In spite of a bias towards bass and treble, this machine remains a bargain.
Technics SL-PS570D	£200	Feb 98	Typical Technics' bright and bassy sound. Prefers Dance and Rock.
Yamaha CDX-480	£200	Mar 95	Mature, laid-back machine drops points for inferior timing and imaging.
Yamaha CDX-590	£230	Feb 98	Detailed, refined but not particularly engaging or exciting.
Yamaha CDX-593	£180	Jan 99	Lean and up-front, the Yamaha is involving on Rock but can sound rough.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Technics
SLPG490 CD

£300-£799

Alchemist Nexus	£599	Jul 99	Listening is 'sumptuous' but perception of fine detail a little more difficult.
AMC CDM7	£340	Jun 96	Very musical outfit which gains sweetness with optional valve output stage.
AR-07	£300	Jan 92	The '07 is even-handed but has no real forte.
Arcam Alpha 7	£320	Jan 97	Superbly-designed, instinctively musical player destined for success.
Arcam Alpha 7SE	£330	Nov 99	Refinement comes second to speed in the &SE, so careful cabling is required for the best results.
Arcam Alpha 8SE	£599	Jun 98	The 8SE builds on the strengths of the standard 8 with HDCD filtering.
Arcam Alpha 9	£799	Dec 98	Apart from its tonal brightness, the Alpha 9 is a very capable machine.
Audio Analogue Paganini	£749	Apr 99	Effortless, wholly musical delivery. The Paganini does for CD replay what the Puccini does for amplification.
Audio Innovations Alto	£449	May 96	Grainless treble is detailed but the Alto misses that vital emotional spark.
Aura CD50	£450	Jul 93	High measured distortion mars the treble and bass is dry.
Creek CD43	£499	Oct 96	A competent player with a musicality that will seduce any music-lover.
Cyrus dAD 1.5	£398	May 99	Great detail and imaging. Classical and Jazz suit the 1.5 down to the ground but Rock can sound harsh.
Cyrus dAD3	£598	Dec 96	Lacklustre with Classical, dramatic and lively on Dance and Rock.
Denon DCD-1550AR	£350	Jul 98	Clean and precise, the Denon lags only in warmth and openness.
Denon DCD-1650AR	£700	Jul 99	Refined and enjoyable. Its in-built smoothness can get in the way of absolute transparency.
Harman/Kardon HD730	£300	Aug 96	Strong on dynamics and drive, but lifeless treble can dampen music.
Harman/Kardon HD740	£300	Jun 99	A smooth, musical and rhythmic player, but midrange best suits Classical rather than Rock.
Hellos 3	£700	Jul 99	It is unusual to find a player with such definite loves and hates. First class with acoustic, otherwise maybe!
Linn Mimik	£798	Apr 95	Tonally hard but possesses many, if not all, of the Linn rhythmic strengths.
Marantz CD-63 KI-Sig.	£500	Sep 96	This is a rare player, greater than the sum of its parts.
Marantz CD-63SE	£350	May 95	Taken as a whole, the CD-63SE is one hell of a CD player. No digital nasties.
Myryad T20	£600	Dec 98	With its brightness balanced by warm ancillaries the T20 will win friends.
Orelle CD100e	£650	Mar 97	Clean and tidy on electronic music. Not so good with acoustic material.
Pioneer PD-S904	£400	Sep 96	Fluid midrange leads a dry bass and tonally-limited treble.
Pioneer DV-717	£550	Sep 99	Detailed and sweet-sounding, the DV-717 brings out the best in most discs. Not the last word in neutrality.
Rotel RCD-951	£300	Aug 99	Good with ordinary CDs, excellent on HDCD. Construction is very solid too.
Rotel RCD-965BX Discrete	£375	Dec 94	Fast, clean sound verges on the clinical at times.
Rotel RCD-971	£350	Sep 98	Refinement is a plus point, but lack of vitality holds the Rotel back.
Rotel RCD-975	£450	Sep 96	Tuneful, pungent bass are the pros, flat sound staging and tone the cons.
Sony CDP-X3000ES	£500	Mar 98	Neutral, dynamic and stylish but not quite up with the best.
Sony CDP-XB930E	£300	Dec 99	A classy customer with a sophisticated and smooth sound that's very hard to fault.
Sony CDP-XE900E	£300	Mar 97	In spite of fine sound staging and clarity, the Sony fails to involve.
Teac CD-5	£350	Jan 96	Clean and dry, the Teac is rather sterile compared to the competition.
Technics SL-PS840	£450	Sep 95	Not the last word in bass control. Midrange is more persuasive.
Thule CD100	£600	Apr 99	A very smooth and refined player with the added bonus of good detailing. Can lack rhythmic bite at times.
Trichord Genesis	£549	Sep 96	Warm and bassy, but extremely natural. Not the most consistent player.
Trichord Revelation	£799	May 97	When it's good, it's very good indeed. Can get confused on dense mixes.



Marantz CD63
KI-Sig.

£800-£1499

Audiolab 8000	£1000	Dec 96	Sweet treble and full midrange give the 8000CD a lucid sound.
Copland CDA 266	£1199	Feb 99	Perhaps lacks the last ounce of strength on Rock, nonetheless has winning all-round ability.
Cymbal CDP12	£1279	Dec 97	Its warm, musical sound plus HDCD compatibility are a strong combination.
Cyrus dAD-7	£899	Jan 95	Up with the best at the money, the Cyrus simply sounds 'right'.
DPA Renaissance	£895	Jun 95	Breathtaking imagery and dynamics. Not strictly accurate, but who cares?
Harman/Kardon HD7725	£800	Jan 94	Construction is price-correct, but not the excessively relaxed sound.
Heybrook Signature	£989	Oct 97	The Heybrook loses out because of its rough treble and lack of clarity.
Hoff Xara	£950	May 98	It's not cheap but the Xara scores for firm bass and exciting presentation.
LFD Mistral	£999	Nov 97	The Mistral is outclassed in areas like pace and bass depth.
Marantz CD-17	£800	Jul 99	Commendably solid build, smooth top-end and velvety overall sound.
Marantz CD-17 KI-S	£1300	Sep 97	The KI-S has a valve-like smoothness and clarity.
Meridian 506	£875	May 95	Characteristically dry Meridian balance which could do with more emotion.
Musical Fidelity X-Ray	£800	Feb 99	Bright, clear and well-built, the X-Ray's transparency can be hard on poor recordings.
Pink Triangle Numeral	£1099	Apr 98	This very natural one-box fully justifies its £1000 price tag.
Quad 77	£850	Nov 95	Competent, entertaining machine with neat styling and remote.
Roksan Caspian	£895	Aug 97	The Caspian is a gifted player well worth its asking price.
Shearpe Audio Phase 7	£1499	Dec 99	The Phase 7 leads the pack for smoothness and tonal colour more than for detail and excitement.
Sugden SDT-1	£850	Mar 93	A superb all-rounder with particularly convincing rhythms.
T+A CD 1210 R	£1150	Sep 99	Outstanding build married to outstanding build, at a price which isn't expensive considering what's on offer.
Teac VRDS-10SE	£850	Apr 96	Draws you into the music. Soundstaging fine but treble is a little bright.
Teac VRDS-25	£1300	Aug 96	Solid build doesn't make up for sound which lags in integration and detail.
XTC CDP-1	£1250	Dec 97	Rhythmically satisfying, but can sound hard in the wrong system.



Roksan Caspian CD.

£1500-

Anthem CD1	£1600	Mar 98	Sweet sound and numerous features make the Anthem fine value for money.
Burmester 937	£5460	Sep 94	Amongst the best with its belt-drive transport.
McIntosh CDM-7009	£2635	Dec 95	Unmatched quality from CD at a high but fair price.
Meridian 508.24	£1995	Jul 98	The 508.24 is one of the top performers at its price.



A selection of our ever changing offers for sale (all fully guaranteed)

Equivalent New Price Sale Price

A selection of our ever changing offers for sale (all fully guaranteed)

Equivalent New Price Sale Price

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Audiolab 8000A Int.VGC	500.00	269.95
Myst TMA-3 Int. VGC	300.00 +	119.95
Naim NAC-22 / NAP 120 Pre/Power with Phono VGC	N/A	120.00
Mendian 205 100 Watts Mono-Bloc Power-Amps. MINT/Boxed	1000.00 +	495.00
Albany M-408 II Mono-Bloc Power-Amps.(2 x 40 Watts High-Current) VGC	1000.00 +	450.00
Musical Fidelity X-A1 2x50 Watts Int. Amp. NEW	N/A	479.00
Musical Fidelity Pre-3A Pre-Amp. with MM/MC Phono VGC / Boxed	550.00	229.95
Musical Fidelity MA-50 Class A Mono-Blocs (2 x 50 Watts) MINT / Boxed.(Superb)	1000.00	450.00
Musical Fidelity B-1 2 x 40 Watts Int.VGC	300.00	149.95
Papworth Audio M-100 Valve Mono-Blocs		
MINT / Boxed / 2x 100 Watts (EL-34's)	3800.00	1995.00
Audion Premier Silver Night (2-Box Valve Pre.with Phono-Stage) MINT	1500.00	795.00
Audion Silver Nights Valve Mono-Blocs (300B's) MINT / Boxed / New 300B's Fitted	2300.00	1195.00
Stemfoort (Sugden) 2x100Watts Passive Pre/Power (1-Box) VGC / Boxed	850.00	449.95
Revox B-750 2x75 Watts Int. VGC	800.00	299.95
Arcam A-60 Original/GC	300.00	89.95
Quad 405 Mk1 Power Amp. G.C 2 x 100 Watts	N/A	199.95
Rotel RA-931 2 x 35 Watts Int. MINT	150.00	99.95
Technics SU-A800 Rem. Int. Amp. MINT	350.00	189.95
Technics SU-A800 II Int. Amp. VGC (No Remote)	350.00	179.95
Technics SU-C1000M Remote / Battery Pre.MINT	350.00	199.95
Mission Cyrus One (Steel Version) (Resprayed Black)	225.00	109.95

TUNERS

Quad FM-3 GC	N/A	79.95
Naim NAT-101 / SNAPS MINT	N/A	499.95
Sugden FM VGC	N/A	90.00
Sugden R-51 VGC	N/A	95.00
Sugden T-48 VGC	N/A	89.95
A&R T-21 VGC	N/A	79.95
Nytech CT-206 VGC	N/A	99.95
Q.E.D. T-231 VGC	N/A	89.95
Mendian 104 VGC	N/A	149.95
Musical Fidelity T-1 VGC	N/A	229.95
Yamaha TX-470 Remote F.M. / Pre-Sets VGC	150.00	89.95

TAPE DECKS

Denon DRM 10 HX 3 Motor Etc: VGC	N/A	119.95
Denon DRM 550 HX-PRO Etc: MINT/AS NEW	160.00	129.95
Denon DRM 800A 3-Head / C.D Direct Etc: MINT	300.00 +	169.95
Denon DRS-640 Front-Loader / HX-Pro Etc: VGC	200.00 +	109.95
Denon DRM-24 HX 3-Head Etc: VGC2	50.00	90.00
Nakamichi BX-100E 3-Motor / 2-Head etc: VGC	500.00 +	199.95
Sony TC-KB 820S Dolby S Etc: MINT / AS NEW	180.00	119.95
Yamaha KX-500 HX-Pro / Vari-Bias Etc: VGC	160.00	99.95
Aiwa ADF-640 3-Head / 2-Motor Etc: MINT	300.00	119.95
Technics RSB-565 Direct-Drive / HX-Pro etc: G/C	250.00	99.95
Technics RS-TR 373 Twin / Auto-Reverse Etc: VGC	230.00	119.95

LOUDSPEAKERS

Epos ES-30 MINT / AS NEW	2385.00	1695.00
Martin Logan Anus Electrostatic / Dynamic / 200 Watts MINT / Boxed / Manuals	2300.00	1395.00
Shahinian Arc VGC	1875.00	995.00
Mendian M-1 Active c/w 101B Pre. / Balanced Cables Etc: (104 Matching Tuner also available @ £149.95) VGC	LOADS	595.00
Rogers LS 2a/II MINT / Boxed	300.00 +	149.95
Kef K-120 Book-shelf G/C Black Ash	200.00	99.95
Musical Fidelity MC-2 (Bi-Wire) VGC	400.00	199.95
J.P.W ML-610 MINT / AS NEW	170.00	119.95
Impulse H-6 Horns VGC	1500.00	699.95
Jim Rogers JR-149 (Classic Cylinder Speakers / Wall Brackets) Similar in Sound to B.B.C. LS-35A (New Fabric Covers)VGC	N/A	149.00
Royd Minstrel / Bases VGC / Boxed	310.00	199.95
Sony SS-A1L Monitors MINT (Superb Mid-Band)	450.00	229.95
Linn Sara / Stands VGC / Boxed / Afrosoma	800.00	350.00
Linn Nexus / Stands Black Ash / VGC	500.00	229.95
Linn Helix / Ku-Stone Stands Black Ash / VGC	400.00	199.95
Linn Index Black Ash / MINT / LIKE NEW	300.00	169.95
Arcam Delta Two Black / Bi-wire / VGC	350.00	189.95
Bose 301 T.M Omnidirectional VGC	350.00	169.95
Mission 762 GC	250.00	99.95
Mordant Short Festival III MINT	N/A	199.95

Snell Type K GC	700.00	299.95
Wharfedale Modus 2 MINT / As New	200.00	129.95
Wharfedale 304 GC	160.00	79.95
Castle Tay Bi-Wire (Rosewood) (MINT / AS NEW)	350.00	229.95
Infinity Reference 10 (Black) MINT	200.00	109.95
Rega Ela Floorstanders (Black) MINT	500.00	249.95
Rega Kyles / Brackets MINT	200.00 +	119.95
Celestion 7 II (Black) MINT	250.00	119.95
APOGEE CALIPER FULL RANGE RIBBON SPEAKERS (FOR SPARES OR REPAIR) SOLD AS-SEEN	3500.00	500.00

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

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NEW PRICE £1875.00 AA PRICE £995.00

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

Meridian 207 / 209 C.D / D.A.C. / Pre-Amp VGC	1500.00	495.00
Mission DAD-5 Remote / DAC-5 VGC	600.00	269.95
Micromega Solo(H Model) Top-Loader / Acrylic / Digital-Out Etc: / Remote		
MINT / AS NEW Boxed / Manuals	1600.00	595.00
Micromega Stage One Full Remote / Digital out etc:	550.00	229.95
Micromega Logic Remote Etc: G/C	N/A	99.95
DPA Renaissance 24-Bit / Remote / Deltran-Sync-Lock MINT	950.00	595.00
DPA Enlightenment DAC Digital To Analogue Convertor MINT	850.00	425.00
Audiolab 8000 DAC MINT / AS NEW	900.00	549.95
Arcam Delta 170 / Black Box 2-Box VGC	900.00	399.95
Harman Kardon HD-7500 Remote VGC	350.00	149.95
Musical Fidelity X-Ray (24/96) (Superb Player) NEW (EX DEM PRICE)	799.00	699.00
Philips CD-830 Remote VGC / Digital Out (Suprisingly Musical)	400.00	129.95
Audio Alchemy Dac-In-The-Box MINT / AS NEW	230.00	149.95
Nad Monitor 5000 VGC / Digital Output	310.00	149.95
Nad 5420 VGC	150.00	79.95
Nad 502 VGC Remote / Digital out	180.00	99.95
Marantz CD-67 Rem. MINT	250.00	169.95

VINYL

Oxford Acoustics Chrystelle / Pedestal / P.S.U. / SME Series V / Decca Super Gold / Pod MINT / Boxes / Manuals (Very Rare & Rather Superb!)	5000.00 +	1995.00
Project 0.5 / Ortofon OM-10 G / C	170.00	95.00
The Source T.T. c/w 3-D P.S.U. / Linn Ittok LV II / Audio Technica AT-F3		
Moving-Coil MINT / Manuals Etc: (Superb Sound / Looks)	1800.00 +	695.00
Manticore Mantra c/w Rega RB-250 / Linn K-5 VGC	500.00 +	199.95
Linn Armboard (Cut for Grace) VGC	N/A	10.00
Linn Armboard (Cut for Rega) VGC	N/A	10.00
Mission 775 SM (Cream)...Not the Band but the colour.. / 774 Arm / Ortofon		
VMS-20EII M.M Cartridge VGC	N/A	299.95
Monacor SPR-6 M.M Phono-Stage / P.S.U (Brilliant/Value) NEW	N/A	26.95
Musical Fidelity X-LP (The One At This Price) M.M /M.C Phono-Stage NEW	N/A	130.00
Musical Fidelity XL-P2 Mono-Bloc Phono-Stage /X-PSU NEW and Superb (M.M /M.C) (Switchable Impedance)	N/A	499.90
Revolver Rebel c/w Arm / A.T M.M Cartridge MINT	N/A	99.95
Grace G-707 Tonearm VGC	N/A	99.95
Audio Technica AT 1005 II Tonearm VGC	N/A	69.95
Quad 34 Moving-Coil Disc Module VGC / Boxed	N/A	30.00

OTHER ITEMS

Yamaha DSP-E1000 Remote Pro-Logic Processor / DSP VGC	700.00	249.95
Panasonic DVD-A350 (Multi-Region) MINT / As New	700.00	399.95
Castle Keep Shielded Centre Speaker(Bi-Wirable) MINT	300.00	149.95
B&W 2000IFS Shielded Centre Speaker MINT	200.00 +	109.95
R.A Labs Shielded Centre-Speaker NEW / Boxed	139.95	119.95
Solid S-100 Surround Speakers VGC / Boxed	130.00	89.95
Sony D-E305 Discman MINT / BOXED Etc:	120.00	79.95
Cable Talk L.S / Incon Cables Now In Stock"NEW"	P.O.A	
Puresonic 9010A Psocc Interconnects NEW Per Pair (One Only Left)		79.95
Musical Fidelity X-Cans Class A Valve Headphone Amp NEW	N/A	130.00
Golden Dragon 300B Valves (4 Of / All Good) (PRICES ARE EACH)	90.00	30.00
Target SF-1 Stand (For Power Amps. Etc): NEW	80.00	40.00
Lovan Trisolator Isolation Platform (Adds Mass-Loading to C.D Players Etc):		99.95
Lovan Classic II Stand (For Power Amps. Etc.):	50.00	40.00
Quad Link Bus-Bar Cables (For 77-Series) (Only 1 Left)		15.00
Ixos 100.X03 Studio Incon1/2 Metre Silver-Plated	150.00	90.00
Ixos 101 Incon 1 Metre Silver-Plated	100.00	59.95
Hi-Q (By Chantry) Headphone Amp. Volume Control / P.S.U / VGC	200.00	60.00

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CD players £ Year Verdict

£1500-

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

Turntables £ Year Verdict

Under £800

Clearaudio Solution	£750	Feb 99	If you seek a powerful presentation where musicality takes precedence over absolute finesse, this could be the answer.
Linn Basik	£400	Sep 94	Definitely a turntable for devotees of attack and strong bass lines. Not strong on imaging.
Michel Gyrodec SE	£775	Apr 99	Great sound, superb build and excellent upgradability make the 'spider' a wonder at the price.
Michell Mycro	£539	Jan 94	Silent and beautifully made, with transparent reproduction.
NAD 533	£200	Nov 94	Based on a Rega Planar 2. Both pleasant to use and look at with a mature sound, all for £200.
Pink Triangle Tarantella	£575	Oct 97	Simply the best at the money. Combines PT's customary transparency with real authority.
Project 1.2	£200	Jun 97	A bargain at £200 with its substantial and involving sound.
Project 6	£350	Dec 93	Involvement and rhythm are priorities. Highly recommended.
Project 6.1	£435	Sep 94	The 6.1 gives a very full, strong sound. A very exciting deck.
Pro-ject Classic Cherry	£450	Jul 99	Emminently capable player that can be upgraded with superior cartridges.
Pro-ject Debut	£109	Dec 99	Produces an enjoyable and confident sound on a budget. There are better turntables around, but not at this price!
Systemdek 2X2	£500	Aug 96	Clear and precise sound through midrange and treble puts it up with more expensive rivals.
Systemdek IIX900	£415	Sep 94	Detailed sound stage and broad imaging with a good, even range of tonal colour.
Systemdek IIXE	£450	Jan 93	Combined with an SME 309 it achieves great results, with a massive sound stage.
Thorens TD168 Mk6	£405	Sep 94	Tonally smooth with a warm midrange, but a little too laid back.
Thorens TD180	£180	Feb 95	A good, basic budget bargain.
Thorens TD280 Mk4	£199	Jun 93	Superbly lucid and clear midrange, but lower reaches are a little lightweight.
Vestax BDT-2000	£225	Sep 99	Price includes cartridge and phono stage. A fit-and-forget solution to LP replay, of exceptional versatility.
Virtual Reality Reson rs1	£600	Nov 95	With fine detail resolution, transparency and a neutral balance the Reson rs1 represents super value.
VPI Junior	£500	Oct 97	The Junior is a very good deck indeed, with an assured and involving sound.

£800-

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

Phono stages £ Year Verdict

Under £500

Creek OBH-8SE/OBH-2	£160	Nov 97	One of the best MC phono stages on the market at the price
Creek OBH-9/OBH-1	£110	Nov 97	Smooth and truly musical, exceedingly worthy entry-level phono stage.
Densen DP Drive/DP-02	£350	Sep 97	A beautifully made, fine sounding device that looks great too.
Lehmann Black Cube	£395	Oct 98	Capable of involvement, neutrality and insight usually the preserve of stages three or four times the price.
LFD Mistral	£299	Sep 97	The most lucid and musical budget phono stage around - a true audiophile bargain.
Musical Fidelity X-LP	£130	May 99	First-class inexpensive phono. MM and MC inputs catered for. Low on distortion, high on clarity.
NAD PP1	£40	Sep 98	At this price the NAD is an accomplished all-rounder. Slowish bass will suit leaner systems though.
Pro-ject Phono Box	£40	Dec 99	Very competent little MM & MC stage at an astonishing price. First-rate starter package.
QED Discsaver	£35	Jan 97	A bargain. Beguilingly musical presentation, with more than enough detail and power for a mere £35.
Rotel RQ-970BX	£130	Nov 94	Combine with a good cheap line level integrated and it will show you how good vinyl can be.
Sonnetear Sedley MC/MM	£399	May 98	The Sedley combines transparency and fine dynamics with excellent rhythmic ability.

£500-

Anthem Pre 1P	£899	Aug 98	Despite a sizeable price tag the Anthem offers a smooth, lucid sound and superb build quality.
Audio Innovations P2	£749	Feb 96	Fantastic bass and super insight make this one of the best phono stages around.
AudioLab 8000PPA	£800	Oct 94	Instruments can have a somewhat flat perspective, but excellent clarity
DPA DSP 200SD	£495	Oct 94	Could be too forceful for some, but with excellent detail and extremely powerful bass.
Kinshaw Perception	£525	Oct 94	Extremely impressive results, especially with MM cartridges.
Linn Linto	£850	Oct 97	Marries beautifully into the Linn family, but not too hot with other components.
Michell Iso	£528	Oct 94	Gives a thoroughly cohesive picture of a recording with a very tight and rhythmical bass.
Michell Iso HR	£850	May 93	Perhaps too good for some record collections. Extremely revealing.
Roksan Artaxerxes/DS5	£945	Oct 97	Doesn't worry about genre, it just gets on with the job of making music in an enjoyable way.
Sonic Frontiers Phono 1	£2000	Apr 98	Expensive, yes, overpriced, no. The Phono 1 is a superb all-round phono stage.
Unison Simply Phono	£495	Mar 96	Liquid sound with great dynamics, but a little hissy and muddled too. Beguiling, but not perfect.

Cartridges £ Year Verdict

Under £200

Clearaudio Alpha	£130	Apr 99	Tends to sound quite hard at the top but imaging and detail are good. Best in a warm system.
Denon DL103M	£110	Aug 97	First manufactured in 1963, it sounds mature and sure-footed rather than over the hill.
Denon DL110	£65	Mar 94	May be a little soft-natured for some. Splendid dynamics and an even tonal balance.
DNM Mica	£185	Feb 98	Beters Goldring's 1042 without difficulty. MC quality from an MM.
Goldring 1042	£90	Jan 93	One of the best MMs at the price with stainless delivery.
Goldring 1012GX	£60	Jul 93	Great with Rock music, the 1012GX is the best value low-price MM.
Grado Prestige Silver	£119	Apr 97	Good tracking and inoffensive sound, but somehow lacks sparkle in any department.
Linn K9	£58	Sep 94	Rhythmic bite compensates for a lack of vibrancy in music (MM).
Ortofon 510 MkII	£40	Jul 99	Excellent tracker at a good price. Warm amplification is needed to tame this sure-footed budget entry.
Ortofon 540	£100	Jan 93	Smooth operator and very good value for money (MM).
Ortofon MC15 Super II	£110	Mar 95	In the right system, can be masterful with its dry and accurate response.
Ortofon MC25E	£170	Sep 95	A considerable achievement that adds true verve a pizzazz to the MC15 Super II
Roksan Conus Black	£120	Jan 93	Light and dry presentation with good presentation (MM).
Slate Brazen MM	£185	Sep 97	If you like the V15 you'll love the Brazen. Works well with an SME 3009.
Sumiko Blue Point	£100	Oct 92	Excellent value for money. It does its job of transcribing the information on the disc without fuss or bother.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Pro-ject Classic Cherry



Lehmann Black Cube



Clearaudio Alpha

AudioSource



Selected used/ ex-dem products 10 - 15% discount for sale same month! See how fast our list changes! Send for latest edition.

	WAS	NOW	STATUS
ANALOGUE			
LUXMAN PD445, SME III, Westrack Super build and sound quality	?	495	s/h
LUXMAN T-50 Lab Reference Tuner Hope I get to keep this myself!	?	495	s/h
Michell Gyro SE/ mod RB300 No s/h or rival comes close	940	795	new
DIGITAL			
Audio Note DAC-4 Signature Upgradeable to DAC-5 for £1,850 but why bother?	9,990	4995	ex-dem
Audio Meca (Pierre Lume) Transport Audio Synthesis DA-X DAC Both items mint, very cheap	?	1995	s/h
Mark Levinson No 39 Owner going home cinema Near offer may be accepted	4,995	3995	s/h
Mission DiscMaster + DACMaster With PSX-R external PSU	2,100	795	s/h
PassLabs D1-DAC Months old, mint, amazing	5,250	2250	s/h
Pink Triangle da Capo Premium DAC 20 bit (1307) filter, £400 upgrade to 24 bit	3,500	1495	s/h
Trichord DAC Just In	1,250	495	s/h
AMPLIFIERS			
conrad-johnson Premier 7B Final version of this classic Exemplary phono, all-tube pre-amp.	11k	4995	s/h
Graaf GM-200 OTL Mint, under 2 years, 2x 200w Worthy partner for 13.5B!	8k	3995	s/h
Gryphon S-100 Danish power with poise, truly Marvellous, far above the crowd	5975	2,500	s/h
Mark Levinson 380 Pre/334 (125w) Unique opportunity, with full Five-year warranty	9,500	6,900	ex-dem
PassLabs X-2 pre/ X-ONO Two box phono and line pre-amp Bal + true transistor single end	3,995	2,750	s/h
Sony Esprit TA-E900 pre-amp and TA-N 900 monoblocks Mint, box, manual, bargain!	12000	3,995	classic
SPEAKERS			
Infinity Reference 1b All-time US classic Upgraded & silver wiring	n/a	3,500	classic
Martin Logan Aerials Mint, under 2 years old	2,199	1,199	s/h
QUAD ESL63 - 2 samples Classic cult, affordable!	3,500	995	s/h

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CABLES DIRECT

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

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

AUDIOSOURCE

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

JPS-LABS

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

AUDIO NOTE

Legendary Stereo Interconnects (silver litz not plated!) 0.5m/ 1.0m:
 AN-S with AN phonos £89/139
 AN-V with AN phonos £129/199
 AN-Vx solid silver plugs £309/499
 AN-Vz solid silver plugs £799/1099

AUDIOSOURCE

High-end, low price
 Stereo Interconnects 0.5 / 1.0m:
 Stratos Transparent Series 2
 RCA or XLR fully bal \$99/ 125
 Additional metre per pair £35
 Digital RCA or XLR \$39/ 59
 Petros Blue Stereo Interconnect
 RCA plugs only £40/ 48
 + Bal XLR or RCA £52/ 58
 +ST XLR or RCA £62/68
 Additional metre per pair \$25
 +ST Digital XLR or RCA £26/35

JPS-LABS

Stereo Interconnects 0.5 / 1.0m:
 Single-ended, RCA to RCA:
 The Ultra Conductor \$69/ 89
 The SuperConductor+ \$179/219
 SuperConductor-2 WBT \$499
 Fully-balanced, XLR to XLR:
 The UltraConductor 1m \$179
 The SuperConductor+ \$449
 SuperConductor-2 \$899

KONTAK

Contact Cleaner £15
MADRIGAL
 CZ Gel RCA or Bal 0.5m £319
 CZ Gel RCA or Bal 1.0m £419
 DIGITAL (1m, one piece):
 MDC-2 Fatboy RCA £295
 MDC-1 Balanced XLR £295

MIT

STEREO INTERCONNECTS 1m:
 MITerminator 3 Interconnect \$89
 MITerminator 2 Interconnect \$129
 MIT ProLine Balanced 1m \$249
 MI-330 Series Two \$299
 MI-330 ProLine Balanced \$495
 MH-330+ Series Three \$499
 MI-330 SHOTGUN \$699
 MI-330 SHOTGUN Balanced \$849
 DIGITAL (1m, one piece):
 MITerminator 3 (RCA) \$99
 MIT Digital Reference (RCA) \$320
 MIT ProLine D.R. (XLR) \$695

FAVoured AC CORDS

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

MAINS BLOCKS

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

AUDIOPHILE FURNITURE

Send for illustrated and priced brochures By BCD, Copulare, RMS Stands Unique, Sonus Systems, and the new Townshend Modular Seismic Sinks.

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SU Carbon/brass Isolator kit \$16/26
 SU Speaker Isolation c/f stars \$25
 SU Brass Spike Discs (set of 4) \$8.49

PLATFORMS

CeeTech VCS (carbon fibre) \$199
 Crystal Cloud (acrylic) \$119
 SU Isolation Glass shelf kit \$55
 Townshend 2-3D S/sink for CD \$234
 Townshend 3-3D Turntable \$299

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Audio Note

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

JPS-Labs

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

MIT Audio Products

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

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

AudioSource

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Web: www.audiosource.co.uk

Cartridges £ Year Verdict

£200-

Cartridge Man Music Maker	£549	Feb 99	Good price, high output and a winning musicality make this Moving Iron cartridge the one to beat.
DNM Lexe	£1300	Jan 99	A Goldring make-over that tracks well and sounds good. Pricey, though.
DNM Rica MM Cartridge	£255	Jun 98	This betters the Mica, has super-MM virtues.
Dynavector DV20X-H	£299	May 99	Delightfully musical sound makes the Dynavector a very strong contender in the budget MC stakes.
EMT HST6	£850	Oct 96	Solid bass and smooth, musical sound make this rare MC cartridge worth the money.
Goldring Excel VX	£495	May 97	Has fine midrange clarity, but is bettered in other areas by cheaper competitors.
Linn Arkiv	£1200	Dec 97	Linn fans will love it but it's up against strong competition.
Linn Klyde	£489	Jun 95	Sumptuous sounding cartridge that borders on the bass heavy but has a good feel for music.
Lyra Lydian	£649	Jun 95	Extremely smooth, civilised MC with no obvious weaknesses.
Ortofon Jubilee	£1250	Mar 99	Detailed, musical and sure-footed, the Jubilee goes a long way towards justifying its elevated price tag.
Ortofon MC25F	£225	Sep 95	Delightfully sweet, musical sound with added refinement on FL that takes some beating.
Ortofon MC30 Supreme	£450	Jun 95	Involving yet refined presentation but some could feel it's slightly coloured.
Ortofon MC7500	£2000	May 94	Conveys the full gamut of emotion from A-Z with the fervour of a live concert. Expensive, but the business.
Ortofon Rohmann	£1000	Apr 96	A top quality MC with superb tonal quality and excellent imagery.
Shure V15VxMR	£295	Mar 97	Warm, dynamic rendition of music with great detail and impact (MM).
Transfiguration Spirit	£1000	Jul 98	A balanced all-rounder that misses out only on the last ounce of detail and bass weight.
Van Den Hul MC10	£840	Jun 95	The MC10 is very hard to fault. A honey, pure and simple.
VDH Grasshopper IV	£3750	Dec 95	Allows music to flow with superb fluidity and reveal things which were previously unheard - at a price!

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Ortofon Jubilee

Tonearms £ Year Verdict

Hadcock GH 228 SE	£595	Dec 98	Construction won't worry SME but its sound quality will unsettle a lot of the competition.
Origin Live RB250/RB300	varies	Nov 97	These modified arms are a considerable improvement on the originals
SME 309	£689	Jan 93	Tight, neutral sound with good tonality, but lacks the IVs pace and precision.
SME IV	£828	Mar 92	Sexy chassis and staggering engineering along with potent performance earn it a place in audio history.

Tuners £ Year Verdict

Under £200

AMC T7	£130	Jul 97	Although it has a tempting price, its sound quality is poor compared with its rivals.
Arcam Alpha 7	£230	Mar 97	An attractive, smooth sounding tuner that won't break the bank.
Cambridge T500	£180	Feb 99	The T500 is one of the most gifted tuners under £500; a very accomplished all-round performer.
Denon TU-260L MkII	£130	Jun 99	With its smooth, inoffensive sound and abundant facilities, the MkII is a worthy addition to the tuner line-up.
Harman/Kardon TU 950	£200	Jul 96	Sound quality is generally impressive. Let down by a rather constricted sound stage, but still good value.
Kenwood KT-2080	£130	Feb 97	Smooth, even balance allows the KT-2080 to convince with whatever it's receiving. £130 well spent.
Marantz ST-57	£150	Oct 97	The ST-57 is a smooth, warm tuner but lacks a little clarity and transparency.
Mission Cyrus FM7	£299	Apr 94	Musical, communicative and extremely detailed and a steal at the price.
NAD 412	£190	Jun 96	A remarkably musical and natural sounding tuner. Unbeatable at the price, or even twice the price for that matter.
Ohkyo T401	£160	May 94	A competent machine, but time has taken its toll on the sound quality.
Rega Radio	£230	Jan 95	Sounds on the whole more than its price, but in other respects it isn't especially competitive.
Rotel RT-930AX	£175	Aug 94	The RT-930AX is a glowing little bargain, real quality at a very realistic price.
Sony ST-SA3ES	£250	Apr 97	The Sony is worth every penny of its asking price. If you're a fan of radio this is one to go for.
Sony ST-SE700	£180	Aug 97	The ST-SE700 is one of the best at this price. LW reception is a welcome bonus.
Teac T-460	£120	Oct 99	An inexpensive and versatile tuner, difficult to fault as such. Sound quality on the dryside.
Technics ST-GT-350L	£140	Jun 95	Not a bad buy at all and a very good fit for budget and mid-price systems.
Yamaha TX580 RDS	£200	Feb 95	If you want something for casual listening with superior aesthetics, this might be the one for you.



Hadcock 228SG

£200-

Adcom GFT 555 .2	£399	May 93	Quite musical but does not rejuvenate the waves! Good solid performance but less than luxurious.
Arcam Alpha 10 DRT	£1000	Jul 99	Arcam's digital radio couldn't be simpler to use. Compared with good FM the benefits are marginal as yet.
Burmester 931	£4347	Nov 94	This is not a cheap tuner, but its cheaper than buying a radio station, which is the only possible alternative.
Creek T43	£399	May 98	A great little tuner. This is the one in the price bracket.
Cyrus FM7.5	£400	Oct 99	Fine, smooth and musical; commendably simple in style and operation. Only its price counts against it.
Denon TU-S10	£400	Mar 98	A stylish, well-built tuner which has a detailed sound but needs careful partnering
Fanfare FT 1	£1350	Mar 95	Whether it's sweaty disco or symphony hall, the Fanfare comes up to scratch.
Kenwood KT-6050L	£300	Oct 95	A good value, excellent sounding rds tuner, but lacks full EON facilities
Linn Kremlin	£1645	Mar 92	Commendable basic performance but, considering the price there are limitations.
Magnum Dyalab FT101A	£749	Apr 92	Worth auditioning but bass rather dry and light.
Marantz ST-17	£600	July 99	Knock-out build quality and rich velvety sound. Poor-signal mute a bit too enthusiastic.
Meridian 504	£660	Mar 96	A clear, natural sound with good punch. Has strong rivals at the price, but acquires itself well.
Micromega Tuner	£700	Jul 95	An unusual design from Micromega that's well built but sonically unrewarding and expensive.
Myryad MT100	£530	Nov 99	Low on facilities, but when it comes to looks and sonic performance, it's the business.
NAD 702	£330	Jul 94	Well worth auditioning, even if you've never previously considered a receiver.
Naim NAT 03	£499	Sep 93	Soft and pure, especially across the midband. Speech very well reproduced plus solid weighty bass.
Nakamichi ST3S	£350	Dec 94	Looks good, but the sound quality isn't really worth the asking price.
Pioneer F-504RDS	£300	Dec 98	One sole mark against the class-leading transparency is its slightly dry character.
Pioneer F-504RDS	£350	Nov 95	Well engineered and competent tuner, but a little uninspiring.
Rotel Michi RHT10	£895	Mar 94	This classy looking tuner can hold its head up high amongst the best tuners at the price.
Rotel RT-990BX	£500	Apr 95	The price of twenty concert tickets, and for that you can listen as if you were there. A bargain.
TAG McLaren T20	£1100	Mar 99	Extremely well built with a lucid if slightly dry sound. The only real drawback is the high price.
Thorens TRT-2000	£500	Dec 97	An otherwise competent tuner is let down by a rather processed character.



Marantz ST-17

Cassette £ Year Verdict

Under £300

Aiwa AD-F580	£150	Apr 98	No Dolby S, but three heads and two capstans make the Aiwa a bargain.
Denon DRM-550	£160	May 96	Good enough for the price and no worse than the competition.
Denon DRM-555	£150	Jul 99	Its slant towards features prevent the Denon taking the audiophile honours at the price.
Denon DRM-650S	£230	Aug 96	Top sound quality with ferric and chrome makes this deck a steal.
Grundig CF4	£250	Jan 95	Fair on pre-recordeds, OK when recording, but speed stability isn't great.
JVC TD-V662	£300	Sep 98	Only the lack of Dolby S conspires against the otherwise excellent JVC.
Kenwood KX-5080S	£200	Jan 97	Stable transport gives fine results on metal and chrome. Rough on ferrics.
Rad 613	£230	Jan 95	Decent playback and good recording when used carefully.
NAD 614	£270	Sep 95	Excellent electronics are let down by a low-grade transport.
Rotel RD-960BX	£230	Oct 95	A solid, competent machine which is reasonable value for money.
Sony TC-K311	£150	Dec 93	Auto-tuning is mediocre and the general results are unexceptional.
Sony TC-K490	£170	Jan 93	A mix of average heads and electronics doesn't make for happy taping.
Teac V-610	£100	Apr 97	The V-610's performance matches its price well, but audiophile it isn't.
Teac V-600	£150	Sep 94	Satisfactory for in-car recordings, but the low price shows.
Yamaha KX-580 SE	£250	Sep 97	The '580 lives up to its SE tag with a fine performance in all areas.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Cassette £ Year Verdict

£300-

Aiwa AD-1950	£300	Feb 95	Vice-free playback is mirrored by impressive recording.
Denon DRS-810	£300	Jan 92	On the right tapes, the Denon repays with delightful sound quality.
JVC TD-V1010	£400	Sep 92	Disappointing on replay but recording is another kettle of fish altogether.
Kenwood KX-7060S	£330	Dec 94	Convincing all-rounder except for heavy-handed noise reduction.
Nakamichi 1.5	£500	Jan 92	The Cassette Deck 1.5 has no rivals in its ability to recreate a realistic performance.
Nakamichi DR-1	£780	Jun 93	Not perfect but as close as you can get for the money.
Nakamichi DR-3	£300	Mar 93	Unfortunately keeping the price down keeps performance below Nak's norm.
Onkyo TA250	£350	Oct 94	Top transport but the electronics aren't on a par.
Pioneer CT-95	£1000	Mar 97	On chrome and ferric, the '95 is smooth and natural. Not so good with metals.
Pion'r CT-S550S Precision	£340	Feb 99	Three heads, ease of use and high quality make the Dolby S equipped Precision a strong contender
Pioneer CT-S740S	£430	Jun 96	Complex but superb in every important area.
Sony TC-K611S	£330	Feb 94	A little muffled on pre-recordeds but pulls out all the stops on recordings, esp. with metal tape.
Teac V-6030S	£550	Nov 97	Solid build and solid sounds. Top-notch at the price.
Teac V-8030S	£650	Aug 95	One of the highest quality Dolby S decks available.
Technics RS-AZ7	£300	Jul 96	Excellent bass but mid and treble lack dynamics. Auto-tunes poorly on metal.

Minidisc £ Year Verdict

Aiwa AM-F70	£250	Oct 99	Solid all-rounder that doubles as a superb dictaphone. Not No 1 as regards MD portables though.
Denon DMD-1000	£300	Nov 99	Sound quality up with the rest, wears its years well. Beginning to look expensive.
Goodmans GMD 920	£160	Nov 99	Very good value; built quality a touch plastic-y but stylish with it. Sonically very worthy.
JVC XM-228	£230	Sep 99	Well-built recorder. Good but not exceptional as Minidisc improves generally.
Kenwood DMF 9020	£500	Aug 99	An excellent tool for home recording; combines convenience, superb sound and a fair price.
Pioneer MJ-D508	£200	Nov 99	Sensible and well featured MD. Excellent transcriber of digital, shows up on analogue a little.
Sharp 722 portable	£230	Aug 99	Flash looks with solid build. First-class portable with domestic potential, but it isn't cheap.
Sony MDS-JB930	£300	Nov 99	UK Special Edition, so it sounds alright! Keyboard compatible with no difficulties in operation.
Technics SJ-MD100	£230	Nov 99	Solid, obviously meant for serious use. Excellent editing features. Sound up with the rest.

Recordable CD £ Year Verdict

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

DVD £ Year Verdict

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

Headphones £ Year Verdict

Ergo Model 2	£140	Apr 99	Wonderfully lucid and transparent panel-like sound.
Jecklin Float 2	£100	Apr 99	Clarity and openness are their traits, rather than slamming bass, but still good value.
Sennheiser, HD-580	£200	Nov 98	In the company of a smooth, warm system the 580s can shine.
Sennheiser HE60/V70	£1000	Feb 95	Electrostatic that set a class standard and can put a case for chucking out your power amp and 'speakers.
Vivanco FMH-6800	£80	May 98	Have a lot of potential but basic operating problems have to be cleaned up first.
Vivanco SR850	£50	Nov 95	Excitement that is rarely heard in headphones, but have a little trouble with heavy orchestral loads.



Sharp 722



Sony PBD-V30

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CD Transports £ Year Verdict

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



Sonic Frontiers 3

CD Convertors £ Year Verdict

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

Prices shown are those at the time of review



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World Classic

Cassette

Nakamichi (various)
Yamaha TC-800GL

See main Guide

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

CD Players

Meridian 207
Pioneer PD-91

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

Amplifiers

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

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



Leak TL12 Point One.

Loudspeakers

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

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

Vinyl

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

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

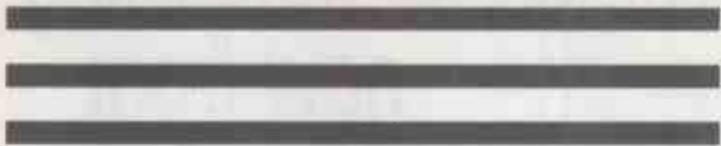


Thorens TD124.

Tuners

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

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



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Clearance Items

	Our Price	Original Retail Price
McCormack DAC	£ 395.00	£ 995.00
Cambridge Dac Magic	£ 75.00	£ 150.00
Audio Alchemy DDS 2	£ 395.00	£ 900.00
Exposure V Active x over (3 Way)	£ 295.00	£ 995.00
EAD 7000 Transport	£ 795.00	£ 2495.00
Magnum P200 pre amp	£ 795.00	£ 1895.00
Gale 401	£ 150.00	-
Micromega amp	£ 495.00	£ 1295.00
Micromega Tempo P	£ 495.00	£ 1250.00
Alchemist Kraken	£ 250.00	£ 580.00

New in This Month

POWER AMPLIFIERS		
Meracur Intrare	£ X-Dem	£ 995.00
Audio Research Classic 150 Monoblocks	£4995.00	£12,000.00
EAR 861 Power amp	£1595.00	£ 3000.00
Linn LK100	£ 450.00	£ 600.00
Audio Research VT60	£1295.00	£ 2645.00
Adcom GF565	£1295.00	£ 2200.00
Rogers E40A (new)	£1495.00	£ 1848.00
Naim Nap 250 (old style)	£ 795.00	£ 1755.00
Naim Hi Cap (new style)	£ 475.00	£ 740.00

PRE AMPLIFIERS		
Audio Research SP9	£ 795.00	£ 2000.00
Audio Research LS3	£1195.00	£ 1845.00
Naim Nac 72	£ 475.00	£ 767.00

SPEAKERS		
Audio Physic Tempo II	£Special	£ 2499.00
Naim Credo	£ 695.00	£ 1175.00
Mission 754 Freedom	£ 850.00	£ 1395.00
Proac Tablette 2000	£ 450.00	£ 600.00
REL Stentor Sub	£ 995.00	£ 1800.00
Sonus Faber Minima Amators Iron Wood Stands	£1295.00	£ 1980.00
Audio Physics Spark	£ X-Dem	£ 1749.00

AV COMPONENTS		
C.D PLAYERS & DACS		
Acurus ACD II	£ 595.00	£ 900.00
Pink Triangle Da Capo 24 bit Battery PSU	£1795.00	£ 3600.00
Pink Triangle Ordinal 1307	£ 595.00	£ 900.00
Teac P500	£ 395.00	£ 600.00
Musical Fidelity X-ACT	£ 95.00	£ 130.00
YBA Integre	£ On Dem	£ 1095.00

TURNTABLES/ ANALOGUE/ VARIOUS		
Musical Fidelity XLP	£ 99.00	£ 129.00
Musical Fidelity X-Tone	£ 99.00	£ 129.00
Pink Triangle Anniversary battery PSU	£1495.00	£ 2500.00

Power Amplifiers

Chord SPM 600	£ 1095.00	£ 1680.00
Linn Kloufs	£ 1495.00	£ 2000.00
Musical Fidelity A3 Integrated	£ X-Dem	£ 850.00
Restek Integrated	£ 795.00	£ 1100.00
Quad 77 Integrated	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Acouphase E200 Integrated	£ 795.00	£ 1695.00
Jadis JA30 Monoblocks (latest)	£ 3795.00	£ 5160.00
Sinus D200 (Silver)	£ dem	£ 2350.00
Cary 572 SE Monoblocks	£ dem	£ 2350.00
Electrocompanie AW120 DM8	£ 1695.00	£ 2695.00
Jeff Roland Model 5	£ 2750.00	£ 4500.00
Audio Note Neiro (as new)	£ 9995.00	£16,500.00
Graff 50/50	£ 1650.00	£ 2150.00
Graff GM 200	£ 4950.00	£ 7900.00
Plinius SA 100	£ 2850.00	£ 3450.00
Cello Performance 2 Monoblocks (4 chassis)	£ 9995.00	£20,000.00
AVI S2000 MA Stereo	£ 495.00	£ 850.00
Krell KAS 2 Monoblock	£ 9995.00	£18,000.00
Jadis JA500	£ 7995.00	£21,000.00
Boulder 102 AE	£ 2650.00	£ 3400.00
Jadis JA 80 Monoblocks	£ 4995.00	£10,000.00
Audion Golden Knights	£ 1995.00	£ 4000.00
Jadis Defy 7 mk III	£ 3250.00	£ 4790.00
Micromega Tempo 2 Integrated	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Krell FPB 600	£ 8995.00	£12,900.00
Krell KSA 250	£ 2750.00	£ 6700.00
FM Acoustics 611X Resolution Power	£14,995.00	£22,000.00
Lamm M1 Monoblocks (100W)	£ P.O.A.	£ P.O.A.
Krell 50S	£ 1995.00	£ 3690.00
Exposure XII psu	£ 495.00	-
Musical Fidelity F19	£ 2250.00	£ 4000.00
Audio Research D130	£ 1395.00	£ 1850.00
Audion Silver Knights	£ 1295.00	£ 3000.00
Musical Fidelity XAS 100 (X-dem)	£ 699.00	£ 799.00
Sugden Stentfort SF60 Integrated	£ 350.00	£ 550.00
Quad 405	£ 225.00	-
Counterpoint SA12	£ 795.00	£ 1400.00
YBA 3a pre/ power	£ 1295.00	£ 2400.00
VTL 125	£ 1795.00	£ 3500.00

Exposure Super VIII	£ 550.00	£ 800.00
Exposure VIII	£ 450.00	£ 700.00
Copland CSA 28 Phono, remote Integrated	£ 1250.00	£ 1349.00

Pre Amplifiers

Chord CPA2200 pre-amp	£ 1595.00	£ 2298.00
Audio Research LS5 mk II	£ 2250.00	£ 5700.00
Audio Research LS9	£ 1995.00	£ 2500.00
Graff GM 13.5	£ 1850.00	£ 3750.00
Cello Audio Suite + master supply	£10,995.00	£28,000.00
Cello Audio Palette + master supply	£ 9995.00	£25,000.00
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Meridian 541 Dolby Surround	£ 650.00	£ 1085.00
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Musical Fidelity F25	£ 795.00	£ 1500.00
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Croft Super Micro A mk 3	£ 495.00	£ 1000.00
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Musical Fidelity X-P 100	£ 699.00	£ 799.00
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Wilson Grand Slam mk II	£35,000.00	£80,000.00
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Mission 753 Rosewood + base	£ 495.00	£ 900.00
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Acoustic Energy AE1 + Stands Piano Black	£ 795.00	£ 1600.00
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Cello Stradivari Grand Master (Rosewood and Piano Black)	£22,000.00	£60,000.00
Audio Static DC1+ (Audi Silver)	£ 2750.00	£ 4250.00
ATC SCM 50A Rosewood	£ 2850.00	£ 5000.00
Wilson Audio MAX	£24,995.00	£33,000.00
Apogee Stage	£ 995.00	£ 3000.00
Wilson System V.1 (Black)	£10,500.00	£18,000.00
Rogers LS3/ 5A Black (NEW)	£ 575.00	£ 798.00
Rogers AB1 Sub (NEW)	£ 395.00	£ 598.00
Rogers LS55 (New)	£ 330.00	£ 430.00
Alon Adriana (New)	£ Special	£10,000.00
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A.T.C. SCM 1000 SL Active Speaker	£ 4500.00	£ 7000.00
Jamo SW3105 active sub	£ 495.00	£ 800.00
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Audio Physics LIBRA	£ X-DEM	£ 5000.00

CD Players & DACS

Oracle CD2000 Transport	£ P.O.A.	£ 7299.00
Theta DATA 2/ Progen III	£ 3500.00	£ 6500.00
Musical Fidelity A3 CD	£ X-Dem	£ 850.00
Micromega Duo 3.1	£ 995.00	£ 2000.00
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Forsell Air Force One	£11,995.00	£25,000.00
Pink Triangle PT Too Ref Bearing, platter, clamp	£ 495.00	£ 950.00
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Lyra Parnassus	£ 995.00	£ 2000.00
Linn LP12/ LVIII Lingo Cirkus K9	£ 1095.00	£ 2000.00
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MERIDIAN 502 PRE AMP	XD	£1385	£1159
MERIDIAN 556 POWER AMP	XD	£950	£759
MERIDIAN 505 MONOBLOCK (EACH)	XD	£845	£679
MERIDIAN DSP5000 LOUDSPEAKERS (BLACK)	XD	£3885	£2999
MERIDIAN 200 CD TRANSPORT	SH	£800	£299
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MICROMEGA MINUM AMP	XD	£350	£229
MICROMEGA SOLO	SH	£2500	£1299
MONARCHY AUDIO M18 DAC	XD	£595	£369
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ROTEL RCD951 CD PLAYER	XD	£300	£249
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SONIC FRONTIERS LINE 3 PRE	XD	£5000	£3499
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Ariston RD40 - SME 3009 MK 2i	£NA	£399
Dunlop System Deck 3, Basic LVX - K5	£NA	£379
Dynavector DV505 (Arm)	£NA	£558
Grace G707 Mk 2 Tone Arm	£NA	£139
Linn LP12 + Basic Plus (Sounds Great)	£1600	£399
Linn LP12 (Rosewood, Cut for Linn Arm)	£NA	£398
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Luxman PD 555 T/Table (Fully Serviced)	£NA	£1599
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Oracle Delphi II/Linn Ittak II	£NA	£1299
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Thorens TD316 Mk2 T/Table (Black)	£NA	£169
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Arcam Delta Black Box 3 DAC	£449	£99
Audio Alchemy ACD2 CD Player	£499	£389
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Audio Alchemy Drive 3	£649	£449
Audio Alchemy Power Station 2	£NA	£109
Audio Alchemy V1 + PSU	£NA	£298
Audio Alchemy V3 DAC + PSU	£900	£549
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Audio Note DAC 1 (Valve Pack)	£NA	£529
Audio Synthesis DAX (DAC)	£NA	£548
Audio Synthesis DAX - 2 (DAC)	£NA	£1298
Cambridge Audio CD 2 CD Player	£NA	£149
Cambridge Audio DAC Magic 1 DAC	£NA	£95
Cambridge Audio DAC Magic 2 DAC	£NA	£108
Conrad Johnson DF2 (CD Player)	£2000	£1398
DPA Bigger Bit 2 DAC 7	£800	£429
DPA Little Bit 3 DAC	£NA	£298
DPA PDM1 DAC	£NA	£179
Kenwood DP9010 CD Transport	£500	£269
Krell MD-10 (Transport)	£NA	£1998
LFD Minstral CD Player	£650	£399
Linn Mimick CD Player	£880	£599
Marantz CD 12 (Trans + DAC)	£NA	£1398
Marantz CD 17 KI SIG (CD Player)	£NA	£848
Marantz CD 94 CD Player	£NA	£498
Marantz DR95 CD Transport, Modified	£1400	£699
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DAC (Ex-Demo)	£NA	£428
Meridian 200 Transport	£999	£399
Meridian 203 DAC	£NA	£258
Meridian 206 CD Player	£999	£449
Meridian 263 DAC	£650	£299
Meridian 518 DAC	£NA	£698

Meridian 563 DAC	£NA	£498
Meridian 563 DAC 18 Bit	£899	£449
Meridian 566 20 Bit DAC	£980	£599
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Micromega DAC 2	£NA	£499
Micromega Drive 3 Transport	£NA	£529
Micromega Stage 2 CD Player	£700	£399
Micromega Stage 5 CD Player (Ex-dem)	£750	£549
Monarchy DIP (De-gitterer)	£NA	£198
Musical Fidelity X - DAC New hddc	£300	£199
Naim CD 3.5	£NA	£898
NVA Emotive Statement CD Player	£NA	£900
Pink Triangle Ordinal DAC	£800	£399
Pioneer PDS 505 Precision CD Player	£549	£299
Primare D320 CD Player	£NA	£438
Procead DAP (DAC)	£NA	£1198
Procead PD2 / PT2 (DAC + Trans)	£NA	£2498
PS Audio Lambda CD Drive (Trans)	£NA	£1098
PS Audio Ultralink (DAC)	£NA	£998
QED Digit Reference DAC (Chrome)	£450	£199
Quad 66 CD Player	£NA	£458
Radford WS2 CD Player	£NA	£698
Radford WS1 CD Player	£NA	£489
Revox B225 CD Player	£1100	£459
Sugden SDT-1 CD Player	£NA	£798
Teac TI (Trans)	£NA	£389
Teac VRDS 10 CD Player	£770	£459
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Accuphase 200 Pre Amp	£NA	£698
Accuphase 266 Power Amp	£NA	£858
Aragon 24k Pre Amp	£1600	£799
Audiolab 8000a (Grey Top)	£NA	£278
Audiolab 8000a Power Amp	£NA	£378
Audiolab 8000x (Amp)	£NA	£348
Audio Research BL1 - SE to Bal (Ex-dem)	£799	£549
AVI 2000 MP Pre Amp	£1100	£679
Chord 1400B Mono's (Inc Ampstand + Trager)	£11730	£7448
Chord CPA 2800 Pre Amp	£NA	£1398
Chord SPM 1200 B Power Amp (Mint)	£3790	£2799
Counterpoint Solid One Power Amp	£NA	£690
Cyrus AV Master Dolby Prologic Processor	£699	£299
Cyrus 1 Int Amp	£275	£159
Cyrus 2 Int Amp	£350	£179
Cyrus Power Amp	£499	£319
Cyrus Pre-Amp	£650	£399
Cyrus PSX-R Power Supply Unit	£329	£219
Cyrus Straight Line Int Amp	£399	£249
Denon AVP 1A Processor	£2500	£1499
DNM Pre 2-PA1 Pre-Power	£2800	£1099
DPA Renaissance Int Amp (Ex-demo)	£599	£399
Electrocompaniet Two Channel Power Amp	£NA	£398
Fisher 440 Solid State Reciever (1960's Classic)	£159	
Galactron MK 2121	£NA	£848
Haffer DH101 Pre Amp	£NA	£149
Harmon Kardon AVP1A Processor	£2000	£459
Harmon Kardon AVP1A Pre	£NA	£248
Harmon Kardon Citation 17 Pre Amp	£NA	£199
Harmon Kardon PA 2200 Power Amp x3	£NA	£198
Krell KAV 250a Power Amp	£3498	£2649
Krell KSA 150 MKII Power Amp	£NA	£POA
Krell KSL (Pre)	£NA	£1298
LFD Line Stage LS1 Pre Amp	£NA	£498
Linn Wakonda Pre Amp	£1200	£579

Magnum MP250-MF125 Pre Power	£750	£349
Mark Levinson 23.5 Power Amp	£NA	£3698
Mark Levinson 26 Pre + 25mc + 266 Phono PSU	£NA	£3898
Meridian 101 Pre + 105 Mono Blocks	£NA	£348
Meridian 201 Pre-Amp	£760	£329
Meridian 502 Pre (Inc Phono Stage)	£1385	£999
Michell Argo + Hera Pre Amp	£NA	£598
Micromega Tempo 2 Amp	£900	£499
Muse Model 300 Mono's (150 WPC - Bal Solid State Superb)	£4400	£2199
Musical Fidelity 3a Pre Amp	£379	£229
Musical Fidelity E100 Int Amp	£700	£399
Musical Fidelity F19 Power Amp (Mint)	£4000	£2399
Musical Fidelity MVX Pre + PSU	£2200	£839
NAD 208 THX Power Amp - (Ex-dem)	£1100	£799
Naim 32 Pre Amp	£NA	£199
Naim 32.5 Pre Amp	£NA	£229
Naim Flatcap PSU	£NA	£298
Naim NAC 72 Pre Amp	£750	£489
Naim NAC 92 Pre Amp	£499	£299
Naim NAP 140 Power Amp	£NA	£398
Nakamichi IA3 Int Amp	£300	£129
NVA A60 Power Amp As New	£495	£329
NVA A80 Mono Blocks New (Pair)	£1460	£959
NVA TSS Second State Stereo Power	£3700	£1799
Parasound 2200 Power Amp	£NA	£1248
Pass Labs Aleph 3 Power Amp vgc.	£2200	£1499
Quad 33 Pre Amps	from	£69
Quad 34 Pre Amps	from	£159
Quad 66 Pre Amp	£NA	£498
Quad 77 Int Amp	£NA	£348
Quad 306 Power Amp	£NA	£229
Revox B2505 (Amp)	£NA	£798
Rotel RX 602 Heavy Weight Receiver	£NA	£139
Sonographe SC1 Pre Amp (By Conrad Johnson)	£399	
Stemfoot SF 60 Int Amp	£NA	£368
Tesserac Monitor Pre Amp	£1500	£798
Thorens TTA 2000 Power Amp (Ex-dem)	£599	£499
Trigon Vanguard 1 Phono - Pre Amp	£300	£228
Trio Lo7c II Pre Amp	£NA	£198
Yamaha DSPE492 Av Processor	£250	£169

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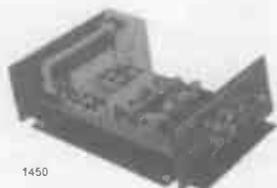
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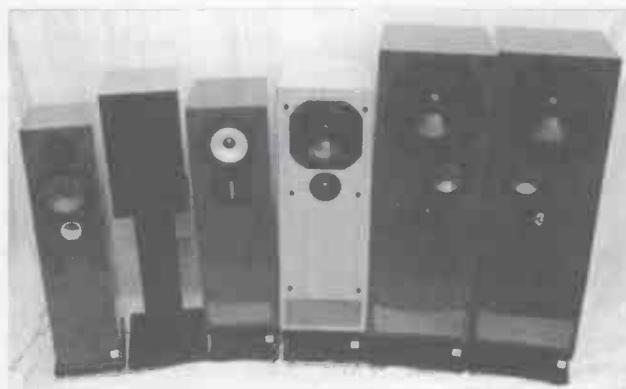
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Audio Note ANCD2 Valve CD Player	1000	499	Albarray 408 Mono Block Amplifiers	N/A	399
Audio Synthesis DAX2 HDCD (Balanced)	3000	1499	Beard M1000 125w - 6550 triode	6500	2250
audiolab 8000 DAC Improved 20 bit	1000	399	Bartolomeo Transparenza ST140 Stereo Power amplifier	1499	699
Deva 600-CD player	699	349	Graff 50/50 Push Pull Power amplifier (New & boxed)	2100	1795
Deva DAC	495	199	Pass Aleph 4 100W Class A Power amplifier	5500	3695
DPA Enlightenment Drive/Transport (New style)	995	695	Roksan Caspian Integrated (New & boxed)	795	595
DPA SX64 DAC 24/96	800	599	Roksan Caspian Poweramps (New & boxed)	599	449
Meridian 506 18 Bit 3 Beam Laser	995	499	Quad 33/303 Amplifiers (New caps fitted)	N/A	250
Meridian 203 DAC	499	119	Quad 606 Power Amplifier	N/A	299
Micromega Stage3	999	495	Unison Research Pentode 35 Valve Integrated (4 x EL34)	1500	995
Naim Audio CD3.5 (5 months old)	1098	799	Unison Research Simply 845 Valve Integrated	3095	1999
Monrio Privege 20 Bit CD Player	950	750			
Monrio Bit Match Transport	950	650	Loudspeakers		
Monrio 18B2 DAC	950	599	Audio Note AN-E/L Rosewood Loudspeakers	1680	950
Nakamichi DV10 DVD DTS/5.1	799	599	Audio Note AN-J/SP Light Oak Loudspeakers	1230	750
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Quad 77 CD Player	900	499	Celestion SL600 Loudspeakers	675	275
Rega Planet CD Player	450	325	Impulse Maya Loudspeakers	695	399
Roksan Atessa DP2 MKII	1499	699	Impulse Lali Cherry	1895	999
Rotel RCD965BX CD Player	350	149	KEF Reference 100 C Centre Speaker	350	175
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Aphellon Audio 401 Plinths (New & various finishes)	250	169	Musical Fidelity MC5 Loudspeakers / stands	899	249
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WHAT HI-FI: Verdict *****

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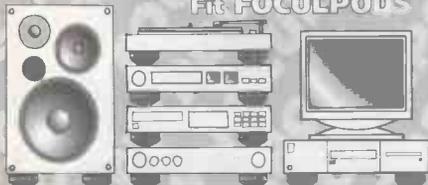
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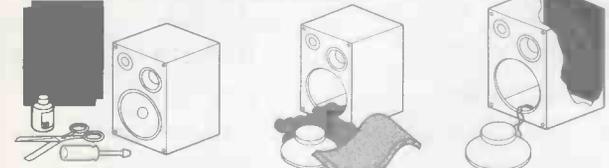
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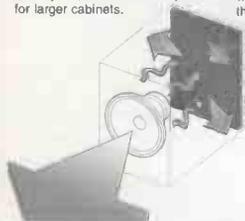
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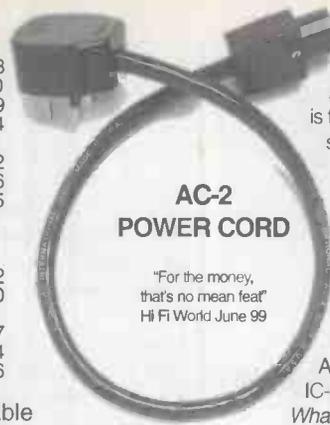


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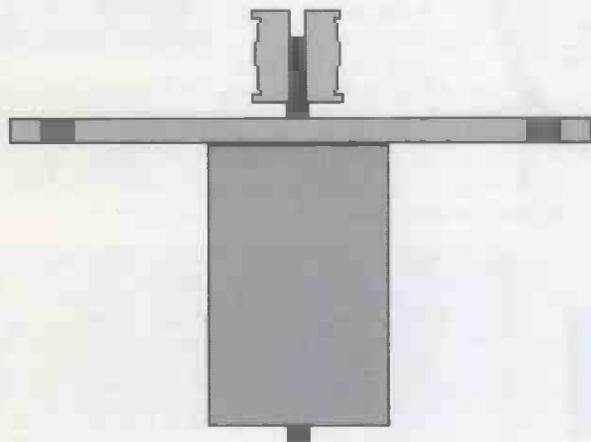
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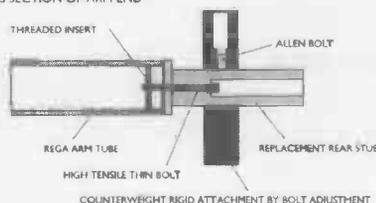
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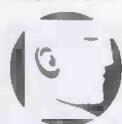
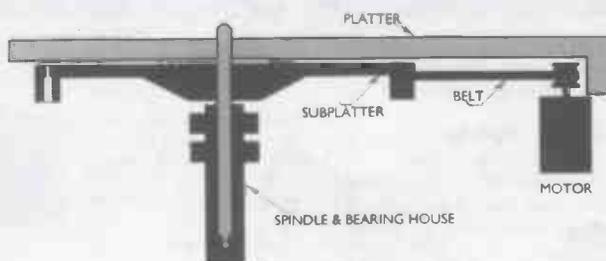
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loudspeakers

ELTAX LIBERTY 1+

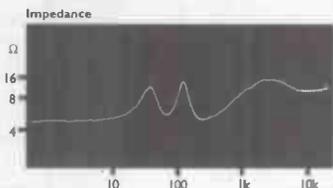
Well engineered small loudspeakers are commonly very accurate in terms of frequency response. The Liberty 1+ is up with the best here, deviating by no more than 1dB or so across most of the audio band. Notable features are the complete absence of a crossover suckout around 3kHz and a super flat tweeter response. The latter means the tweeter lacks resonances and will sound clean, character free and smooth too. Lack of a crossover suckout ensures good detailing.

Flat frequency response can, however, be a little academic. Some slight plateau bass lift adds a little warmth and body. Lacking this the Liberty 1+ is probably best placed close to a rear wall.

The port is well damped, displaying a

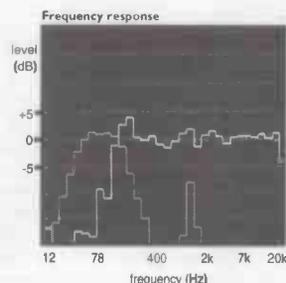
broad output that extends bass output down to a low 30Hz (-2dB), an impressive figure for a small loudspeaker. Since the port works right up to 125Hz it delivers nearly the entire bass spectrum, unusual and interesting. Bass quality should be consistent and well controlled.

Sensitivity was relatively high for a small cabinet, at 87dB from a nominal watt of input power. Since impedance measured 7.5Ω overall, the nominal watt is a true watt, so the Liberty 1+ is also



efficient and easy for an amplifier to drive. Having a smooth impedance curve, it is low on reactance and energy storage as a load. Since electrical impedance also reflects mechanical behaviour this means the drive units are well designed too.

The Liberty 1+ measured very well in every area. They were quite outstanding in fact. NK



KEF CRESTA

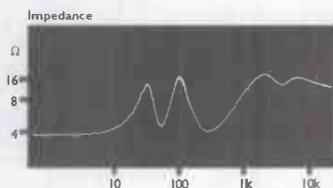
Kef have given the Cresta an impressively smooth response, with a gentle roll off above 12kHz and a slight bass lift to give the sound some weight. It will sound natural and detailed, but not bright. The port peaks at 50Hz and takes output down to 30Hz, so the Cresta has plenty of bandwidth.

The impedance curve is a little odd, showing KEF have matched a sensitive tweeter to an insensitive bass driver. The tweeter has a high impedance of 9Ω and takes little current; the bass unit measures 4Ω (DCR) and draws more current, giving an unusual-looking characteristic. Low

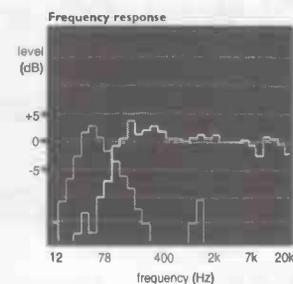
rates of change indicate limited reactance and energy storage, so the Cresta will not upset feedback networks unduly. Overall impedance measured out at 5Ω.

Sensitivity was a reasonable 86dB sound pressure level from a nominal watt (2.8V).

KEF usually resort to lowering impedance to improve sensitivity. Although the



'speaker is a more difficult load, it utilises the potential of amplifiers better. The Cresta needs a good amplifier all the same, but it should sound smooth, detailed and refined. NK



MISSION 780

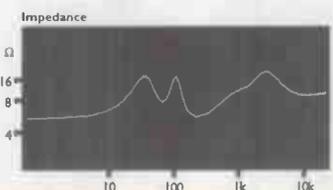
Mission prefer to place the tweeter underneath the woofer on their small speakers, so they fire slightly upward. This helped give the 780 a reasonably flat and cohesive response on-axis and above it. Drive unit phase matching was close, eliminating the softness that ensues from crossover suckout.

Our response analysis in fact shows the reverse: there's a little treble lift to brighten the sound. The 780 has strong treble and may sound a little bright, but precise too I suspect.

Similarly, there's some bass lift to enhance the impression of bass. The

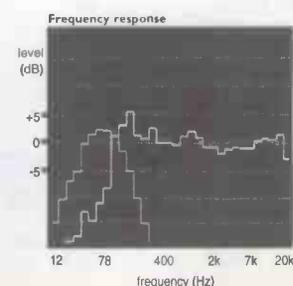
780s peak at 160Hz, forward output dropping rapidly below 100Hz. The rear firing port takes over below this, extending output down to 40Hz. The traces show it's output is reasonably well damped, so bass will sound firm.

The 780s are an easy load, measuring 8Ω overall, mainly resistive. Sensitivity



was low, measuring 84.5dB, so around 60W will be needed to get good volume.

Neatly designed, the 780s have some added bass and treble to liven things up. They may boom close to a wall. NK



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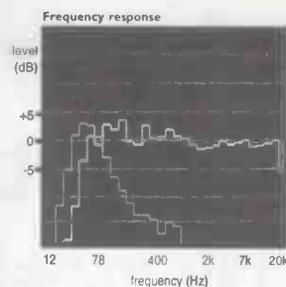
ALESIS M1 ACTIVE

The Alesis is more an active monitor than a multimedia loudspeaker, with professional connectors and limited gain. Our -20dB test signal could induce no more than 88dB SPL at full gain, so the M1s will work fine direct from CD and high output sources, but not otherwise unless a preamp with gain is used.

Frequency response was astutely tailored to be nicely flat across most of the audio band, but with some plateau lift at

lower frequencies to add a little warmth and body. Forward output reached down to 50Hz, the ports extending this down to a useful 30Hz. The M1s should sound smooth and detailed yet full bodied as a result. They have carbon fibre cones too, which usually give a clean sound free from the quack of plastic.

The Alesis M1 Actives are accurate professional monitor loudspeakers that measure very well in all areas. NK



GENELEC H206

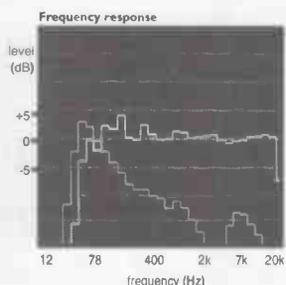
The small HT206 delivers an impressively flat frequency response. The slit ports add a little to low frequency extension, enough to take the bottom end down to 40Hz. Output from the bass cone reaches down to 50Hz within limits of a few dB, so the H206 goes lower than most passive loudspeakers of the same size.

The trouble with squeezing deep bass from small cones is that when fed any power, they will bottom out, since progressively greater volumes of air must be moved. Genelec roll off output hard below 40Hz to control this; there's overload protection, and they fit a switchable

bass roll-off filter with four selectable rates. There's also a bass shelf filter with three depths, to remove boom when the cabinet is placed on a desk or against a wall. There's also a treble filter, to soften out the sound. This is likely to be necessary, since perfectly flat treble usually adds up to brightness, especially close to.

Sensitivity was more than enough for direct working off a CD player, although the H206 has no volume control as such. Delivering a 95dB SPL (very loud) at one metre from 200mV input (-20dB below full output of CD) it will even go loud hooked up to older sources like cassette

decks, therefore a passive pre-amp is desirable. The H206 measured very well in all areas, giving deeper bass than passive loudspeakers of a comparable size. NK



JAMO CS5

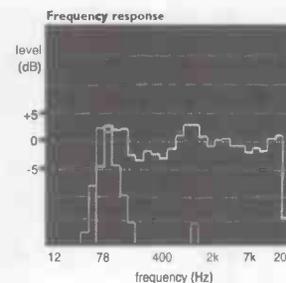
The CS5 has a bumpy response curve by modern standards, none too impressive in a passive speaker nowadays, let alone an active one where electronic equalisation is possible. The speaker will probably have coloration around vocals caused by the midband peak, and some bass boom due to a bass peak. It should project voices quite well however. The port strangely overlapped forward output, being tuned high to 80Hz, below which output plummets. Forward output from the bass unit

reaches down to 100Hz. None of this is too impressive. The Jamo cannot reproduce deep bass.

Sensitivity was very high, a -20dB CD test signal (pink noise) producing a whopping 98dB SPL at full volume from the useful front mounted volume control. The CS5s will work with any source, without a preamp.

The CS5s measured disappointingly. Small speakers are commonly very accurate; and small active ones more so, but

not in this case. NK



PHILIPS DSS330

The DS330s measured impressively well for a £60 loudspeaker system, especially since this includes an on-board amplifier, digital-to-analogue convertor to handle USB digital audio and software controls to adjust bass, treble and volume.

Frequency response was flat and extended, stretching from a low 50Hz (-6dB) up to 20kHz within 3dB limits. There's a peak at 2.5kHz and one at 16kHz, which will add a little sharpness and may be indicative of coloration (short wavelength box reflections in the satellites). There were no significant distance-related phase problems between sub-

woofer and satellites.

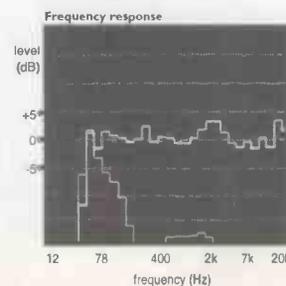
Subjectively, bass was strangely weak for a system measuring flat to 50Hz, with analogue connection sounding better than USB, contrary to Philips handbook, unless music was played as .wav files from Easy CD Creator. Listening tests were via the analogue connection.

USB connection requires Windows 98 (new version) on a PC (Macs are not supported). From USB connection the DSS330s produced 80dB SPL at 1metre.

The software tone controls produced very little measureable change; bass providing honky sounding lift at 63Hz only.

The subwoofer gain provided a somewhat smoother, broader lift of +5dB.

The DSS330 measured well and is a clever concept, if a little complex. Some refinement would be useful. NK



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Trichord Pulsar DAC. Good condition. (£1395) £550

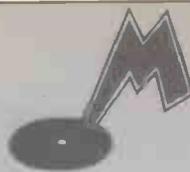
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VIDEOLOGIC SIROCCO PRO

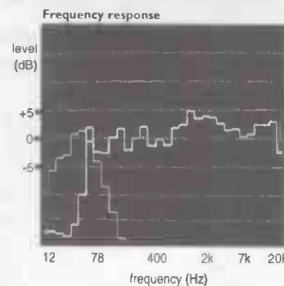
Tested with its tone controls set flat, the Sirocco Pro has a fairly pronounced midrange peak. Increasing subwoofer output helped flatten the response a little, giving a respectable overall result from the High Definition Aerogel (HDA) Audax drivers. They have very little coloration, so the Pro is likely to sound bright and clear. The subwoofer must be a few feet away from the satellite to get the response shown. It must also be in the same vertical plane. Faster crossover rates would reduce these phase problems.

Forward output from the subwoofer cone reaches down to 63Hz, below which the port takes over, reaching down to 20Hz. With a volume control on the subwoofer channel, there's plenty of potential here for really big, deep bass.

Sensitivity was high enough for just about any source. The PRO system produced 97dB from 200mV input (rms, pink noise), so it will go loud even from an older low output source.

With an on-board DAC that will accept digital connection from a sound-

card's SP/DIF output, subwoofer level and 'Attitude' control (tonal tilt) the Sirocco Pro system has a good basic performance and plenty of room for adjustment. NK



VIDEOLOGIC SIROCCO SPIRIT

A smooth hump across the midband will give vocals from the Sirocco Spirit a little emphasis and may well indicate coloration. The paper cone Audax units are not exactly super quality, and the phase plate across the tweeter pulls down output quite strongly above 8kHz. It will soften treble, though not too much.

In spite of the response undulations mentioned above the Sirocco still manages to stay within quite tight limits across the audio band. The 'Attitude' control introduced large amounts of response tilt

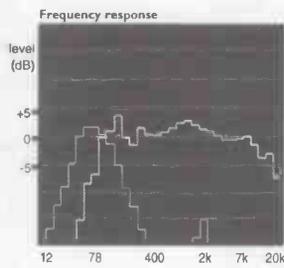
- none too subtle under test.

The small bass driver reached down to 100Hz and the port extended this down to 50Hz, quite a good performance for such a small cabinet.

Sensitivity was a little less than others of the group. A maximum of 91dB sound pressure level (SPL) was generated from the high sensitivity PC input (sound card) at full volume. The CD input produced a modest 78dB. Since this was from a -20dB test signal and most music CDs hover around -10dB, peaking at 0dB, the Sirocco has been tailored to give about as

much volume as is wise, and it will go loud. The on-board volume control means it can work direct from any source.

The Sirocco gives a balanced performance from budget components in a small cabinet. NK



amplifier & mp3

ROKSAN SYSTEM

The weighty Roksan power amp has no fewer than five channels, each producing 136W into a standard 8Ω load. That amounts to 680W in total, a massive figure that increases to 1125W into a low 4Ω load. Frequency response stretches from 5Hz to 75kHz.

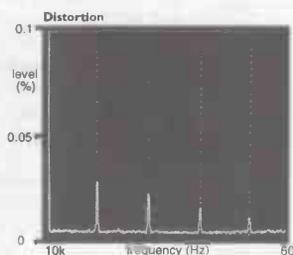
The preamp is massively complex, but is built to work from a multi-channel source like a DVD player. There's no gain for stereo sources like tuners; sensitivity was low at 1V.

Distortion through the system was low, although there was some rise at high frequencies, too low to produce audible coarseness.

The system measured well but will not necessarily interface with standard stereo items easily. NK

Power 136W
CD/tuner/aux.
Frequency response 7Hz-75kHz
Separation 95dB

Noise -98dB
Distortion 0.018%
Sensitivity 1 V
dc offset 3/2mV

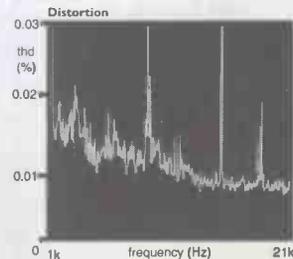
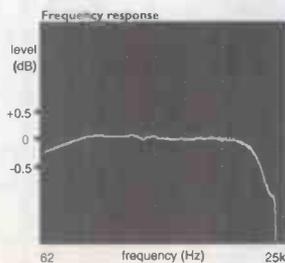


TERRATEC mp3PO COMPACT DISC/mp3

The mp3PO didn't measure well by today's audio CD standards and its problems will compromise sound quality. Frequency response was restricted and there was around four times more distortion than normal. Unimpressive. NK

Frequency response 30Hz-17kHz
Separation left right
1kHz 87 88
20kHz 64 65

Distortion left right Noise -90dB
-6dB 0.006 0.006 with emphasis -90dB
-30dB 0.06 0.06
-60dB 2.1 2.2
-90 60 62 Dynamic range 90dB
Output 0.88V



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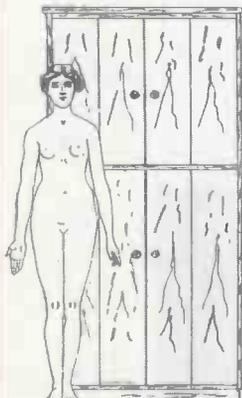
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MORE SYNERGY

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

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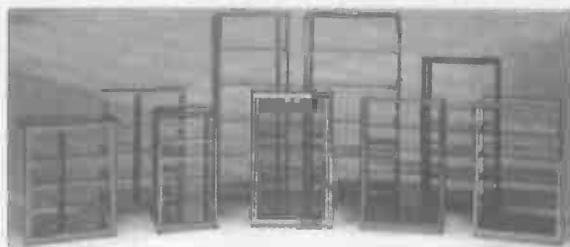
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BEARD P100 valve amp Mk I, Beard P100 MK II amp both £800 each. All re-valved plus Beard 506 pre-amp, mint, new £950. Tel: 01562 827 710 N-T-W please, day/night reluctant sale. (May/I)

LINN KABER Aktiv speakers (special finish) £850. Linn Aktiv cards £250. Linn LK100 power amp £300. Linn K60 tri-wire cable £90. All items boxed as new condition. Tel: 01482 618 116 (May/I)

COPLAND CT301 MK II VALVE pre-amp Copland CT505 valve power amp with new set of power valves. One owner both boxed as new £1800. Tel: 01793 512 885 (May)

HAFLEDER DH200 power amp DH101 pre amp 100 watts per channel £200. Thorens TD124 Series II SME 3009 Series II £150. Tel: 01529 304 343 (May)

QUAD 606 power amplifier and 34 control unit, excellent condition £495. B&W CM2 Matrix speakers £350. Tel: 01274 580 089 (Yorkshire) (May)

DYNAUDIO AUDIENCE 50 Atacama SE 20 stands £425. Musical Fidelity MF270 power amp £400. Michel Argo HR preamp separate PSU £450. Passion Passive preamp £250. Tel: Brian 01747 851 166 (May/I)

NAD 1300 pre Cambridge A100 power combi, boxed, £170. Akai AM73 integrated, onboard DAC £80. Tannoy MI5's £40. Sony tuner £30. Rotel RCD965BX £80. Tel: 01442 823 880 after 7pm (West Herts) (May/I)

TANNOY MERCURY M2 speakers cherry £70. Sherwood CD 5010R CD player £80. JPW Gold monitor speakers, black £30. Audioquest Quartz x3 interconnect 0.5 metre £50. All boxed, as new, c/w instructions. Tel: 0121 243 6886 (May/I)

TANNOY REDS 12inch £390. Revox B77 15 ips varispeed £425. Studer A725 CD broadcast model £275. Ferograph Series 7 £100. Thorens TD124 SME. £190. Lowther Acoustas, PM6's £190. PX4 £100. Tel: 0191 281 0260 (May/I)

AUDIONOTE OTO phono SE, perfect, boxed, 1 year old, bereavement sale £1100. Pair Rogers speakers, perfect, boxed £350. Tel: 01225 833 692 (May/I)

SHEARNE PHASE 2 Reference, MM board, the best integrated below £1500, new £575. Teac VRDS9 CD, built like a battleship £295, rare Dall 350 Red Reference floor standers, half price £295. Tel: 0117 924 6297 (May/I)

RARE LUXMAN A384 hybrid integrated with remote £325. Linn Basic TT, Akito Arm, K9 £225, Musical Fidelity E500 tuner with remote £225. 7M Cord Myth £60. van den Hul Thunderline £80. Tel: 0117 924 6297 (May/I)

MERIDIAN 501 pre amp. Excellent sound. Perfect condition. Boxed. Instruction manual. Large variety of inputs (upgrading) £450 ono. Tel: 01633 254 673 (May/I)

NOTTINGHAM ANALOGUE interspace turntable including Mission 774 arm. Nottingham Analogue Tracer, one cartridge, no packaging £350. Tel: 0121 344 3598 Birmingham (May/I)

SONY ESPIRIT TAE900 pre amp £650. PS Audio 4.5 pre amp with massive PSU £350. Pioneer 9500 Mk 2 tuner (classic) £100. Nakamichi DR2 £235. Teac 2-6000 cassette awesome (£1600) £375. Tel: 0771 297 6103 (May/I)

'STANDS UNIQUE' high AV support. Mahogany legs, adjustable 6mm glass shelves, spikes, as new. Tel: Nick (home) 01908 696 869, (work) 01908 356 205 Milton Keynes (May/I)

QUAD ESL 63 speakers, brown, excellent, boxed condition £1200. Tel: 0115 933 3597 (Nottingham) (May/I)

ROKSAN ROK-1 speakers £300 ono. Orelle SA-100 amplifier £300 ono. Yamaha DSP A590 surround amp £175 ono. Celestion Ditton 15XR speakers, offers. Denon DRM 550 tape recorder, offers. Tel: 01384 359 273 after 6pm (May/I)

KRELL CD DSP Mk II £1400 (£5800 new). Lumley LVI pre amp £300 (£1000 new). Lumley ST40 power amp (chrome) £400 (£1325 new). Tel: 01939 261 644 evenings or 07971 179 604 mobile (May/I)

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

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

NAIM CDI player £950. 72/90 pre/power £625. NAT03 tuner £360. All boxed, manuals, interconnects. Also Meridian 501 pre amp plus MSR. Boxed, as new £410. Tel: 01425 655 940 (May/I)

PIONEER RT20-22 high speed tape recorder half track, variable bias, equalisation, 10" reels semi pro, excellent £380. Revox G36 low speed half track stereo valve recorder 10" reels £230. Tel: 01782 870 804 (May/I)

REVOX G36 stereo valve tape recorder £300. Rogers Cadet III stereo valve amplifier £35. NAD 7125 tuner amp £60. Technics SLPG370A CD player £50. 2 leak valve pre amps. Tel: 01708 525 175 (May/I)

DYNACO STEREO 70 valve amplifier. Fully renovated. New valves £295 ono. Custom built 20bit DAC. Superb sound £195 ono. Tel: 01296 623 573 (May/I)

PRO-AC RESPONSE 3 plus 3.5 Burroak pairs. Marantz quadrophonic demodulator plus sqdecoder. Isoberik stands. All above boxed, superb. Ron Smith aerials: Galaxie 23 (FM) plus arrow 30 (UHF band A) infilled, newish. Tel: Mike 01843 585 458 (May/I)

NAIM NAP180 power amp mint condition, boxed, instructions £650. Also Din to 2 phono interconnect £30. Tel: 01273 556 458 or 07971 131 324 (May/I)

LEAK TROUGHLINE tuner, fully rebuilt by GT Audio, early case £400 ono. Arcam Delta 170 CD transport, with output stage and power supplies modified by Audio Synthesis. Co-axial output only. £225 ono. Tel: 01962 851 802 (May/I)

AUDIO RESEARCH PH3 phonostage. 15 months old. World class. £750 (£1500). Ear 834P phonostage. New February. Fitted with Mullards, silver wiring. £325 (£590). Dynavector DV20 cartridge. Barely used. £180. Tel: 0181 325 2585 (May/I)

MERIDIAN 551 integrated amplifier £450. 565 surround sound processor DTS 7.1 £1600. 518 digital processor, eight months old £600. All boxed and mint. Tel: 01483 535 593 or 0468 318 424, Email: gemunu-peries@hotmail.com (May/I)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS transcend transport (Sony) £700. Desire 150w power amplifier (upgraded) £1000. Offers considered. Both items mint condition. Tel: 01603 593 185 days, 01603 250 510 evenings. (May/I)

NAIM 62/140 pre/power vgc £500 ono. Falcon C800 loudspeaker kit electrics alone cost £700. They are built and running, amazing performance £400 ono. Marantz CD 85 £200 ono. Tel: 01943 607 336 (May/I)

REL Q50 sub bass unit, good condition £190. KEF Q15's in black, good condition, £95. Tel: 0116 271 5439 (May/I)



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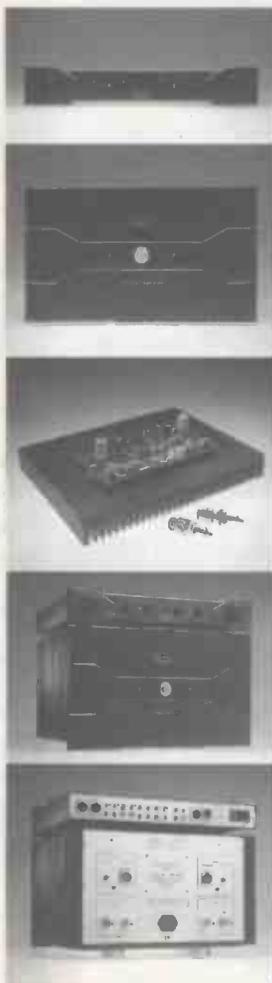
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LINN IKEMI CD player £1450. Linn Keltik loudspeakers £2700 ono. Linn Kairn pro pre-amp c/w slimline power supply £850. All excellent condition. Linn K400 speaker cable (biwire) new - offers. Tel: Andrew 01782 595 073 (7.30pm onwards) (May/I)

QUALITY SYSTEM, low price! Denon DCD1700 CD player, good transport £140. Monarchy Audio DAC £250. CD and DAC £360. Castle Chester loudspeakers, mahogany £250. Audiolab 8000A £100. Akai AA1135 receiver, imposing appearance £40. Celestion DL4 speakers £20. BW speaker stands £10. All excellent condition, some boxed with manuals. Tel: Tony 020 7473 3818 weekday evenings, 01844 216 706 weekends (May/I)

KRELL KAV 300CD immaculate condition protective, plastic still on remote control, boxed £2400. Tel: Jason 01924 290 749 (May/I)

NAIM 92R + MM phono £345. NAP 90/3 £295. Nait 3 £295. NAC 102 + NAPSC + MC phono £865. NAP 180 (3 months old) £845. Naim CDi £795. All excellent condition. Tel: 0117 977 0317 (Jun/I)

NAD S300 Silverline integrated amp. Boxed, unused. Great bargain £950. Tel: 0181 287 9878 or 07967 304 537 (May/I)

LEAK TL12.1 Radford tuner. Quad 33/405/FM3/303. Garrad 301/SME arm. Leak T/Line tuner. Teac/Revox G36 reel/reel. PS Audio p/amp/other amps. Misc Hi-Fi spares. Tel: 0131 332 7536 (evenings) (May/I)

LINN SONDEK LP12, Ekos 2, Lingo, new motor, upgraded baseboard, Troika with written report stating 700 hours life left, mint condition £1300. Naim Nait 3 £330, Nait 1 £100. Linn Tukans (American Cherry) £400, Kans (Black) £150. Tukan active cards £125. Quad 33/303 £100. Yamaha NS1000 speakers £100. Tel: 01622 858 085 (May/I)

MICHELL GYROPOWER (per-spex) £95, Sumiko blue point, low use £40. DPA The Power, RF filter, adds warmth and detail £50. Tel: Bob 0151 480 3566 (May/I)

CHORD 1200B, mint, 3 years warranty £2000. Harbeth HL-Compact 7 with Target stands, mint, boxed £700. Nordost Blue Heaven speaker 2 metres bi-amp £160. Sound Organization 5 shelf rack £90. Tel: 0207 226 7481 (May/I)

LINN KOLEKTOR preamp, Linn LK140 power amp, both as new, boxed £850. Also Creek T43 tuner as new and boxed £250. All can be demonstrated. Tel: 01753 856 629 (May/I)

WADIA DIGIMASTER X32 DAC 2 digital and 1st optical inputs phono outputs 44.1kHz (CD), 48kHz (DAT) selectors, Audio Invert boxed £335. Trichord Clock 2 £45 (£90 new). Tel: 0115 929 1973 (May/I)

MERIDIAN 200/203 transport and DAC. Cost £1300, bargain at £445, inc. boxes and user manuals. Also rare but excellent Californian Audio Labs Gamma DAC £325. Tel: 01445 712 023 (Scotland) (May/I)

KRELL FPB300 power amp £6700 ono. Krell KRC3Mk2 pre amp £2100 ono. Mark Levinson No 39 CD processor £3700 ono. ATC A7 monitors cherrywood £550 ono. Tag McLaren 125W power amps £1400 ono. All units 14 months old, mint, boxed with remainder of warranties. Can arrange cash on delivery on all units. Tel: 0141 226 5711 day, 0141 424 0226 evenings. (May/I)

NAIM SBL's, walnut, original boxes and manual £950. Tel: 0161 788 0817 (Manchester) (May/I)

MERIDIAN 200 CD transport, excellent condition £225. Meridian 203 DAC, excellent condition £75. Audioquest Quartz interconnect, half metre pairs £25. Tel: 01978 750 151 (North Wales) (May/I)

WILLIAMSON VALVE amplifier. Complete set of wound components mains transformers chokes special outputs with ultra linear option, circuit supplied. Intended ultimate build but move forces sale £200 ono. Tel: 0191 422 1156 (May/I)

CYRUS DISCMASTER transport & DAC balanced. Mint condition £650. Audio Synthesis DSM APS 02 DAC, 2 boxes, mint £350. Tel: day anytime 07909 697 060 or 0118 981 5681 (May)

WANTED LINN LP12 arm cartridge. Also Roksan Xerxes X. Pink Triangle Tarantella. Any turntable in exchange for Magnum IA170SE amplifier, 6 months old also Wilmslow Elegance speaker. Tel: 0181 531 5979 (May/I)

YAMAHA DSP-E390 D.P.L. processor £110. Denon DRM-510 cassette deck £85. Kenwood KT660L AM/FM/LW tuner timer £45 ono. Tel: John 0181 248 3607 (May/I)

SOUTH COAST speakers. Alpha IIG floorstanders, 3 way design with upgraded crossovers. 1000mm tall. Superbly finished in natural light beech £475. Response down to 28 hertz. 3 months old. Tel: 01274 632 492 (Bradford, Yorkshire) (May)

TOWNSHEND GLASTONBURY biwiring Swiss broadcasting. Used them new £1800, save £1000, pay £800. Quartz 6 metres £100, new £200. Townshend recommends Quartz. Buyer collects. They weigh 90lbs each. Cases, complete. Tel: 01502 476 249 (Suffolk)

NAKAMICHI ZX7 £500 superb, Quad II power amps £220 excellent, Thorens TD125/2 Thorens arm Shure V15/II £90 vgc. KEF 105 loudspeakers £60, all ono. Tel: 01432 870 455 (Hereford) (May/I)

ARCAM DELTA 70-3 C/D player £175. Nakamichi 610 control preamplifier £160. Spendor Preludes speakers £125. Quad 33 preamp £60. Teac 3300 SX professional reel tape deck £240. Vgc. Tel: 0181 681 1054 (Croydon) (May/I)

TECHNICS CD player SL-P 999 £75. Tuner ST-S4L £50. 12W graphics SH-8055 £50. Proton pre-amp AP-1000 similar Audiolab £75. All mint. Service manuals included. Tel: 01252 794 803 (Surrey) (May/I)

WANTED ACOUSTIC Research amplifier R06. Tel: 01628 524 439 (May/I)

ROGERS LS7t speakers. Immaculate black ash finish, bi-wireable, unmarked, boxed, complete with 14" very heavy gauge, sand fillable stands spiked, finished in matching black. Speakers and stands £200. Tel: 01753 868 694 (May/I)

WANTED: SONY SBM-1 Analogue/digital converter. Wanted: co-ax/optical connector for above. Wanted: 1960's Goodmans Maxim, tweeter condition immaterial! Wanted: KEF - B139 - B110 - T27. Tel: 01706 641 998 (May/I)

ROGERS LS3/5A speakers. Teak. 12 months old. £220. Musical Fidelity X-DAC. 9 months old. £160. Atacama R724 hi-end speaker stands, sand filled. Buyer collects this item please (£140) £60. Russ Andrews 6ft hi-current Powerkord £65. All mint. Tel: 01752 773 369 (Plymouth) (May/I)

LINN KARIK Brilliant PSU £695. LFD Zero integrated MM/MC version transparent natural sound £295 (£680), both items, pristine, boxed, manuals. Wanted: Kimber Silver Streak or Audionote Ans interconnects. Tel: 01429 429 953 Hartlepool (May/I)

WHARFEDALE OPTION one. Active loudspeakers four 150 watt Quad power amplifiers & speaker unit each box. 2 sub-woofer £2000 ono. Tel: 01527 459 274 (May/I)

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AUDIO INNOVATIONS PI phono pre-amp Jimmy Hughes rave as new, boxed, approx 40 hours use £195 or nearest offer. Denon MC cartridge DL110 40 hours use £35. Tel: 0113 252 2820 (Leeds) (May/I)

ISOBARK SPEAKERS late model black mint with Aktlv crossover and Dirak PSU. All cables boards for active or passive operation. First offer £899. Tel: 0141 956 1440 (May/I)

NAIM 32.5-72 upgrade. Spare MC boards. Immaculate £250. Hi-Cap new style, boxed, mint £450. NAP 250 new style excellent £900. Tel: 01925 723 301 (Warrington) (May/I)

AUDIO ANALOGUE Paganini CD player £500. Bellini pre and Donizetti power amp £750. Sonus Faber Concertino speakers £350. Luxman T-12 tuner £150. Teac W-790R twin cassette £100. Tel: 01935 411 448 (May/I)

CYRUS DAD7 CD player, immaculate, boxed £900 new, accept £400. Cyrus PSX-R power supply as new £200. Tel: 01455 633 350 (May/I)

GARRAD 401 SME 3009 arm, solid MDF, walnut veneered plinth and cover. Vgc £295. Rogers LS35A's £175. Various Hi-Fi racks. Headphones, cables, speaker stands, bargain prices for details. Tel: 01224 646 473 (May/I)

PAIR EXPOSURE eight monoblock power amplifiers £450. Tel: 01327 261 527 (S'Northants) (May/I)

MARTIN LOGAN Quest speakers 1995 model. Updated by Absolute Sounds 1998. New panels to be fitted due to accident £2500 ono. Sony TCD-D7 Datwalkman recorder c/w POC-DA12 new drum & reels £300. Tel: 01527 401 954 (May/I)

AUDAX HMI70Z0 HDA cone drive units. Only a few hours latest spec £50 the pair. Four Sovtek 6C33C-B tubes c/w bases £50 lot. Tel: Mike 01758 741 026. Email: m.davis@virgin.net (May/I)

NAIM NAIT 3 integrated amplifier with phono boards, mint condition £415! Rega Kyte speakers and stands, excellent condition £100. All equipment boxed with manuals. Tel: Adam 0114 267 6275 (May/I)

TDL STUDIO 3 transmission lines, walnut, stands Rotel RB870 power, RC850 pre amplifiers, Sony X222 ES CD, remote variable lineout direct connection transparent full range sound. £1000 complete system. Tel: 0171 252 3882 (May/I)

SME IV tonearm with extras £600 boxed. Tel: 0207 226 7481 (May/I)

SONUS FABER Concerto's + stands £800 (£1250). Muscal Fidelity E300 power E200 pre £525 (£1300). AVI Neuneutrons + custom built stands £475 (£675). Arcam Alpha 8R amp £275. Sony power amp TAN-55ES £125. Sony XB92OE CD £145. Sony RM-AV 2000T R/C unit g.teed operates 12 items too complicated for me £65. Tel: 0121 246 0486 (B'ham) (May/I)

COPLAND CDA288 award winning compact disc player, later spec, £950 ono. Tel: 01858 464 771 (May/I)

TEAC 500 SERIES CD player and amplifier plus KEF Coda 7" SE speakers, stands and cables £380. ('What Hi-Fi' Award Winner). Also pair of KEF Q35's floorstanding speakers £190 ono. Tel: 01344 488 342 (May/I)

OMEGA POINT tonearm VDH silver wired £100. Lowther Acoustas Lowther cabinets PM6C one unit kaput £150. Sony TAFB920 R amp mint £130. B&W DM2 speakers, quality speakers £130. Tel: 01827 261 082 (Tamworth) (May/I)

ROKSAN CASPIAN CD player £470. Creek OBH-12 passive pre-amp £80. Creek A52SE power amp £350. van den Hul The Teatrack hybrid bi-wire speaker cable 5 metres and 3 metres £60. Mission 751 Freedom speakers £150. All 14 months old. Mint. Tel: Tom 0151 342 7448 Wirral (May/I)

MARTIN LOGAN SL3 18 months with boxes plus two sets of cables, 8 ft Kimber and 12 ft QED silver £2400. Tel: Steve 0171 772 2039 days, 0171 286 7220 eves and weekends (May/I)

EPOS ES25 speakers, light walnut. Excellent condition, boxed, manual. Audiophile sound. Only selling due to upgrade to Thiels. Cost £1655, asking £695 including tri-wired cable worth £330. Tel: 01243 555 632 (Arundel) (May/I)

MERIDIAN ANALOGUE surround system. M60 rosewood speakers, M60C centre, 508/CD, 504/radio, 541/controller, 555/rear amp. Beautiful sound. £3200. Tel: 07775 686 444 (May/I)

MUSICAL FIDELITY A3 CD £575 (£800). A3 tuner £425 (£600). Tag McLaren PA20R pre £800 (£1500). Tag 125M monoblocs pair £1300 (£2400). Chord Chorus 1.0m £100 (£205). QED silver spiral 0.5m £40 (£78). Tel: 07977 667 670 (May/I)

MARTIN LOGAN Aeries, boxed, papers, near mint £1175. Tel: 0171 722 9417 (May/I)

TRICHORD 'CLOCK 3' + power supply (includes complete fitting instructions) £80 (new £170). Kimber fibre optic interconnect (0.5 metre length) £20 (new £40). Wanted: Musical Fidelity X-PSU. Tel: 01780 754 694 (May/I)

AUDIO RESEARCH SP9 MK II pre-amp £800. D115 MK II power amp £900. Marantz CD 94 £300. Rappaport pre 1A £250. Tannoy M2 loudspeakers £60. Musical Fidelity A1 amplifier late model Marantz SD52 cassette £80. Tel: 01704 530 928 (May/I)

KRELL KSA 50 £750. Spica Angelus floorstanding loudspeakers £500. Marantz PM94 amplifier £500. Marantz C700CD recordable £300. Sony MDJ520MD minidisc £125. Sony professional portable cassette £150. Arcam C200 pre-amp £150. Tel: 01704 530 928 (May/I)

NAIM 72/90 amplifiers. Boxed. Excellent condition. £575. Epos II speakers with stands. Minor repair required. £175. Naim phono boards. MM/MC £35. Tel: 0141 641 0496 (May/I)

CROFT EPOCH valve pre, chrome front £270. UKD Opera Callas Foundation stands, DPA slink speaker cable 2m £365 ono. DPA 100S pre (line) £595 (£2300). Finest pre I've ever heard. Tel: 01443 412 390 (Glamorgan) (May/I)

QUAD 40S power amplifier. Excellent condition £160. Tel/Fax: 01302 859 095 (May/I)

NAKAMICHI 700ZXL cassette deck with many features, automatic calibrate, Dolby processor, the ultimate record playback machine, boxed and manuals, mint condition. £650. Syrinx PU3 pickup arm, mint condition. Tel: 01767 677 634 (May/I)

LINN KLOUT £1125. Wakonda Kudos Sneaky tuner £775. Majik phono £400. Arcam Delta 290 amp £150. B&W 602SI speakers £100. Pioneer PD75 CD player £300. Tel: 01270 651 330 (May/I)

PROAC RESPONSE 3.5 loudspeakers yew finish mint and boxed. £2000 (£4675). Musical Fidelity P270 power amp and 2A pre amp. £475. Both boxed. Tel: 023 8044 5090 (day), 023 8046 6853 (evenings) (May/I)

MUSICAL FIDELITY XPRE £150. And XLP £90. Garrard DDQ650 turntable £70, A+R Cambridge A60 amplifier £70. Leak Varislope Stereo 2 pre-amp £50. Excellent condition. Tel: 0421 470 286. Email: neiliasimon@yahoo.com (May/I)

PINK TRIANGLE Ordinal DAC £375 ono. ACOS GSTI tonearm, suit your 401 sir! Boxed. Offers Tel: Rick 01386 793 328 evening weekends please (May/I)

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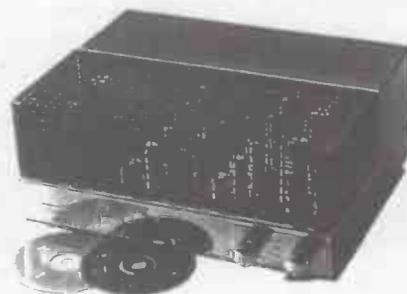
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see page 130 for details*

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MARK LEVINSON 332 200W and 333 300W power amps. Each Class A dual mono block, fully balanced, award winning power and refinement, immaculate, boxed, full documentation, guarantee. £4250 (£6500 new) and £5600 (£8500 new). Tel: 0171 706 8838 (Jun/I)

REGA PLANET CD player with remote control, boxed as new condition, reason for sale - upgrading. Tel: 0181 556 0606 evenings (May/I)

PRIMARE A20.2 amplifier, 6 months old, box and instructions, mint condition, bargain at £300 no offers. Tannoy DC 2000 floor standing speakers £90. Atacam SE 24s £35. Tel: 01765 600 450 (North Yorks) (May/I)

MARK LEVINSON no. 331 power amp (very famous previous owner) £3000. Mark Levinson No. 28 pre-amp with phono £1500. Mint. Marantz CD12 2 box player with massive remote £1100. Thiel 2.3 speakers, 3 weeks old, walnut (£3500) £2750. Strictly no timewasters. Tel: George 07957 177 463 (May/I)

MAGNEPLANAR SMGA black cloth beech cheeks, perfect condition £300 ono. Tel: 01322 661 265 (May/I)

LP12 AFROMOSIA, EKOS, Denon 304MC cartridge, Cirkus upgrade. Excellent condition. £1050. Moth phono pre-amp MC/MM £125 QED Vector pre-amp remote control £100. Tel: 01633 881 722, email: andrews@magor3.freeseve.co.uk (May/I)

QUAD ELS 63 loudspeakers and stands, excellent condition £1050. Tel: 01953 888 130 (May/I)

MUSICAL FIDELITY F19 power amp £2000. Explorer tuner £475. Large horn speakers to singular high spec design £3000. All items mint condition & boxed. Tel: 01226 764 272 evenings (May/I)

TEAC T-1 transport and DAC £550, or sell DAC separate £250. Sonneteer Alabaster amplifier £550. All immaculate, boxed. Roksan DA-1 DAC £150. Wanted: Chord amp SPM 600/400, can p/ex above Tel: 0116 255 0172 (May/I)

PINK TRIANGLE DACAPO DAC with 1307 HDCD filter. Excellent condition, boxed with Chord Prodac interconnect £550. Also 3 metre Chord biwire flatline speaker cables £50. Tel: 01684 564 530 after 7pm (May/I)

QUAD 34 control unit and Quad 606 power amp, both grey, mint, boxed, manuals, £500 ono. Marantz CD52SE boxed, remote, manuals £60. Tel: 0117 924 0913 (Bristol) (May/I)

HI-FI HOUSE clearout. DNM 3C Primus pre-amp, as new, under warranty, £1500 (£2300). Muse Model 300 monoblock power amps, 300wpc, silver, as new, under warranty, £1750 (£4200). ProAc Response 3, oak, Vdh rewired, excellent, £1500 (£3600). ProAc Response 2S, cherry, mint with RS2 stands, £1200 (£2600). Copland CSA28 amp, mint, £850 (£1400). Infinity Modulus spkrs, piano black with stands, vgc, £275 (£1000). All with original boxes. Tel: Adil 0208 673 3850 or 0207 919 8559 (London) (Jun/I)

THORENS TD125, SME12" arm, SME plinth. Very good condition £260. Mullard valve tester with box of cards working £75. SME 3009 £55. Linn K9 £35. Wanted: mono valve amps. Tel: Steve 01964 551 436 (May /I)

NAIM CD3 £450, Naim 72 (m-m board) £400, Naim Hi-Cap £400, Naim 180 £500, Harbeth HL3-PES inc. stands £450, REL Storm Subwoofer £350. Tel: David 0411 731 325 (day), 0171 228 0925 (eves) (May/I)

GAMMA ACOUSTICS Space Reference valve pre + power amp Mk3. excellent condition, little used. Any inspection welcome. Cost new £7999, will accept £2999. Tel: 01726 824 114 (May/I)

YAMAHA B2, Teac 35-2 tapdeck, Exposure XI/VIII/IX, Pioneer SX950. Leak TL10 +Pre/FM, Cambridge C/50, Mullard 4xEL37 new, TD124/II, SME3012/II. Ortofon SL-20E, Decca FFSS. 50s/60s: 3000 classical, +500 jazz LPs, mint. POA. Nakamichi 1000 ZXL. Tel: 0171 625 8966 (May/I)

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NAIM HI-CAP and 62, as new £600 current spec. Rega Planet CD player with remote as new sale due to upgrade £325. Tel: 020 8871 3353 (May/I)

VAN DEN HUL The Wind speaker cable 8 x 1.3 metres (good condition) & fitted with Kimber ultra plate banana plugs 4mm. Yamaha stereo cassette deck (KX380), as new boxed (mint) £75. Tel: 01424 431 536 (May/I)

AVI 20BIT CD (£1300) £495. Krell KAV 250A (£3498) £2150, boxed as new. DPA Little Bit £99. VDH Seconds £110 (phono). Chord Din-Phono £35. Tel: 0208 948 0899 (W.London) (May/I)

LINN ISOBARIK speakers, walnut £600. Can demo. Buyer must collect. Linn Pretek preamp, great LK100 partner £150. Koss Pro4AA headphones £30. Tel: 020 8850 2530 (eves), 020 7500 6736 (day) (May/I)

NAKAMICHI CASSETTE Deck 1, serviced, immaculate, new £700, want £375, includes interconnects. Grado SR60 headphones, new, guaranteed £45. Tel: Ben 0181 333 4187, Email: webbb@icrf.icnet.uk (May/I)

MANA EQUIPMENT. Five tier amplifier stand £420. Three Soundstages £120 each. One soundframe £75. Prices do not include carriage. Tel: 01595 694 205 for details. (May/I)

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ECC82	CV4003, MULLARD	12.50
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	WITH <>	30.00
E88CC	MULLARD	10.00
E88CC/01	MULLARD	16.95
ECL82	GERMAN	4.50
EF37A	MULLARD, GREY	2.50
EF86		4.35
EF86	MULLARD	11.00
EL34	SOVTEK	6.00
EL37	MULLARD	45.00
EL84	SOVTEK	2.15
EL84	MAZDA	5.10
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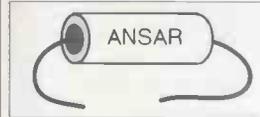
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CPW220N	Ansar 220nF 630V	32 x 9.0	1.60
CPW330N	Ansar 330nF 400V	32 x 8.0	1.60
CPW470N	Ansar 470nF 400V	32 x 9.0	1.80
CPW580N	Ansar 580nF 400V	32 x 10.5	1.80
CPW100	Ansar 1uF 400V	32 x 12.5	1.80
CPW150	Ansar 1.5uF 400V	32 x 14.7	1.80
CPW200	Ansar 2.2uF 400V	43 x 14.8	1.80
CPW250	Ansar 2.5uF 400V	43 x 17.6	2.20
CPW300	Ansar 3.3uF 400V	43 x 20.7	2.50
CPW400	Ansar 4.7uF 400V	43 x 22.8	3.00
CPW500	Ansar 6.8uF 400V	43 x 26.5	4.00
CPW600	Ansar 10uF 400V	43 x 29.5	4.00
CPW150	Ansar 15uF 400V	55 x 34.1	5.50
CPW220	Ansar 22uF 400V	55 x 39.3	7.00
CPW250	Ansar 25uF 400V	55 x 42.0	7.50
CPW300	Ansar 30uF 400V	55 x 44.7	8.50
CPW500	Ansar 50uF 400V	83 x 46.0	11.50
CPW600	Ansar 60uF 400V	83 x 51.7	13.50
CPW750	Ansar 75uF 400V	83 x 55.1	19.00
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CPW150P	Propax 150pF 630V	0.35
CPW220P	Propax 220pF 630V	0.35
CPW330P	Propax 330pF 630V	0.35
CPW470P	Propax 470pF 630V	0.35
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105 deg C +PLUS low impedance.
These superior electrolytics offer a low impedance path to the signal, resulting in a very open & detailed sound. The use of high temperature materials ensure that these capacitors enjoy a long & stable life.

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10Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 10uF 63V	0.25
22Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 22uF 63V	0.30
47Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 47uF 63V	0.35
100Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 100uF 63V	0.50
220Y50	Lo Imp Hi Temp 220uF 63V	0.75
470Y63	Lo Imp Hi Temp 470uF 63V	1.25
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CAB4	Alcap 4uF	0.40
CAB5	Alcap 5uF	0.40
CAB6U8	Alcap 6.8uF	0.50
CAB8	Alcap 8uF	0.50
CAB10	Alcap 10uF	0.50
CAB16	Alcap 16uF	0.65
CAB20	Alcap 20uF	0.65
CAB25	Alcap 25uF	0.65
CAB35	Alcap 35uF	0.65
CAB50	Alcap 50uF	0.75
CAB60	Alcap 60uF	0.85
CAB80	Alcap 80uF	1.00

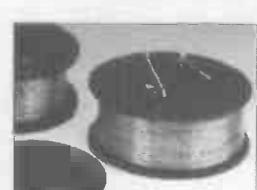
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P68	680uH 0.350 59x19mm	£4.50
P100	1.0mH 0.40 59x19mm	£5.50
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P220	2.2mH 0.60 70x30mm	£8.00
P330	3.3mH 0.750 70x30	£10.00

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Part No	Description	Price
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6L6GT	OUTPUT VALVE	£4.50
65N7GT	OUTPUT VALVE	£4.50
6V6GT	OUTPUT VALVE	£3.95
ECC81	TRIODE	£4.50
ECC82	TRIODE	£4.50
ECC83	TRIODE	£4.50
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Part No	Description	Price
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