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It was what you could call a life changing day, like starting university or passing your driving test. It was also like buying a dog basket before your puppy arrived - totally useless but what the hell! Way back in the mists of time, I strolled down to my local Our Price in Putney, South West London and for the first time proudly turned left towards the meagre selection of CDs adorning the one, single silver disc shelf.

To my amazement, there was a 4AD Cocteau Twins compilation. A relatively minor band - economically, not musically, I hasten to add - I was stunned to find their beautiful, ethereal soundscapes available on the new, 'ultimate' music format. Although I already owned the band's entire canon on black vinyl, I clutched this treasurable CD close to my breast en route to the sales counter, shocked to find it. All I had to do now was buy a CD player!

Back then everybody - from electronics manufacturers to the music industry and buying public - accepted that CD was going to replace vinyl as the primary music carrier. Contrast that to the present day and the situation with Super Audio Compact Disc (SACD) and DVD-Audio. There are now five SACD players available, including one at a very affordable £500. But where are the discs to feed them? You won't find a single SACD, DVD-A or even HDCD disc of any band or artist in a similar market position to the Cocteau Twins anywhere. Indeed, the same goes for discs of any kind of popular current band or artist, not even Oasis!

This tells a story. When it was launched, CD addressed both hi-fi hobbyists and the music buying public, but high quality formats such as SACD and DVD-A seem to be for hi-fi nuts only. It would be great if they eventually replaced the entire CD catalogue - but I fear they won't. Too much is happening with audio technology too fast, and the likes of Sony probably believe that internet gaming machines will become the mass players of tomorrow. Today's kids are the

high disposable incomers of tomorrow, and they're downloading music from the 'net which is often absolutely free. Audiophile discs, by way of contrast, are neither free nor cheap at over £20 apiece. When people complain so loudly about CD prices of £16 will they ever accept £20 or more?

Even companies with long high-end hi-fi traditions like Klipsch (of the horns fame) are welcoming internet audio with open arms. "What?", I hear you say, "A horn multimedia loudspeaker for my computer?" Well, yes - it's available as I write and very good it is too. Purists who sneer at such ideas are a dwindling minority. Yes, I listen to vinyl but accept that many others don't and won't.

People will always listen to music and that's the most important thing - without it our passion for hi-fi would be pretty dull - you can't tap your feet to pink noise. I'm glad that music's alive and well, irrespective of formats and delivery systems. Riding the digital technology wave like Klipsch is bringing the high-end to future generations. I welcome the new diversity!



Simon Pope

how we test the products

- Hi-Fi World has its own advanced test laboratory and acoustically treated listening room.
- Hi-Fi World has a dedicated in-house team of experienced listeners. We review thoroughly by extensive auditioning, rather than by quick-fire group listening tests.
- Hi-Fi World's engineering team designs a wide range of products in-house. No other hi-fi magazine is so expert and dedicated.

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

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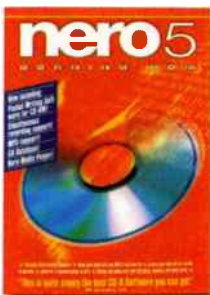
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WORLD NEWS

NEW BOX OF TRICKS FROM ARCAM



Arcam recently held a stylish press launch at the Magic Circle in central London. The DiVA (Digitally integrated Video and Audio) range consists of ten components with a chic silver or black finish and sleek lines. The range is described by MD, John Dawson as "a major advance for Arcam... that will further strengthen our position as the UK's leading manufacturer of specialist hi-fi."

The highlight of the show was the launch of the long awaited first DVD-video player, the £900 DV88, which promises to be one of the most advanced on the market. It's an in-house design, not bought in from OEM suppliers. Arcam being a well-established audiophile brand, emphasis lies on the audio capabilities

of the player. The machine will play DVD-video, Video CD, Super VCD, CD-R/RW and CD-ROM discs. The DACS in use are two 24bit/192kHz Wolfson WM8716s. This makes the DV88 upgradable to play DVD-A discs by mid-2001, by use of flash programmable memory inside the machine and installation of a new circuit board in the modular board system.

A Zoran decoder handles Dolby Digital (2.0) and MPEG (2.0) - plus HDCD and apparently 'some' MP3 encoded CDs! Outputs are Dolby Digital Bitstream, DTS and a 24/96 PCM digital out. As well as all this, Arcam have paid attention to the clocking system, using two 'asynchronous' audio and video clocks to

reduce jitter (as opposed to the audio clock derived from the video oscillator at 27 MHz, which raises jitter).

The DVD88 is joined by Arcam's first AV receiver, the £800 AVR100, featuring 70W into five channels, with 90W in stereo mode with processing for Dolby Digital, Pro Logic and DTS. Although Arcam are champions of Digital Radio, the tuner is analogue, not DAB, but expect to see DAB in future projects.

The remaining eight members of the range consist of two CD players, at £400 and £850, three integrated amplifiers from £370-£700, two power amplifiers at £300 and £500 and an analogue tuner for £280. Entry level Alpha models continue with a price drop. Watch this space for reviews...

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SOUND BEAM COUNTER-CLAIMS

Development continues on the fantastic idea of beaming sound to listeners from small transducers. But as successful commercialisation approaches - Chrysler now have a concept car with beamed audio - a dispute has broken out between rival developers.

U.S. researcher Joseph Pompei claims Sennheiser of Germany appear to have exploited ideas he published in 1999, developed within the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Media Lab. Sennheiser deny this, saying Pompei's work is unoriginal. They published a paper on ultrasound processing similar to Pompei's two months before his first AES demonstration in



1998 and have been demonstrating working prototypes of their AudioBeam that, they say, do not use his ideas.

Sennheiser have been working with Dresden Technical University.

Joseph Pompei is not worried however, claiming MIT MediaLab has filed many key patents. Very high frequency sound beams, beyond hearing, are beamed like rays of light. Where they meet, audible sound is

produced. Distortion has been a problem, but Pompei claims to have uniquely surmounted this difficult, matching the performance of ordinary loudspeakers.

<http://sound.media.mit.edu/~pompei/spotlight/>



Joseph Pompei

www.sennheiser.com



SUPER AUDIO CD

Get inside the music.
Sony Super Audio CD.



No other music system gets you closer. Sony's new Super Audio CD (winner of the EISA European Audio Player of the year 2000-2001 award) provides you with unrivalled sound reproduction thanks to Direct Stream Digital (DSD). A clever little 1-bit recording system that samples audio signals at a rate 64 times higher than conventional compact disc. Giving you a dynamic range of over 120db and an unprecedented bandwidth of over 100kHz. SACDs also benefit from 6 times the capacity of regular CDs and incorporate a reserved space for non-audio data such as text information which can highlight track, disc and artist name. And because all Sony SACD players are compatible with conventional CDs, there's no need to replace your CD collection. To see Sony's range of Super Audio CD players visit the Sony website. To hear one, why not try your nearest philharmonic orchestra.

www.sony.co.uk

Customer information centre 08705 111 999
Sony, DSD and SACD are trademarks of Sony Corporation, Japan.

World Radio History



go create

SONY

WATERMARK SOUND DISPUTED

A loud dispute has broken out in the music business about digital watermarking. It's all about a new anti-copying system from U.S. based Verance that industry bodies like the Secure Digital Music Initiative (SDMI) and the global representative body for the music business, the IFPI, are introducing to control digital copying and deter piracy.

The SDMI wants all future recordings to be watermarked and/or encrypted to prevent unauthorised copying or play. Encryption is a problem because no players other than those SDMI equipped could unscramble the code. Watermarking, where the digital music signal is subtly altered to carry an identification code, said to be inaudible but at the same time digitally decodable, is a favoured

immediate alternative. Watermarked music will play on all audio equipment, but trigger anti-copy mechanisms on SDMI equipment the music business hope will proliferate in future.

Trouble is, whilst 'suits' in the music business, and likely many artists too, support any copyright protection mechanism, those concerned with sound quality are up in arms. Engineers and studios strive to improve sound quality, some recordings nowadays being mastered in high resolution 24bit/96kHz code or even '4x', meaning 4x48kHz or 192kHz sampling rate, as used in DVD Audio. To reach this standard demands the use of the latest, expensive studio equipment.

Working to these high standards, studios and engineers are unhappy

about a watermark system devised to control internet distribution initially, being applied to all music by the need to watermark-code all recordings in the studio before release. Said Ed Abbott, senior recording engineer at Universal-MCA in the States "only a blithering idiot would think that anyone would hit DVD-A audio with the same watermark process at the same intensity as internet music". The SDMI have been heavily criticised over listening tests that, they claim, prove the watermark is inaudible, but others claim were inept and prove no such thing.

Irrespective, the complex arrangements to control copying and possibly make extra charges (levy) to consumers for SDMI upgrade software roll on. (See SDMI CALL ALL HACKERS!).



WINNING COMBINATION

Next to London's swanky Selfridge Hotel Sony launched what they regard to be a "strategically important" new product for the UK - the DVP-S9000ES DVD player. It's an attempt to demonstrate Sony's lead in both the audio and video markets. Described as the world's most advanced DVD player, the DVP-S9000ES also acts as an SACD audio player. It will also play ordinary CDs and although not advertised by Sony, a quick demonstration revealed it will play CD-R/RW discs.

An undeniably stylish bit of work, the DVP-S9000ES has a sophisticated fascia with a sleek disc drawer that feeds the disc into Sony's new FX

Mechanism. This system intends to improve trackability of all discs used in the player by use of a fixed base unit system in which the lasers are housed. To minimise jitter Sony use a dedicated audio master clock, separate from the video oscillator, for better synchronisation.

The video circuitry can be switched off to stop interference with audio signals to further enhance audio playback quality. S

The DVP-S9000ES employs the same Direct Stream Digital (DSD) processing technology as found in the more expensive SCD-1 and SCD-777ES SACD/CD players.

Although Sony UK product

manager Eric Kingdon denies that the DVP-S9000ES is a first-step 'universal' player and more a "combination" product, Sony are part of the DVD Forum so we could well see similar future players incorporating DVD-A compatibility as well as SACD, as currently seen in Pioneer's £4,000 flagship DVD-A player which will be available in the U.K. towards the end of the year.

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A NEW NU-VISTA FROM MF

Once again Musical Fidelity have thought up yet another way of utilising their presumably dwindling stock of miniature Nu-Vista valves. After the roaring success of the limited edition (500 each) pre and power amps, which are now all sold, comes the stunning looking M3 'super' integrated - the last ever Nu-Vista model to be launched by the company.

The M3 claims to be a truly transparent sounding amplifier in the true MF Nu-Vista mould. The circuitry is the same as used in the

NU-Vista pre and power amps - but apparently improved. MF claim that this version of the circuit can produce up to 14% less distortion than previously due to consideration of the current flow. Minute details in the amplifier abound, for example, the Ms uses the same choke regulation technology as found in the power amplifier, but in the integrated they are mounted in the heatsink which they claim improves low level detail.

As far as power is concerned the whopping quoted output of 275W per channel should be able to drive

virtually anything. There are six inputs, including tape loop and an MM/MC switchable phono stage. There are no official dates for release yet but the price will be £2,995. Start saving now!

Musical Fidelity Ltd.
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Wembley
Middlesex HA9 0TF
Tel: 020 8900 2866



SDMI CALL ALL HACKERS!

The SDMI committee recently announced an offer of up to \$10,000 to anyone able to break their new Verance digital watermarking code. This is an opportunity for hackers to make a few bob and gain notoriety.

The SDMI committee say "If you

can remove the watermark or defeat the other technology on our proposed copyright protection system, you may earn up to \$10,000. To participate, just go to the website at www.hacksdmi.org after September 15, 2000".

Doubtless they are worried the code will be hacked like that originally proposed for DVD Audio, putting back the launch of this new music system by months.

www.hacksdmi.org

next issue

Here's a selection of some of the delights that we hope to bring you next month

MISSION 783

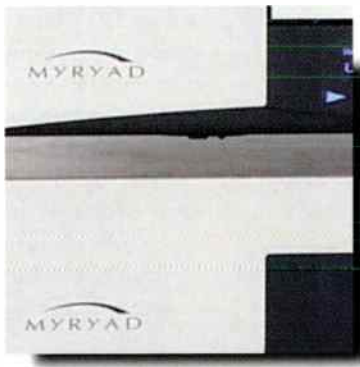
These hefty floorstanders from Mission are the top of the 78 range at £1000. Will they improve on the speed and clarity of the 782. Find out next month.

MUSICAL FIDELITY HOME THEATRE SYSTEM

This surround processor and power amp combination is the first foray into the world of multichannel. See how it fares in just four weeks.

TANNOY mX3

The mX3s are the £230 floorstanders in the new entry level range from Tannoy. Find out next month if they can vie with the stiff competition.



S LIVES P A R T A T E

Hi-Fi World pick four one-brand separates systems priced between £1,000-£2,000. Which one should you buy and what best serves your needs? We reveal all in this month's group test.

Not all audiophiles crave for esoterica and mis-match. The Linn and Naim armies of the eighties are testament to this. With the rise of the home improvement brigade manufacturers are having to become more aware of how things look and more importantly, match.

In the past many audiophiles - Linn and Naim apart - sneered at the thought of owning a 'one-brand' hi-fi. But for years manufacturers have been telling us nothing sounds as good with their amps than one of their CD players and vice versa. Well, they would wouldn't they?

They may have a point. Each of the components are designed to be used

with their stable mates, so shouldn't they match best in that situation?

As far as looks and facilities go, you can't really go wrong with any of these systems. Most of them can be operated from a single remote control whilst still keeping their audiophile independence as a separates system. Likewise, they'll fit into any room with style and grace, yet will still look like a hi-fi, which is important for many buyers.

The likes of Linn's Classik may well have put paid to this attitude though. At the end we'll compare the Classik's sound quality to our auditionees here. But for the meanwhile, read on... ►►

What we tested the system's with:
 Mission 782
 loudspeakers £700
 van den Hul Royal
 Jade 'speaker cable
 £11/metre
 Chord Company
 Anthem interconnect
 £275
 Copulare system rack
 £1,000

ARCAM ALPHA

Alpha 8R amplifier £350/Alpha 7SE CD player £300/Alpha 8 tuner £250. Complete system £900.



Although Arcam are soon to launch a new range of mid-price components, these members of the established Alpha range will stay in production. They've also taken a price drop due to the fact that the strong pound has reduced the purchase price of major components. This saving of £110 brings the total system to under the watershed-point of £1000 and will make this system very competitive in the market.

The aesthetics of the Alpha range are hardly what you'd call cutting edge and you won't crush your foot if you drop 'em but neither are they as dull or flimsy as some would have you believe. The style is a smooth and ergonomic one that fits inconspicuously into any environment and has the look of 'serious' hi-fi and measure in at an average 430 x 290 x 85mm (w,d,h). They also feel good to the touch, with nice springy buttons and a good sized volume control. A master remote is supplied only with the tuner that will control the whole system, the other two have dedicated remotes.

Amplifier

The 50W per channel (into 8Ω) 8R integrated is the only amplifier in the test to have bypassable tone controls for those that wish to tweak the sound. There's also controls for input selection, tape monitor, second 'speaker selection and a headphone socket. Ironically, like most amps, the more affordable they are, the more you seem to get for your money!

There's a total of five inputs available, one of which is switchable from a line input into an MM phono stage. There are two sets of BFA approved 'speaker terminals found at the rear. The upper pair are for the main 'speakers and the lower pair for attaching a second pair of 'speakers, perhaps in another room. This second pair of terminals is switched on and off on the front panel and both sets of terminals are switched off when a headphone jack plug is inserted into the socket. In true Arcam style, upgradability is assured by a preamp output which can feed a power amp.

On the back is a 'processor/normal' switch for an external Dolby Digital or Prologic processor. When selected, the processor will act as the master volume control.

CD Player

The Alpha 7SE player has proved itself to be a market leader since its launch in July last year when it replaced the award-winning Alpha 7.

Inside is a Burr-Brown 24 bit multi-level Delta-Sigma DAC and improved power supplies. The unit can be upgraded to Alpha 8SE or full Alpha 9 spec.

At rear there are two pairs of audio outputs and two digital outputs - one coaxial and an optical for MiniDisc users. The front display is nice and clear and there's a host of 'localised' controls on the front panel.

Tuner

The usual Arcam fascia adorns the Alpha 8 tuner's chassis, making a change from the usual minimal facias of most hi-fi tuners. There is no RDS function but you can receive MW and LW broadcasts. Tuning is via 'up' and 'down' buttons and between them sits a green 'on tune' LED applicable to any band.

A total of 24 preset stations can be stored on two storage 'levels' - 16 on FM and 8 MW and/or LW. If the tuner's mains supply is disconnected its memory contents remain for one week, so keep off fortnight holidays!

For all the facilities and storage functions, it has no signal strength meter, though. It's supplied with a 'heavyweight' bootlace indoor aerial and 75Ω adaptor.

PERFORMANCE

Unusually, for more affordable hi-fi the Alpha system has a smooth and has a rich top end. The Alpha 7SE has Arcam's trademark full sound but

thankfully lacks the harder edge of yesteryear.

Here we have a well-balanced and exciting sound that was shown to the full by the classic Copland demonstration piece, 'Fanfare For The Common Man'. This Reference Recordings version has a clarity and breadth of frequency span rarely found in CD. Notes from the brass section were smooth and the bass drum thumped with a vengeance to create an involving and exciting listen.

With Radiohead's studio rock the Arcam impressed equally. It took all the confusion of the rough mix and delivered it in a clear and dynamic manner, with rhythms and bass tight and driving.

The tuner is a tad confusing to use, so a good look at the manual is recommended but the sound is full and clean, even with the supplied indoor aerial. Spoken voice on Radio 4 is natural and unaffected and commercial stations such as Capital are played with verve and involvement but sound a tad more shrill than required.

This system is excellent value. The CD plays discs to a standard at least twice the price and the Alpha 8R amp delivers a wide and deep sound stage that betters previous equivalent Arcam models. The system as a whole is crammed with facilities and is very, very upgradable - which gives it a big thumbs up in our book. ■



WORLD VERDICT



Perhaps the best system available for under £1000. A great sounding bargain.

ROKSAN KANDY

Kandy CD player £475/Kandy amplifier £475/Kandy tuner £375. Complete system £1325.



▶▶ After the success of its stylish Caspian separates, Roksan recently launched its new entry-level Kandy range. With modern yet accessible design based on the eclectic house style of the Caspians, they come in seven colours including the striking purple we had, as well as lacquered black and even pink! And, if you get bored or move into a pink house and want your hi-fi to match, they're all interchangeable! Such quirkiness shows that Roksan, always one for modish and well built gear, now also recognises the growing market for those whose choice of consumer electronics is dictated by their domestic surroundings.

All three Kandy offer fine build for the money. Fascia buttons, for example, are metal as opposed to silver painted plastic. Then there are the heavyweight proportions - few integrated amps or CD players at this price weigh in at the Kandy's' tonnage. Usefully, the remotes supplied with each component control the whole system, although the Cameo's synchronised standby facility isn't available here as there's no system linking provision.

Amplifier

The Kandy integrated amp offers six line inputs, one of which is switchable to an MM phono input as well as a tape loop. It's a powerful beast, offering a whopping 110W per channel into 8Ω thanks to a chunky toroidal transformer and beefy power supply. There's one set of 'speaker outputs and a headphone output socket located at the rear, plus a preamp input and output.

CD player

The CD player's styling is very similar to its bigger Caspian brother, apart from the lack of a flip-down front panel. It's fairly sparse round the back too, with just phono outputs, a mains power switch and two (coaxial and optical) digital outputs. This is more user-friendly than the one BNC-type found on the Caspian. Inside the casework you'll find a Burr-Brown 24bit delta sigma DAC and a Sony-sourced transport.

Tuner

The Kandy tuner receives FM, MW and LW broadcasts, and comes supplied with a pink bootlace type FM indoor aerial for those within safe distance of a transmitter, plus the usual AM 'loop' aerial. Aerial connec-

tions are by way of the 75Ω socket, and the twin-screw type for AM. You can store up to 50 pre-set stations in the memory. Fascia functions are minimal - a total of six buttons control tuning up and down, band selection (FM stereo, FM mono, MW and LW). These functions can also be operated via the system remote.

PERFORMANCE

Although Kandy resembles the Caspian in looks, that's where the similarity stops. That's not to say it doesn't perform well, because it boasts a sweet yet powerful sound with less refinement than the Caspian range but more clout. Few amps at the price deliver the amount of power and dynamics available here.

The climaxes of 'Fanfare for the Common Man' could blow your wig off, yet we still felt the Kandy had more to give. It certainly delivers in the power stakes, not in the sense of sheer brute force but in its control and grip on the music, which gave the Copland disc bags of vitality and sheen. The downside was that high register instruments and percussion could 'shout' a little or become shrill. Still, there's nothing wrong with its bass response, which is as deep and controlled as anything at twice the

price. With Supergrass's eponymous album the Kandy system delivered an up-front, rhythmic sound that was fast and exciting, the CD player matching the amplifier for speed and attack.

Riding the airwaves via the Kandy tuner was a hassle-free affair.

Thanks to its minimalist nature this radio is easy to operate - pressing either tuner 'up' or 'down' for two seconds will kick start the automatic search mode and stop at the next station. 'Tuned' then appears in the display window, along with 'Stereo' if in FM mode and correctly tuned. For fine tuning, pressing the tune down button will change the frequency in 0.05 MHz steps. Sound quality is again nice and robust, with good clean reception in the less processed stations such as BBC Radios 3 & 4.

The Kandy system follows Roksan's tradition of well-built, value for money hi-fi. Its sound isn't as refined or insightful as the Caspians, but it is exciting, with speed and vitality. You don't have the operational whistles and bells that come with the Cameo system, for example, but you do have more of a traditional hi-fi sound - and the amp's power makes it very easy to match to most loudspeakers. ■ ▶▶

WORLD VERDICT



Good sound and excellent build from Roksan. Exciting and up-front sound which could become tiring after a while.

MYRYAD CAMEO

£1,500 (sold only as complete system)



Unlike other entries in this month's showdown, the Myryad Cameo is conceived and sold as a system; it comes in one packing box and you can't buy the components separately. Despite this fact, it's still a separates system - your £1,500 buys you the three components (CD, tuner and amp), a system remote and two cables to link everything together for synchronised operation. Audio interconnects aren't included, so these have to be purchased additionally as per any other separates system. It's a stylish and well-built combination, with more than a whiff of the 'lifestyle' about it.

Amplifier

The Cameo's amp delivers a quoted 50W per channel into 8Ω and 100W into 4Ω. It uses high current output transistors to ensure easy compatibility with 'speakers, and features five line inputs and one switchable MM phono/aux. Also, round the back there are separate tape and pre-amp outputs for recording and upgrading, plus a single set of gold-plated 'speaker terminals for that touch-of-audiophile sophistication. A headphone output, discretely placed at the bottom of the unit in the thin black arc, completes the facilities. A large central rotary volume control ensures you can't mistake this amp for anything else than a Myryad.

CD Player

The CD player features a 24bit/96kHz Crystal DAC (although it won't play 24/96 audio discs), seven separately regulated power supplies and a 100% DC-coupled circuit. As far as outputs go, there's a single digital coaxial to complement the single analogue stereo pair. CD text, if present, is also shown. The window display is of the tried and trusted 'music calendar' type - easy to read and understand.

Tuner

This is based on the FM-only, top of the range Myryad MT100 but has the added appeal of RDS facilities. Up to twenty nine presets are programma-

ble. Unlike the MT100 there's no rotary tuning knob, but the system remote control ensures you don't have to leave your chair to select another station. The central display window shows your choice of station with commendable clarity. When in standby mode the tuner displays the time, in a nod towards mass household appeal.

PERFORMANCE

This is a highly user-friendly machine, thanks to the Cameo's My-Link system (connected with the only supplied leads) which will, with a press of the 'standby' button on the remote, kick start the whole system. The red standby buttons all turn to 'operation' mode - blue - and you're ready to roll. Pressing the standby button on the fascia of the CD player or tuner will fire up just that component and the amp, whilst the fascia standby button on the amp will have the same universal effect as the remote button.

The overall feel is one of balance, trading carefully between specialist hi-fi and mass market appeal in both looks and sound. The Cameo doesn't deliver the most neutral sound on the planet but neither does it have Gauguinesque coloration. There's no edge to the treble and the bass is filled out rather than accentuated.

Reference Recordings' CD of Copland's 'Fanfare For The Common

Man' didn't always cut the mustard with the Cameo when it comes to precise detail, but it sounded full and open, with air a-plenty.

Much better suited to the Cameo's sound were well produced mainstream pop and rock discs such as Supergrass' eponymous and full orchestral classical pieces. One gripe is that the remote won't scan tracks, only skip them. To scan you have to get off your butt and use the fascia's buttons.

Like the MT100, the tuner is very good. Programming and tuning is easily achieved by the remote and the signal is strong and full. In line with slight coloration of the amp, commercial stations sound marginally better than with other separates systems, which is a bonus. No signal strength meter is present, just a blue light to show the station is tuned and another to display stereo broadcasts, although there's a mono switch available.

Whilst you never quite shake off the fact that the Cameo is a one purchase product, it definitely has the feel and sound of dedicated separates, detaching it from the taboo of being merely a 'system' and all that the word implies. It's a successful attempt to combine true hi-fi separates performance in the rapidly expanding lifestyle systems arena. ■ ►►

WORLD VERDICT



A bold attempt at separates to penetrate the 'lifestyle' market but the sound could be a little too thin for some.

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MUSICAL FIDELITY X-SERIES

X-A2 integrated amplifier £499/X-Ray CD player £799/X-Plora tuner £599. Complete system £1897.



Although MF's X-Series look has been with us for over three years now, it still manages to look as fresh and modern as ever and sexier than any lifestyle system we can think of. Being the most expensive system here the build of these components is next to none. The front panels are machined from milspec aluminium billet and the chassis is custom made non-resonant extrusion. Fascia controls are machined metal buttons with a good solid feel. The quality is in the details, as they say. The size of these components ensures that they can be put virtually anywhere in the home (each measures 230 x 110 x 320mm - w,h,d). Never has high quality hi-fi been so modest in dimension and so household compliant - especially with the edition of the X-Series matching stacking blocks. Unlike the other auditionees, though, the tuner and CD player each have their own remote and there's none for the amplifier - there's no single system remote available.

Amplifier

The X-A2 is the new replacement for the successful X-A1 integrated. Musical Fidelity have accepted that the old model may not be quite at the top of the pile anymore. So in true Musical Fidelity style they've replaced it to hopefully regain top status in the entry/mid-price market. In order to do this Musical Fidelity have taken the circuit from their £1,000 X-A100R model, removed the remote control facilities and utilised the remaining space by "improving" the circuit layout. The result is more power (at 75W per channel) and a sound that MF say betters the X-A100R, at half the price. There are six line inputs, but no phono, and a pre output for adding a power amplifier. The separate power supply included with the amp is the same as that used for the X-A100R.

CD Player

The X-Ray has been around for a while now but lacks nothing when it comes to CD player essentials. Although small the X-Ray is a bit of a Dr Who's Tardis and weighs a surprising amount for its meagre dimensions. Crammed inside the casework are high-grade components such as a Burr Brown 24 bit DAC and a specially developed five-pole linear phase filter to help reduce high frequency spurious and to reduce distortion levels. Low jitter is attained through use of the clock re-timing circuit in combination with the DAC. All basic skip and scan functions are

operational via the remote as well as more elaborate tasks such as autospacing - adding four second silences between the tracks to help during taping.

Tuner

The nattily titled X-Plora is an FM-only design but has the advantage of RDS. Like most tuners the front fascia is fairly spartan - basically it's an X-Ray without a loading drawer. Aerial connection is by way of a 75Ω socket only - an adaptor would be needed for indoor aerial use. This is joined on the rear by just an IEC mains socket and the analogue audio outputs.

The supplied remote is the standard MF size but houses only nine buttons - leaving enough space on the surface for a herd of grazing cattle. The remote can be used for switching the RDS on and off and also operating the local/DX facility. When 'local' is selected the X-Plora will ignore stations with weaker signals. These can be searched by changing to 'DX' mode. The X-plora can be tuned in either search mode or manually. A signal strength meter is displayed by pressing the relevant control found on the remote.

PERFORMANCE

This X-A Series system makes listening to music a pleasant experience. The amplifier delivers a beefy, refined sound that matches the airy transparency of the X-Ray CD player. Immensely well suited to big

orchestral pieces, the X-Ray and X-A2 played Copland's 'Fanfare For The Common Man' with grip and breath-taking dynamics. The repeating bass drum thwacks were resonant and fast and accompanying brass sweet and realistic sounding. This resulted in a genuine 'edge of the seat' sound that was certainly bright and alert but never too grating.

Radiohead's 'The Bends' was next up and the MF took a hold on the heavily processed mix and made sure that nothing was lost in performance. Guitar driven climaxes such as those in Iron Lung did not become muddled or harsh and I could identify every layer of the mix - which is basically what good hi-fi should do.

In the world of hi-fi it's a rare occurrence that a tuner truly makes one sit up and listen. Examples of ones that do being Leak Troughlines, the tuners of Naim and perhaps Marantz's ST-17. The X-Plora could well be up there with them. It delivers a realistic and suave sound that shows all that is good with radio broadcasts, such as BBC Radio 3 lunchtime concerts, and all that is bad, such as Capital Radio's over-generous use of studio effects. It's a natural and effortless sound that brings you into the studio like few other tuners available today. Impressive stuff.

Musical Fidelity do it again. A great sounding system, hard to beat at even twice the price. All it lacks is a volume remote! ■ ▶▶

WORLD VERDICT



Not the cheapest system around or the most user-friendly, but it sounds superb.

A lot of changes - and still rather a lot of money.



Speakers as universally revered as our Reference Series are a tough act to follow. After all, what can you do to improve on excellence?

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small is beautiful



Creek Audio's latest CD player is a new, improved and smaller version of their classic CD43. Simon Pope spots the differences in the much upgraded Mk2 version.



I admire Creek's fuss free attitude to hi-fi design - they let the music do the talking. By retaining house style, the latest incarnation of the CD 43 - first shown at the Frankfurt High-End show in June - bears a striking resemblance to its predecessor.

If you want a CD player to last you into the next decade, and sound quality is a priority, then Creek's latest offering could fit the bill. What you have to remember though is that looks and build come second. The £599 (no small price today) that you'd pay for the CD43 Mk2 goes on the inside, rather than the outside. At £895, my Roksan Caspian CD player could almost be renamed the Rock of Gibraltar; the CD43 Mk2 is a mere pebble in comparison.

Although the Mk2 retains the looks and the model number of its predecessor, it's virtually an entirely different player. For starters it has a non-magnetic alloy case and is a lot smaller. It's perhaps the smallest and lightest 'full-size' player I've ever seen, measuring a titchy 600mm x 420mm x 200mm (h,w,d). There's now a standby feature: pressing any fascia or remote control button brings up power. A single coaxial digital output is Creek's chosen type for digital recording or an external DAC.

That's the small stuff over with. The most radical changes are inside the box. The second generation CD43 features a new Philips transport that will read CD-R/RW discs. Indeed, the only item inside the Mk2 also found in the Mk1 is the Crystal CS4390 delta-sigma 1 bit DAC. Capable of 24 bit resolution, its performance has been improved by a new, low jitter master clock. Noise has been lowered by separating the power supplies for the analogue and digital sections.

After all these additions, replacements and tweakings the price remains £600, but it's been a while since we reviewed the Mk1 and a lot has happened in the meantime. How does its successor stand up to today's competition?

When it comes to sound quality, very well. The Mk2 has a truly musical nature with every disc that's put in the drawer. The Minnesota Orchestra's version of Mahler's 'Das Lied Von Der Erde' on Reference Recordings (available from Vivante - 020 8977 6600) is a fine disc that sounded transparent and open through the Creek player. Separation of the orchestral sections was perfectly executed, resulting in a spacious and airy sound. The different timbres of each instrument were

perfectly picked out and the female vocal line of the last movement was rich and detailed, with breath and natural sibilance adding to the performance.

Rock music in the form of Radiohead's *The Bends* sounded equally impressive. Although the two recordings couldn't be more different (the Mahler open and natural and Radiohead compressed like nothing else on earth) the CD43 Mk2 picked out the important lyrical lines in tracks such as 'High And Dry' and 'Iron Lung'. The latter managed to sound both full-on and rich at the same time.

Creek's CD43 Mk2 is a brilliant performer within the limits of CD. The appearance is a let down and may well lose it a few deserved places on domestic shelves in favour of better built and looking players. This would be a shame, as few players at this price manage to sound as open and natural. Next time someone tells me that size matters I can now argue my defence with a stronger case.

Creek Audio Ltd.
2 Bellevue Rd.
Friern Barnet
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www.creekaudio.co.uk

WORLD VERDICT

Great sounding player that's just let down by its lightweight build.

Measured Performance see page 111

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now read this!

All the way from Benica, California comes NHT's new SuperOne standmount loudspeaker. Simon Pope dusts off his old Beach Boys hills and surfs the sound waves.



▶ The list of three-letter hi-fi manufacturers is long - NAD (New Acoustic Dimension), KFF (Kent Engineering & Foundry), JVC (Japanese Victor Company), EAR (Esoteric Audio Research) to name but a few. The three letters usually stand for something rather staid or even mundane.

Then take NHT - Now Hear This. You could say it's straight to the point, if not a little boastful, but it's also indicative of this company's off the wall attitude to the business. It's about excitement and enjoyment, things sadly lacking in the mainstream world of hi-fi. It's a serious business you know! It's a bit like saying, "you've seen and heard the rest, now give us a try". So how could we ignore such a brash offer?

Firstly, the SuperOnes are a cracking looking pair of boxes. Finished in a classy high-gloss laminate in either black or white, they're undoubtedly a style statement. Solid of weight and build, these first give the impression of being a £600-plus loudspeaker. How shocked was I to discover they actually carry the humble price tag of £250! Very, that's how. Instead of the now ubiquitous bass reflex design, the SuperOnes are a closed box (or infinite baffle) speaker, which is rare at this price. The benefit of this is that they offer a smooth and fast sound, without the bass flab found in ported cabinets. It's often totally devoid of bass boom, but makes up for its lack of quantity with better quality. The downside is low sensitivity, which can make them a hungry load.

Low frequencies are handled courtesy of a healthy sized, 165mm coated paper cone long-throw woofer, partnered by a 25mm fluid-cooled soft dome tweeter. Both units are magnetically shielded for AV application. Cabinet construction is excellent, a quick knuckle rap on the side painfully confirmed that the SuperOnes are superbly put together for the money. My only small gripe is that there's only accommodation for single wire cable.

It's not always the case, but dare I say sometimes you can actually judge a book by the cover when it comes to speakers. A closed cabinet should deliver a sophisticated sound and a solid, heavyweight cabinet should ensure little coloration. Sure enough, both were traits of the SuperOnes. Linked to Audio Analogue's Puccini SE, John Lee Hooker's seminal 'Boom-Boom' was first into NAD's S500 Silverline CD player. The SuperOnes showed good attack, fast bass, great imaging and a deep sound stage. Here was a sound more commonly found in far more expensive speakers. The old fella's gruff voice was perfectly placed in the centre of the image and accompanied by a tight groove from the drums and bass, exempt from coloration.

Much the same effect was found with classical orchestral music. A brilliant '4D' recording of Mahler's sixth symphony by Pierre Boulez and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra on DG resulted in a spacious and

'out of the box' sound which belied the perceived characteristics of a closed box speaker. Here was space and depth galore - taut, sinuous double basses to the far right of the mix and centrally placed airy woodwind all created as large and powerful a stage as you could wish for. As far as driving them is concerned, the 60W Puccini SE had to be cranked up a little but there was no decline in quality or presence whatsoever.

At just £250 the performance of the SuperOnes is superlative. A tight and fast sound is delivered with finesse and quality usually only found in speakers twice the price and upwards. To be really fussy I could say they don't possess the most pure or sweetest treble in the business but this is a bit churlish at the price. Indeed, the problem is that you think they're more expensive than they are! Now Hear This! Now Buy This! ■

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WORLD VERDICT

 Excellent value for money, offering high end quality at a low end price.
 Measured Performance see page 111



DSP5000 - a classic

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It's back! After an extended sabbatical the best monthly competition in the audio industry returns with a vengeance.

We kick-start our competition relaunch with a cutting-edge audiophile delight. Sony's brand new SCD-XB940 SCD/CD player and matching TA-FB940R UK Edition integrated amplifier are being given away to one lucky reader!

The brainchild of Sony and Philips, SACD (Super Audio Compact Disc) takes today's CD to another level in sound quality. DSD (Direct Stream Digital) recording technology minimises the number of stages in the recording and playback process. SACD has a frequency response stretching to 100kHz (as opposed to CD's 20kHz), and a dynamic range greater than 120dB. You get a sound closer to the original source than CD can deliver, with an extraordinary sense of ambience and atmosphere.

SACD discs come in three types - single layer, dual layer and hybrid. Hybrid and dual layer discs play on both existing CD players and the new

SACD machines, thanks to their two (SACD and CD) layers being glued together. Single layer discs only play on SACD players, though. At present, there are around 160 SACD discs available world-wide.

Like the rest of the QS range, Sony's SCD-XB940 offers exceptional sound and build quality. It will play either SACD or CD. Behind its stylish fascia is hidden the LSI DSD decoder found in the reference SCD-1 player. This is the heart of the 1-bit signal processing used for SACD. From the SCD-777ES model comes the twin EI-core transformers found in the SCD-XB940, one for the audio system and the other for the servo and digital system.

When we reviewed the SCD-XB940 in our September issue we found its playback of CDs rivalled the best at the price. The player has a good grip on bass and rhythms, while the top end is sweet and smooth. And with SACD, discs like Hyperion's hybrid disc of Faure and Debussy's Piano Trios struck us with the same transparency and detail that bowled

us over with the SCD-1.

The matching TA-FB940R UK edition amplifier is designed to cope with the high frequency detail found in SACD recordings. Sony have concentrated on giving the 940R three new characteristics to complement SACD. These are a wider frequency response, an increase in the rise time (sound attack), and more stable phase characteristics achieved by use of a Linear Phase Circuit. The amplifier combines excitement and power. Bass is deep and well focused with plenty of grunt to drive along rock and dance music. This is matched by a depth of sound stage rare at this price point, and excellent portrayal of both female and male vocals.

Together the SCD-XB940 and TAFB940R offer a great combination and an ideal introduction to the musical joys that SACD can bring. And getting your hands on this brilliant combination couldn't be easier! Simply answer the following questions on a postcard, and send it to the address at right before October 31st 2000:

Competition Questions

- [1] What does SACD stand for?
- [a] Superbly Audiophile Compact Disc
 - [b] Super Audio Compact Disc
 - [c] Strangely Addictive Cacophonous Din
 - [d] Subcode Augmentation Codec Designation

- [2] Which SACD discs will NOT play on a CD player?

- [a] single layer
- [b] dual layer
- [c] hybrid
- [d] anything by James Last

- [3] What type of transformer does the SCD-XB940 use?

- [a] EI-core
- [b] TA-core
- [c] Marine-corps
- [d] EIEIO-core

- [4] Approximately how many titles are available world-wide on SACD?

- [a] 3.14
- [b] 160
- [c] 2000
- [d] 186,000

Please send all entries to:

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THE HI LIFE

Hitachi has a recent history of producing high quality DVD players.

Simon Pope lives with the new Hitachi DV-P505E.



It's reported that DVD is set to replace VHS over the next three years. Almost 47 million European households will have a machine by 2003. This is amazing, particularly when you consider that only a small number of these machines will be able to record like VHS that they supposedly replace. Still, there's no stopping the DVD revolution, fuelled by plummeting hardware prices.

Hitachi's brand new DVP-505E DVD player is a prime example of this price erosion, because just one year ago a player of this capability would have cost almost twice its £300 asking price. It's typical of the latest generation DVD players in the sense that comprehensive features and decent sound quality are now common.

The DVP-505E uses Hitachi's own DVD drive and will play DVD/VCD/CD/CD-R and CD-RW discs, making compatibility excellent. A zoom feature lets you switch between two and four times magnification and there are on-screen sliders to adjust the selected zoom area, to focus in on those all-important details!

As far as built-in decoding is concerned, the 505E will only decode Dolby Digital 5.1 on-board, not DTS. There's a Dolby Digital output as well as digital outputs for MPEG multi-channel and DTS. Other outputs include analogue video out, Video S out, Scart out and '5.1 channel'

analogue audio outputs. The remote control supplied is one of the easier to use types, although bereft of the handy jog wheel found on Sony's models.

DVD technology currently allows players from non-specialists like Hitachi to sound as impressive as models from Sony or Denon, and this was the case with the DVP-505E. With red book CD, the 505E delivered a full-on, forward sound from Supergrass's latest album that was both exciting and musical in equal measure. Vocals were clean and detailed, and bass firm and deep, if a little coloured. This is a long way from the 'treble roll-off' smoothness found in the first DVD players. Although there isn't quite as much detail present as you'd get from similarly priced CD players like Rotel's RCD-951, there's plenty of excitement.

The Classic label's 24/96 recording of Rachmaninov's Symphonic dances was next in the tray and the detail absent from conventional 16/44.1 CD was made up for in abundance. Lots of high frequency information from percussion such as triangles was played with sparkling presence. Strings were a tad dry sounding and violins a little harsh, but the double basses powered their way through the piece like a hot knife through butter, showing the Hitachi has no lack of bottom end grunt.

Programming myself into 'popcorn munching, couch potato' mode I slipped a copy of *The Bone Collector* into the disc drawer, and settled down for an evening of entertainment courtesy of Angelina Jolie and a serial killer. Picture and soundtrack quality was very good, pauses did exactly that and the dynamics of the shock-a-minute soundtrack made sure I didn't doze off.

My personal dilemma with DVD players comes in the form of confusing on-screen graphics and commands. With a little help from the manual, the DVP-505E managed to prompt me through playing back and programming a pre-arranged sequence okay, so it duly gets my thumbs up for user-friendliness!

For its £300 street price the Hitachi DVP-505E offers fine value for money. It plays music to a very good standard, although it can often get a little too excited by certain recordings. This, however, makes it ideal for film soundtracks. If you favour an up-front sound with bags of sonic thrills coupled with the ability to play movies you could do a lot worse than demo this player from Hitachi. ■

HITACHI DVP-505E £300
Hitachi UK
Dukes Meadow Bourne
End Bucks SL8 5XF
Tel: 01628 643000

WORLD VERDICT



Fine value DVD player with good, if rather forward, CD replay.

Measured Performance see page 111

fat boys slims!

Opera have a long tradition of naming loudspeakers after great voices, and the SuperPavarotti is their latest. Simon Pope clears his throat and joins in.

Being slim, svelte floorstanders, these attractive new 'speakers from Opera bear little dimensional resemblance to the great man they were named after. You'd imagine anything that carries the Italian tenor's name to be slightly larger than life, but not so here. Oh, and in case you were wondering, distributor UKD informed me that, yes, permission was granted from the golden-throated one to use his name. Indeed, he was duly sent a pair in gratitude! At least at 95x14x18mm they won't take up too much precious floorspace in his (presumably) cramped accommodation!

The aim of this model is to combine the best of both bookshelf and floorstanding designs in one package. This is no easy task, as each type has its own pros and cons. Smaller bookshelf models usually boast better attack and imaging, whereas floorstanders give deeper bass and a wider soundstage. The Opera chaps have a major job on their hands getting this balance right. They used several tricks to get the desired result, including a "double asymmetric loading" configuration using two interconnected chambers in the cabinet, one for each mid/bass unit. The upper driver is ported the lower one, which is in turn air-ported to through the bottom of the cabinet. This configuration is often used to make smaller drivers sound bigger, but can threaten speed and clarity. In this case the two 110mm drivers operate together below 100Hz, but above this the lower rolls off and the upper acts as the midrange until 2.3kHz, after which the 19mm fabric dome tweeter takes over. Effectively, this creates a cavity loaded three-way design.

Like the man himself, the SuperPavarotti's build is excellent. As with other Opera 'speakers the cabinet is made from solid hardwood, an

admirable trademark of the company for over ten years. A choice of luxurious Italian walnut (our models), mahogany or cherry is available. Wired to Audio Analogue's Puccini SE and Roksan's Caspian CD player, these 'speakers deliver a smooth, lyrical sound that does justice to their name.

Starting with the Overture to Verdi's Nabucco, this Italian combination of Pavarotti, Puccini and Verdi couldn't fail to excite, could it? Well no, but whereas the Pavarottis are excellent with string and woodwind phrasing they suffered when the rhythmic going got tough. Those galloping sections with the snare drum leading the percussion need a vice-like grip, but the Pavarottis didn't quite have it, unlike for example, Mission's 782 floorstanders. Fortunately, their sweet, airy treble made rather better work of the lush orchestral timbres and phrases.

Whilst not the quickest around, bass was commendably free of boom and coloration and found information at surprisingly low levels. With the harsh, forward guitar rock of Bernard Butler's first solo album, the Pavarottis smooth nature cooled things down to a sensible level. Unsurprisingly considering the name, vocals were very good! Butler's unlovely warbling leaves much to be desired, but the words and consonants were clear and detailed. This CD's numerous layers showed the Pavarotti's admirable midrange detail - despite the muddy mix the 'speakers innate smoothness showed up phrasing that I hadn't heard previously. The rhythm section held together well, but could have had a touch more drive.

Overall, the SuperPavarottis are beguiling loudspeakers. What you pay extra for here is that gorgeous hardwood build, but at just the right side of £1,000 they have strong competition. For example, Mission's



similarly sized 782s are faster, tighter, more detailed and cost £300 less. Where the Operas come into their own is in lyrical phrasing and subtlety, where delicacy is the order of the day. They're a fine attempt at creating a big sound from small boxes, and as they sound excellent with classical music their name's sake should doubtless be happy with his pair. But where they fall down is their lack of grunt - clubbers, DJs and air guitarists should look elsewhere!

Opera SuperPavarotti £995
UKD 23 Richings Way Iver Bucks SL0
9DA Tel. 01753 652669 www.ukd.co.uk

WORLD VERDICT



Warm and rich musical sound that's great with lyrical music. A lack of rhythmic drive lets them down though, and the competition's fierce at this price.

Measured Performance see page 111

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ARCAM Alpha 10 DRT Tuner

Digital Output ♦ 7 Presets ♦ Remote Control



WHAT HI-FI? JUNE 1999



J A Michell Gyro SE Turntable



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WHAT HI-FI? AUGUST 2000

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WHAT HI-FI?
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Classikal music

David Price listens to Linn's first integrated music system, the Classik.

► **M**any hi-fi industry figures I've spoken to about Linn's new Classik see it as further proof (as if they needed it) of Linn's move away from 'real hi-fi' into the abyss (as they see it) of 'lifestyle' systems that are all surface and no substance. They couldn't be more wrong. At the risk of putting the coach in front of the horses and writing the conclusion before the review, this is one hell of a piece of hi-fi, and one of the best products Linn has ever done.

Combining CD player, amplifier and tuner in one, midi-sized box for £995, the Classik falls between the two traditional stalls of audio and hi-fi. This is precisely where its problems begin, because people into 'lifestyle' systems are unlikely to have heard of Linn and even less likely to end up at one of the company's retail outlets. Conversely, audio purists on first name terms with their local hi-fi dealers are hardly going to rush out and buy such a downmarket, 'entry-level' product.

Let's hope the Linn marketing men manage to get their message across about precisely what the Classik is and is not. For all you cynics out there, no, this isn't a lifestyle system in the mould of B&O or one of Sony's glitzier all-in-one affairs - it sounds far too good for that and isn't as easy to use. Nor is it an esoteric hi-fi system that's gunning for your old fashioned high end

separates. In fact, the reality lies between the two - think of it as an audio iMac, a superbly judged plug'n'-play package with everything you could ever want to enjoy music on.

Any suggestion that the Classik is some kind of lightweight, user-friendly lifestyle system is contradicted by these two facts. The first is that it isn't actually that easy to use, thanks to fiddly controls and a cluttered remote. The second is that it sounds superb for its £995 selling price, better indeed than any combination of £330 CD player, amp and tuner separates I've heard.

For an explanation of the Classik's fine sonics, look no further than the last generation of Linn electronics. Back in 1995 I reviewed the Mimik CD player and concluded that it was a fine machine for its £799 retail price. Ditto the £749 Magik-I amplifier and tuner section of the Wakonda preamp. Well, the Classik uses the electronics from all these products, puts them in the same box, and adds a few more features on top - at around one third of their old combined retail price! While they may have been good at their old prices, at a notional £330 each they're superb. Put a £1000 system comprising (for the sake of argument) a Marantz CD6000OSE, Arcam Alpha 8 amplifier and NAD 414 tuner, against the Classik and the Linn wins hands down. See what I mean?

So what does Linn's new baby

actually offer? Inside its beautifully finished metal casing (vital statistics 6kg, 80x320x325mm) lurks a CD player with a quality transport and Delta Sigma DAC, and a 75W amplifier with AUX, TAPE 1 and TAPE 2 inputs, plus TAPE, PREAMP and PHONES outputs. You even get twin sets of speaker terminals round the back for biwiring, plus a decent pair of 2.5m speaker leads terminated with plugs! There's also an AM/FM tuner with 80 user definable presets and a digital signal strength meter. Then there's the remote control unit that offers everything from Treble, Bass and Balance controls to independently switched Listen and Record selectors. There's a digital clock with timer and sleep functions, which also controls a switched AC outlet on the back panel. This, Linn points out, means your Classik can wake you to music in the mornings and brew up your coffee too!

'Teasmaids' never sounded this good!

In short, Linn's Classik is awash with sensible, useful, real world facilities for music listeners. It's almost a joy to use too - it's superbly screwed together and there are nice touches like muting when switching between sources and automatic source selection. I say 'almost' because the Classik doesn't have the faultless ergonomics of the likes of B&O. The remote control is a nasty plasticky affair with a dazzling array of equally spaced grey buttons, the like of which



I haven't seen since Sony's late eighties CD players. True, it offers every feature under the sun, but it simply isn't easy enough to use for non-audiophiles who may well consider buying this product. It also lowers the tone of the Classik - a swish brushed aluminium affair would be just the job.

Another lost opportunity is the lack of an optical digital output. Many potential Classik buyers will doubtless be MiniDisc portable users who'd appreciate this feature enormously. Oh well, guess you can't have everything at this price.?

As far as the Classik's sonics are concerned, you have to remember that you're effectively listening to three £330 separates. With this in mind the little Linn comes over as unbelievably refined and sophisticated sounding. There simply isn't a ragged edge to be found. The jazzy drum'n'bass of 4Hero's 'Universal Love' shows it to be Linn through and through, which means a very clean and dry performer with a characteristically tight and lean bass. While not possessing the most expansive soundstage around (although certainly no worse than any £1000 separates system), you get an extremely finely etched midband with loads of detail. Strings are smooth and refined, voices powerful and immediate. Drums - especially snares and rim shots - machine-gun out from the recorded acoustic with a

verve that an equivalent separates system simply can't match. Best of all, the Classik frames all this action beautifully, giving the impression of a song on the move, of building up to a climax rather than just ambling along.

Move to heavy rock and it's even more in its element. Happier when not called on to convey the warmth and richness of acoustic instruments, the Classik thrives on the high octane electric guitars of Rush's 'Fly By Night'. Although not the best recording ever committed to disc, the baby Linn makes a direct line for its rhythms and dynamics and the result is pure fireworks. Simply put, I've yet to hear another £1000 system convey this track's sense of drama and occasion. From the rhythmic bass work to those staccato drums, the Linn thrusts the song along without so much as a suggestion of running out of power even at high levels.

It's no less accomplished with classical music. Thanks to its uncoloured and even-handed nature. You get a mature sound without so much as a hint of distortion or edginess. Powerful piano pieces such as Debussy's 'Submerged Cathedral' prelude show the Classik well able to convey the music's brooding build up to a crescendo of powerful piano cadences. Again it hangs on tight when the music's dynamics would throw off lesser systems, and again you come back wanting more, time after time.

When you consider the relative lack of sophistication that even well matched £1000 separates systems offer, it's churlish to criticise the Classik's music making abilities at all. Judged against stiffer opposition however, you begin to realise its characteristically dry sound is just a little too lean. This takes some of the joy out of listening to jazz, which can seem just a touch too artificial at times. This is actually mostly down to its CD player section - if you put a warmer source through the AUX input things fill out and bloom quite considerably.

So there you have it. The beauty of Linn's new Classik, its obvious aesthetic appeal aside, is the fact you can pull it out of the box, plug it in and get excellent hi-fi sound with the minimum of fuss. In next to no space and time, you suddenly have a serious hi-fi system at your disposal just ready to play music. Whether you're sick of system building, tired of tweaking or simply want the best sounding CD player, amp and tuner combo under a grand, this is now the one to get. Classik by name, classic by nature. ■ ▲

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WORLD VERDICT

 Another landmark product from Linn, combining superb convenience with great sound.

quiet revolution

David Price looks back at one of vinyl's unsung heroes, the Rega Planar 3 turntable.



Question: which turntable has done more to further the cause of vinyl in this country than any other? Well, it would have to be Linn's LP12 wouldn't it? It's the only deck that's seeped into the public consciousness to the extent that even non-audiophiles have heard of it. Or how about the Technics SL1200, the longest running disc spinner still in production, cultural icon, saviour of the dance 12", etc.? Wrong. I'd have to say the Rega Planar 3 - no other record deck has brought such high quality sound to so many people for such little money.

Launched back in 1977, it was a development of Rega Research's very first vinyl foray, the Planet. So named, the joke has it, because Rega must have been on another one to have done something as zany. It had three large cast aluminium alloy spokes to do the job of supporting the record, which basically didn't work. A popular mod became placing a glass mat on top of the Planet's platter, which was pretty much what Rega did to make the new Planar. Instead, the metalwork was junked for a thick slice of glass and tipped with a felt mat.

The Planar 3's great strength was its arm, a Japanese S-shaped affair made by Lustre, it was more than good enough for the deck's already capable motor unit. In conjunction with the Philips Impex AC synchronous motor, as seen on the Linn and a thousand other belt drive decks, Rega were able to offer an extremely cost-effective product. Given a decent cartridge, like Rega's own Supex-derived R100, or A&R's P77, the Planar 3 made very sweet music indeed. What it did, it did brilliantly,

which was to give a very capable all round performance and a rock-bottom price. Wow and flutter was low, rumble inaudible, and if you placed the deck properly it wasn't really troubled by acoustic feedback either. This made for a smooth, open sound that just played music without the fuss that suspended subchassis decks like Thorens' TD160 made. Once installed, a Rega never went out of tune.

By the summer of 1983 Rega went and did the unthinkable and modified it. Suddenly Planars started appearing with curious looking, long straight black tonearms, and the RB300 had arrived. A far more significant product than even the Planar 3 itself, this little gem stunned everyone who came across it. £90 bought you what was arguably the best tonearm in the world at that time. The numbers spoke for themselves - Linn's Ittok LVII superarm cost £253 and was less neutral, less transparent in the midband and lacked the Rega's soundstaging and information retrieval characteristics. Rega had played a blinder.

For the princely sum of £188, the new Planar 3 came with an RB300, and what a cracking deck it was! It completely trounced rival all-in-one designs, for the tonearm if nothing else. It brought bags more detail and sophistication to the sound, and also the chance to use far better moving

coil cartridges. If anything, the RB300 was far too good for the poor old P3, and only served to highlight its faults. It became less musical (and more analytical) sounding than the Lustre-armed deck, and slightly duller too - the old silver S-shaped arm had added a bit of life-enhancing coloration.

Still, well set up and with a cartridge like Audio Technica's AT-OC5 it came close to the super decks. In truth, it was more likely to be used with Linn's new K9, with which it worked well enough, but the best sounds I ever heard from a P3 was from my own Rega R100 cartridge version, mounted on a Target shell screwed into the wall. Rega subsequently launched their updated range of cartridges, some with Linn Troika-style three point mountings, but they never quite sounded as special.

Today you can pick up a second-hand Planar 3 for around £100, and £150 should buy you a mint example in an interesting colour - 1985's mauve/pink is a particularly exotic beast. Check the tonearm and main bearings are sound and that the motor's quiet. If there are any other problems like speed instability, it's highly likely a new belt will fix them. Spares are cheap and plentiful, like the deck itself. So if you're new to vinyl or sick of your CDs, this is the one to get. ■▲

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According to leading industry sources, CD is not long for this world. David Price traces the history of the once controversial format, and asks whether it still has a future.

Four words that shall ring in the collective consciousness of the world's audiophiles for all time - "pure, perfect sound forever". Funnily enough, manufacturers, reviewers and consumers alike spent two decades arguing the toss over the first three, but never stopped to question the fourth. While even the least enlightened industry 'experts' now concede that Compact Disc has imperfect sonics, how many still believe it will last forever? We thought we'd investigate its position in the great scheme of things, where it's been, where it is right now, and where it's going tomorrow...



THE STORY SO FAR

The first consumer CD players were shown to journalists in 1982, when the technology behind them still seemed staggering. Lest we forget, lasers were the stuff of *Star Wars*, so the prospect of a using one to read digital information from a silver disc was gobsmacking, even to hardened hi-fi hacks. By the time they reached the shops in Britain in 1983, it really felt like the future had moved one step closer. Despite the microcomputer boom, most people had simply never encountered such a serious slice of high technology that worked

straight out of the box.

The two earliest machines, Philips' CDI100 and Sony's CDP-101, looked radically different. The Philips had crazy space-age styling, while the Sony was a triumph of ergonomics and even came complete with a remote control! No less arresting was their sound. Compared to a similarly priced Linn turntable, both sounded extremely crisp, clean and bold - it really was like a veil had been lifted from the music. For many this was proof that CD was perfect and LP wasn't, causing them to sell

their entire record collections and switch to CD without looking back. Back home though, with a shiny new player and a small collection of discs, the sad truth dawned. CD's initially staggering detail and focus was too hard and fatiguing for protracted listening. Somehow something just wasn't quite right.

This was because many hi-fis had been balanced around high end vinyl sources with oversmooth, almost dull natures. To make systems sound neutral, bright sounding amplifiers (like Naims, for example) were ▶▶

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popular. Factor in the uncouth nature of contemporary loudspeakers (distortion-prone doped paper drivers were the norm, with 'quacky' polypropylene and Bextrene the only alternatives), and you have a good explanation for why early machines sounded so bad. Many discs were also poorly mastered, with tales of engineers forgetting to remove RIAA equalisation (with its strong treble peak) put there for LP transcription purposes!

After Philips' glitzy press launch, countless hours of TV coverage and extensive stories in virtually every national newspaper, all the fuss seemed to die down. Just 300,000 silver discs were sold in Britain in 1983 [source: BPI], and barely a handful of players. Perhaps this wasn't surprising, because even the cheapest cost £500, more than most people spent on their entire hi-fi systems. It wasn't until 1986 that prices reached affordable levels, by which time tweaked versions of first generation machines like Yamaha's CD-X3 were going for £299. By this time, CD software sales had jumped to 8,400,000, whereas vinyl was holding steady at 52,300,000 and cassette racing up to 69,600,000.

It seemed to take an age, but eventually Philips' new 16bit, 4 times oversampling players like the £250 CD160 reached dealers' shelves. With an altogether cleaner and more detailed sound, 16x4 proved the format had hidden potential untapped by existing players. The Japanese replied with a range of high end machines, from Denon's £500 DCD-1500 to Sony's £800 CDP-552, which took the format still further ahead in the detail and imaging stakes. The appearance of separate CD transports and digital-to-analogue converters finally established Compact Disc's audiophile credentials. Arcam launched its Black Box

DAC, Kenwood its DP-1010 transport, and together they were dynamite. Soon we had a format war on our hands, and erstwhile purchasers of high end record players were being increasingly tempted towards the new digital format.

Conventional wisdom had it that CD was indeed perfect - or close enough - and that vinyl was drawing its last breath. Now that CD's sound had been sorted, British hi-fi magazines presented vinyl's demise as a fait accompli, and embraced the new format unquestioningly. One exception was *The Flat Response*, which simply refused to except that 'digital' was better. One contributor, a certain Noel Keywood, discovered that far from CD having 'pure' sound, at low levels it threw out far more distortion than LP. Philips simply couldn't deny the truth, and CD's myth of measured superiority was duly disabused. This confirmed what many vinyl fans' ears had been telling them for years.

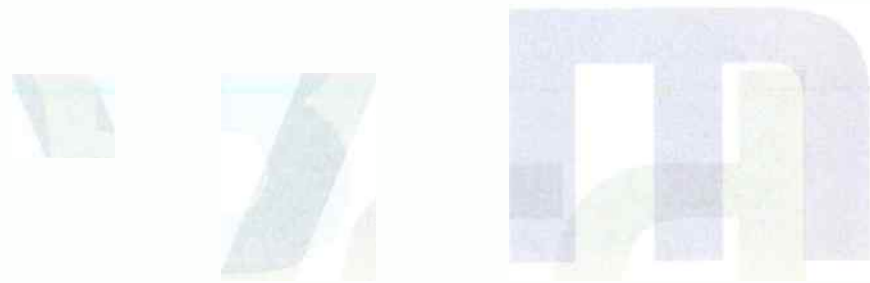
The audiophile format war intensified when Philips introduced Bitstream in 1989. By designing its DACs in a different way, and oversampling single bits at very high frequencies rather than larger digital words at lower frequencies, engineers effectively eliminated that glassy midband which had become a trademark of Compact Disc. The new technology spread like wildfire, and suddenly CD players got dramatically cheaper and better at the same time. By 1990, when Bitstream finally hit the shops, CD software sales soared. Now at 50,900,000 units in the UK, they trounced LP's 24,700,000, and even the mighty cassette had started to wane a little at 75,100,000.

Ironically, after the elimination of CD's sonic nasties, a rush followed to make it sound more 'organic' and musical, like vinyl. Tweaking hit mainstream hi-fi and a number of

manufacturers started tuning their players for a more involving, less clinical sound. Marantz's Ken Ishiwata played a major part in this with the CD-52 Special Edition, which for £300 brought a taste of the high end to the previously neglected budget market. It was amazing what a difference a few trick capacitors, some copper screws and better case damping made - not since Dual's CS505 turntable had those on a budget got access to a decent hi-fi source on the cheap.

The nineties saw a diverse role for CD that would have been undreamed of just a decade earlier. Pacific Microsonics' HDCD (High Definition Compatible Digital) arrived in 1995 with further proof of standard CD's shortcomings, as well as a worthwhile and cheap sonic upgrade. Despite a recession, that year posted massive CD sales figures, with 139,200,000 units sold - against 3,600,000 for LP and 53,400,000 for cassette. By now, the format had stamped its authority all over the music industry.

The best was yet to come though, because CD then became the format of choice for the computer industry too. CD-ROMs ushered in the multimedia age, and enhanced CDs appeared with full length promo videos and computer programs. Then came CD-R which, driven by the computer market, radically transformed the recording possibilities open to audiophiles. By 1998, thanks to computer CD writers and domestic CD recorders, audiophiles had access to high quality, mass market 16bit digital disc recording for the first time. By 1999, CD had replaced everything from Compact Cassettes to DATs to floppy disks. With sales of 176,900,000 in the UK alone (compared to LP's 2,300,000 and cassette's 18,400,000) its position seemed unassailable. So what went wrong? ►►



◀◀◀ **THOUGHT FOR TODAY**
 Superficially, all's well in the world of Compact Disc. UK CD sales are up again this year, but scratch the surface and you begin to see strange things happening. First, while CD's unit sales increased by 14%, the value of these sales has only increased by 9%. According to BPI spokeswoman Sarah Roberts, this (in marketing speak, when 'value performance trails volume') happens when formats are heavily discounted, either by budget or mid-price releases or by special deals and discounts going to music retailers. In the car industry, discounting is a tell-tale sign that all is not well on the forecourts, so why should it be any different with music?

Then there are several trade surveys done into CD hardware sales. Philips commissioned market research organisation GFK to look at CD player sales across Europe. In the UK market at least, the conclusion was that conventional CD player sales are declining. According to Marantz's Product Manager in the UK, Harry Oikawa, this is especially

noticeable with machines costing between £240 and £400 where, "CD player sales are moving to the high end, and mid-price player sales are shifting to DVD".

After nearly twenty years of having everything its own way, Compact Disc is now under attack on all sides. DVD is the format most touted as CD's nemesis. Whereas it took three years for CD player prices to reach affordable levels, thanks to intensive discounting DVD players have now moved firmly into CD territory.

FOR TOMORROW?

Sony's Eric Kingdon agrees that DVD is now gunning for CD player sales, believing that it could soon be curtains for CD at the bottom end of the market. "At this very cost-conscious price point, people are after one-box solutions which do it all. I don't think buyers are thinking in terms of formats, but rather about what a particular product will do for them at a given price." He argues that if buyers can go for a one-box DVD/CD player instead of their existing two-box video and CD player arrangement, then they will.

At the upper end of the market though, things are looking rosier. In the same way that Compact Disc wiped out the budget and mid-price turntable market back in the mid eighties, but left the high end market to prosper, so CD could go on to greater things. Harry Oikawa points out that despite the availability of fully fledged DVD Audio and SACD players in Japan, audiophiles are continuing to buy purpose-designed high-end CD players like Marantz's CD7. "The world is still big enough for non-combined machines, as Japan proves", he told *Hi-Fi World*.

If DVD is making inroads into CD in the mid price sector and has designs on the budget arena too, it

isn't the only cloud in the sky. Indeed, right now it looks like there's a queue of formats waiting to rain on Compact Disc's parade. The most immediate threat to CD player sales is, ironically, CD recorders. Philips CDR-951 machine and its predecessors have done much for recordable CD's cause, but possibly Pioneer have the greatest success story here. The company struggled for ages throughout the nineties to take the CD hardware sales fight to Marantz and Sony, but has had a surprise success with its PDR-509 recorder, which has moved in and blitzed the opposition.

Leading music industry figures see the advent of CD recorders as a significant development, and a force for both good and bad. Chris Cass, MD of Internet music portal Vitaminic reckons, "CD will go the way of the cassette, and become a kind of universal, easy-to-use recording medium you can use everywhere". Tony Wilson of Music33.com agrees, but sees an important piracy issue around copying music CDs on computers. "Much has been talked about MP3 piracy, but it's a farce because CD-R piracy is costing the industry one hundred times what Napster is costing. Pre-recorded CD sales are down around 20% in continental Europe, largely thanks to the advent of CD recorders and people burning CD-R blanks".

SACD is the next blot on the landscape. Various hi-fi industry figures have been surprised at the speed which Sony rushed to bring Super Audio Compact Disc down to the mass market, and have hinted that they'll deliberately not do the same thing quite yet. Yet Sony's Eric Kingdon is talking in terms of all Sony's CD players having SACD compatibility eventually, "Whatever the format, consumer giants are always looking to add on something to give to the consumer".



Tony Wilson

Cynics would say that Philips and Sony have a particular vested interest in turning CD players into SACD players that are backwards compatible with CD, simply because of Red Book CD's licensing arrangement, which won't last forever. Harry Oikawa says, "the licensing revenue for Philips and Sony is huge, and they don't want to lose it, so they have to concentrate on something new".

SOMETHING NEW

Harry points out that Japan is leading the world in what you can do with mobile phones. From rail ticket ordering to online banking, people are now using their WAP phones to do everything. "When MP3's copyright issues are sorted, WMA and AAC truly get to market and streaming improves, wireless distribution by mobile phones will be the way ahead, but that simply isn't settled yet." Hilary Rosen, president of the Recording Industry Association of America agrees, "despite widespread interest in the Internet as a music distribution platform, CDs will be around for a long time".

Rather, DVD is the straw at which the industry seems to be clutching. Again, this would appear to leave CD out in the cold, or does it? An interesting way of thinking about the issue is to imagine a world where DVD machines are totally dominant, and even the £120 machine in Dixons decodes and plays 24bit, 192kHz DVD audio discs as a matter of course. That then leaves buyers with two options - 'do I want to buy a DVD player that plays CDs', or 'do I want to buy a CD player that also happens to play DVD Video'? Rather than a choice of formats, buyers can choose the emphasis put on them buy the manufacturers of the players.

Traditional brand values would suggest that a mid market Marantz 'KI Signature' DVD would be tuned

for optimum audio playback, whereas the Saisho cheapie would be happier playing mid-price reissues of *Top Gun*. Further up the price range, purpose-built players from the likes of British and Japanese high end manufacturers would continue playing Red Book CD exclusively. Eric Kingdon says it's best understood in the context of the old separates vs. systems paradigm - although cheap mini systems do it all, if you want real performance you go for carefully chosen separates. Maybe this is what will keep Red Book CD players out of the history books for a few more years yet?

Indeed, DVD Audio could actually have a beneficial effect on the sales of purpose built CD only players, by reminding the public that audio is something to be experienced and enjoyed. "It opens up a dialogue in the consumer's mind about what they want from audio", believes Eric Kingdon. Essentially then, being made of aware of this new format might get folk to think about the old one some more!

MORE'S THE PITY?

In the States CD is flourishing, with both unit sales and profits up. The one area where it's taken a hit though is in sales of CD singles, which are down nearly 35% [source: RIAA]. In the first half of the year, CD singles accounted for \$77 million of music sales, a sizeable drop from the \$120 million accounted for at this time last year. This suggests that in a multi-format, multimedia world, people are fine tuning their formats to their music more.

Some argue that MP3 file swapping has hit the singles market badly in the States, but has actually boosted CD album sales. Vitaminic's Chris Cass thinks this is perfectly possible, "The music industry is about breaking new acts, and MP3 is a great form of promotion, almost like a

business to business service provider". In other words, people are hearing stuff they like on MP3 and then buying the CD later. Tony Martin, Sony Music's director of eMedia argues that we've reached the end of the era of one single format, and that this is now, "an incredibly important time, the point at which the music industry is deciding to do business in a different way".

The advent of new music distribution systems, new formats and new hardware technologies all point to a world where CD no longer reigns supreme. Many industry insiders now reckon it's had its day, but still has life left in it. Ten years is a popular guess, thanks to the massive amount of music now available on the Compact Disc format. Like vinyl before, this could be just about how long it takes before CD players end up the exclusive preserve of a rich, dedicated group of niche audiophiles with a particular allegiance to their format. Whatever happens, it's going to be fascinating to watch the next chapter of hi-fi. ■





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LETTER OF THE MONTH

DIGITAL DISSONANCE?

This digital world of ours is causing me severe problems! I have watched the development of CD players over the years, the introduction of the new generation DVD products and the ever increasing merger between the computer and hi-fi worlds. But what I have seen recently raises some questions about the fundamental differences that were thought to divide the design of products in the two markets.

Meridian, a digital hi-fi manufacturer at the cutting edge of design has recently introduced its 800 series DVD player. A top of the line flagship product that employs... wait for it... computer CD-ROM drives! What's going on there? Was all that talk in the hi-fi press about the disc transport being ever so important a load of rubbish?

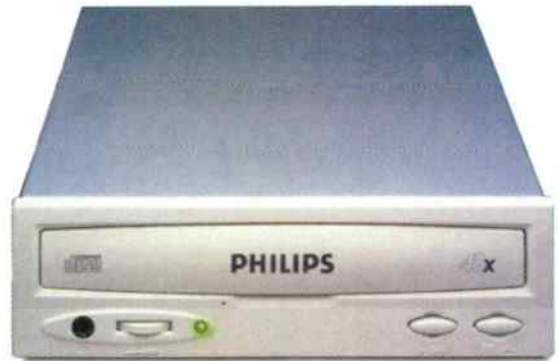
Does the hi-fi industry really have a grasp as to what digital really is? CD-ROMs obviously get all the data off the disc that is required to make a superb sound or Meridian wouldn't employ them in their top products.

Is the hi-fi market really ready to put all its preconceptions in the bin, and let the computer industry lead the way?

When will they realise that silly things like disc drives don't make all that much difference. CD-ROMs are already super high spec devices as they stand - higher spec than purpose-designed. It's about time hi-fi manufacturers started selling sound and not specification. Or have I got it all terribly wrong?

Stephen Ritchie

More and more manufacturers are using CD-ROM drives in their audio Compact Disc players because they're cheap. Normal Philips CDM12.3 transports are also inexpensive and reliable but thanks to economies of scale, data-grade devices are even gentler on corporate purse strings. This needn't mean sound quality suffers, because if the money saved then goes on, for example, better power supplies, the sound could be substantially improved within budget constraints. If it went on snazzier casing with big metal knobs, it wouldn't help the sonics one jot. You pays your money and takes your choice.



The Philips audio computer!

Considering that even the very first CD players (Philips CD100, Sony CDP101) were in effect audio computers, it's no surprise computers and audio are now becoming closer. Expect more of the same soon - Simon and I were discussing the imminent arrival of hard-drive based audio recorders. How about a major UK company doing a digital audio centre with 30GB hard drive, DVD/CD reader/writer and DACs working up to 24/192, full MP3, AAC and WMA compatibility, and software upgradeable from the Net? It's perfectly possible right now, and would blow our minds! I'd still play my vinyl though. **DP**

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▶▶ **SPEAK MY LINGO!**

My system comprises: Linn LP12 Valhalla Ittok LVIII Goldring 1042, Marantz CD-17 K1-S, Naim NAC 92INAP 90IFlat Cap, Monitor Audio Gold Mk II speakers, Naim speaker cable and Chord interconnects. My large record collection is made up of mostly punk, jazz, rock and blues music. I think I can achieve the biggest improvement in sound by upgrading the turntable and changing the speakers. Do I change the speakers before or after upgrading the turntable? With a plethora of different options available to me, I would also like some assistance with short listing a few products for audition.

I was thinking of upgrading the turntable by purchasing a moving coil cartridge (Dynavector DV-20XL, Ortofon MC-10 Supreme or Sumiko Blue Point), adding a phono stage (Naim Prefix, LFD Mistral, Sonneteer Sedley or Moth 30 Series) and adding an external power supply (Linn Lingo, Naim Armageddon, or Origin Live motor upgrade). I would only be able to upgrade the turntable in stages, unless I can buy them second-hand, and so what element would you suggest upgrading first? My initial list of speakers consists of Dynaudio Audience 50I70, ProAc Studio 125, Spendor SP2 or Epos ES15I22. My budget is up to £1000 and I will probably look to buy second hand. I would appreciate your thoughts on the best speaker options.
Darren Blake,
Norwich

Linn have always made a fuss about the importance of the source, and as far as I'm concerned they're damn right so to do. So go for that used Lingo straight away! Next thing is a Cirkus upgrade - I've heard the difference pre and post Cirkus, and frankly it's night and day. It only costs £300, for which you practically get a new turntable.

This may also be a good time to replace your cartridge. I'd actually advise you to retain your existing Naim phono stage - they do the best onboard stages in the business, so

why not save yourself a few quid to put towards the speakers? Keep your existing MM boards and go for a DV20X-H - you'll find it sounds like a turbocharged 1042 - more of everything while retaining its essentially rich, musical nature.

Now for the 'speakers. I can't recommend Yamaha's NS1000Ms highly enough. I use them myself, and for rock and pop they blow any speaker I've heard out of the water. Don't let their relative lack of media exposure here put you off - in their native Japan they're worshipped! Your Naims should just about drive them too - although they don't really sound completely at home until there's a NAP250 geeing them along.

If you're more of a jazz man, consider buying used KEF's Reference Series Two-Twos or large Tannoy dual concentrics like the Stirling. Alternatively, brand new JBL 4312mkIIs would certainly get the curtains flapping in time to John Coltrane! **DP** ■

Contrary to what most people perhaps think a good 'speaker will sound good with any music. There's no truly 'good' 'speaker that sounds brilliant with string quartets and tripe with Jimi Hendrix. Being a 'music buff' rather than a hi-fi buff, you'll also appreciate that you need a 'speaker that will perform with 'ordinary' CD recordings/vinyl/whatever, rather than just with musically dull audiophile discs.

The answer could lie in a recent auditionee from KEF. They've re-launched their high-end Reference Series and the cheapest of the range, the One-Two, is a cracker. They would round off the bright and clean sound of your MF system well and give a well-balanced performance of anything, with enough kick and grunt without going OTT and enough subtlety without sending you to sleep. Not that dissimilar to the Concert 11s in sound, they're built like a brick outhouse, so should last you the rest of your listening days. Also, at £1,350 they're nicely within budget. Alternatively, try Dynaudio's Audience 70s, or a second-hand pair of the aforementioned Concert 11s from Jamo. **SP** ■

▶▶ **ONE TO LAST**

I've recently purchased a Musical Fidelity X-Ray CD player, X-P100 pre amp and four X-A50 monoblocks. So far so good. The nightmare, however, has begun with speakers. I've listened to a number of pairs now and am a little disappointed with most. I anticipated a budget of £1000-£1500 but can't seem to find anything. They all seem a little polite or harsh. The only pairs that truly hit the mark are Jamo Concert 11s and Monitor Audio Studio 50s, which are both fantastic but more than I can afford.

My problem is that I am not a hi-fi buff but a music one, and I wanted to buy a really good system just the once and enjoy it for evermore. It's a one off purchase I don't want to get it wrong or compromise the overall sound for the sake a few hundred quid. Is there a speaker within my budget or do I save up for a bit longer?

Shaun Eyles.



One - Two watch

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All the latest news and products from the ever-changing world of computer audio and multimedia!



S3 RIO PMP600 portable 52, 53, 55

David Price puts the world's first true third generation 'digital music portable' through its paces.

Nero 5.0 software 57, 58

The power user's friend, Nero is the CD authoring software CD-R geeks insist on. Nick Tate fires it up.

DVD - THE SEQUEL

Panasonic's latest 4.7GB DVD-RAM drive offers twice the speed and nearly twice the capacity of its first generation drives. The new LF-D211N can record a 2-hour high-quality MPEG-2 movie and is now fast enough to be able to write streaming video. Importantly, thanks to improved media-defect management, it will also record on bare hi-fi type DVDs as well as the data-grade type

enclosed in protective cartridges. This means you can play back audio and video you record on it, on the forthcoming DVD Universal separates. The new DVD-RAM system also offers a revised disc storage structure which is faster for audio/visual recording. All this works from a standard E-IDE interface, although there's also a SCSI-2 version available. www.panasonic.com

YAMAHA YST-M40 SPEAKERS

Want some cheap boom boxes for your MP3 portable or CD Discman for under £50? Yamaha's multimedia speakers are far better than most, as last year's review of the YST-M100s proved. There's a healthy 24W RMS output from twin 80mm full range speaker units, small-footprint cases, bass and treble controls and a 3.5mm headphone jack. Those wanting deeper lows can use the subwoofer output jack. Well made and magnetically shielded, you could do far worse for the money!

www.yamaha.co.uk

SPARE SOME CHANGE PLEASE?

The Napster saga is producing some silly stories. Two Canadian college students are collecting money for artists whose music is being traded on Napster, believing that they'll be needing it if Napster is given a reprieve. Matt Goyer and John Carmie of the University of Waterloo in Ontario have started a site called FairTunes.com, but are reported to have collected under \$100 to date. As Napster's legal defence is arguing that non-commercial file-sharing is a perfectly legal use of digital music, they're unlikely to sanction this 'virtual tip jar', because it would tacitly admit the site is doing artists out of an income. For a giggle, see

www.fairtunes.com!



GNUTS ABOUT MUSIC

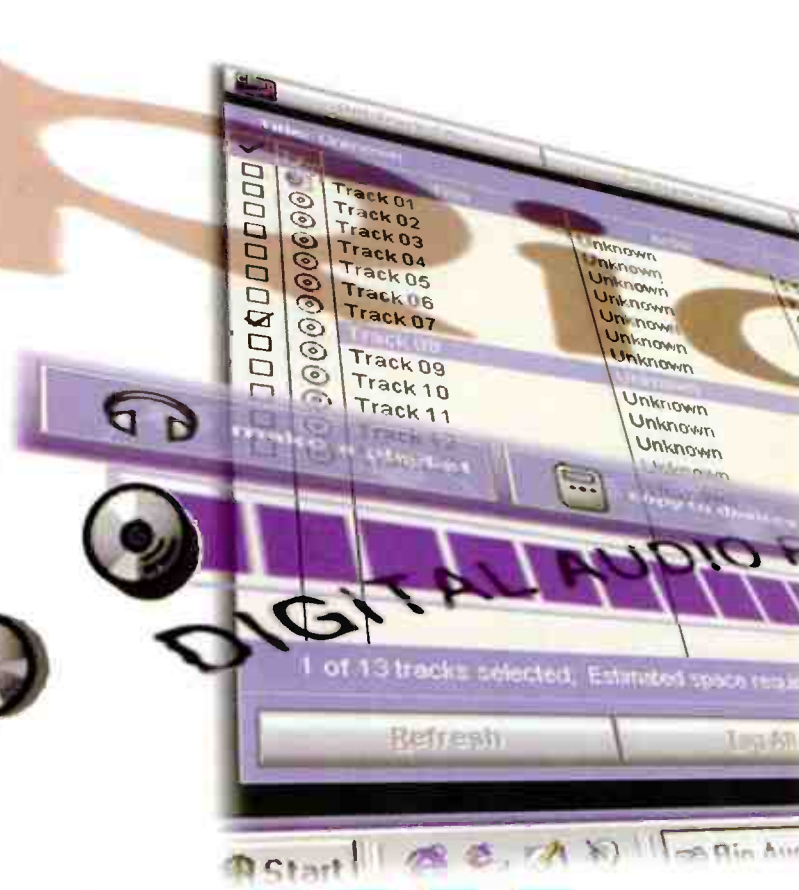
As Hi-FiWorld goes to press, the Napster saga continues with an uncertain outcome. One thing's for sure though - as it hovered on the brink, many US music fans sat down and taught themselves Gnutella. This site uses code created by a division of America Online, which was disowned before any official release on grounds of questionable legality. Much to AOL's chagrin, it has now been adopted as an open-source music file swapping resource like Napster, as well as a resting home for Internet libertarians with a political axe to grind about sharing music and movies online. Many legal experts reckon Gnutella has an impermeable shell against lawsuits, thanks to the United States' Fifth Amendment, which upholds the right to free speech. For example, a US federal judge is currently considering ruling that this legal principle protects a journalist who distributed software used for overriding DVD copy-protection online. To see what all the fuss is about, click on www.gnutella.com

CREATIVE'S NEW CREATION

Creative Labs' slinky new DAP Jukebox is a state-of-the-art third generation MP3 walkie with 64MB memory, voice recorder, personal organiser and portable data storage facilities, plus FM tuner. The same size as a portable CD player and weighing in at only 400g, it stores up to an incredible 150 CDs worth of music on its 6GB of built-in hard disk storage. Like s3's new Rio 600 it's 'codec agnostic', which in plain English means it is future-proofed by reprogrammable firmware supporting multiple audio formats (MP3, WMA, AAC and WAV) and software extensions. The standard USB interface makes the DAP easily plugged into and unplugged from PCs. It comes in a funky magnesium case and features a comprehensive liquid crystal display, high-quality earphones, optional transportable 6GB hard drive and docking station. It's expensive at £349, so how it fares against s3's forthcoming Rio 800 remains to be seen. www.creativelabs.com



It plays both MP3 and Windows Media formats. The brand new Rio 600 is arguably the first true third generation 'digital music portable' around. David Price takes a close look at the player the music industry's been waiting for.



The Third Way

► **B**ack in early summer 1999, Diamond Multimedia launched the Rio PMP300, the first commercially available 'MP3 player' to reach the UK. It had a troublesome birth, not least because the US music industry (under the auspices of the Recording Industry Association of America) tried to legislate it out of existence. They argued that it was a 'recording device' which would further the spread of music piracy. The US Supreme Court thought otherwise, and gave Diamond MM (now known as 'S3') the go ahead. From that moment on, the music industry's looked a very different place.

The Rio 500 arrived last autumn and proved a paradigm shift in the way 'MP3 portables' worked. Like Sony's early MiniDisc machines, the first Rio 300 had more symbolic value than practical worth. Awkward to use and low on memory, it had mediocre software, and connectivity - and it didn't sound too hot either! By contrast, its successor the Rio 500

was so good it could almost challenge the best MD portables. With swish ergonomics, superb USB connection, fine sound, top notch software and 64MB of memory, at last reviewers could unreservedly recommend MP3 portables to music fans and audiophiles alike.

Even since the 500 launched, things have moved on apace. This time last year most people hadn't heard of MP3 - it was essentially a hobbyist pursuit akin to vinyl junkies swapping old singles instead of buying new compilation CDs. Now, though, music piracy is finally beginning to hurt the recording industry and the majors have flocked to the first music compression format with 'Rights Management', namely Windows Media Audio.

Despite its predecessors' illustrious history, S3's new Rio 600 doesn't make one single reference to MP3, or indeed any other audio format. Instead, the introductory track pre-loaded into every machine calls it a 'digital music portable', almost as if

MP3 never existed (this introductory track, by the way, is recorded in WMA format!). Spokesman Neil McGuinness told Computer Audio World that S3 always saw MP3 as just the means to an end: "It was simply a way of getting solid-state portable players to market, rather than some kind of lifestyle statement".

This is why, now something more 'music biz-friendly' has come to the party, MP3 is no longer the centre of S3's attention. The 600 still plays it but the focus is now on a multimedia, multi-format world where MP3 is simply one of many music carriers. Indeed, the new Rio 600 is the first 'digital music player' to support multiple audio formats out of the box thanks to its Cirrus Logic Maverick processor. For example, when AAC finally hits the market, you'll be able to download a new codec direct into your Rio 600 to play it. S3 reckons this is the future, and so do we.

Indeed, this is the new Rio's single most significant feature - instead of being allied to one format it supports



anything you like. This surely has resonances for the hi-fi industry en masse - 'forwards compatibility' is a trump card flash memory holds. The hi-fi market is currently such that if you want to update your CD player, at best you send it back to the manufacturer for an expensive chip transplant, or at worst you bin it. Let's hope designers start making DACs and transport software 'flash upgradable' from the 'net very soon indeed.

The new S3's second genius move is its awesome package of ergonomics, build and finish. Considering its £169 retail price, I know no other audio portable that even comes close. This is really saying something - anyone who's seen Sony's latest MD recorders will know how beautifully screwed together they are. Finished in a classy rubberised plastic, the 600 feels like it's come straight from an Audi A8 dashboard. Factor in its comprehensive backlit, fine-pitch, alphanumeric liquid crystal display and this player feels a million dollars. Controls are minimal, comprising

playback mode, volume plus and minus and a menu button to access set-up functions.

The next eye opener comes when you switch it on. As well as indicating exactly how much juice is left in the battery, it casually announces 32MB of onboard memory. I wasn't happy to see this, after campaigning over the past year for at least 64MB as standard on all MP3 portables. Neil McGuinness points out that 32MB is a 'starter pack' to get you going. "Snap-on 'backpacks' using flash memory and IBM Microdrives will soon be available giving one, two and ten hour increases in its storage capacity". Oh well, alright then!

He also makes the point that this is actually S3's entry level machine. A new, premium priced Rio 800 following soon will have more as standard.

Other features of S3's Rio 600 show it to be a superb piece of contemporary industrial design. It sits easily in the hand, offers stacks of options (including dozens of EQ presets) through its menu system and

you can even customise it with interchangeable colour faceplates, and use it with an optional remote control.

The USB link is superb - the computer detects whenever you plug the cable in and is ready to download music at the click of a mouse button.

The latest Rio Audio Manager 3.3 software is no less impressive, offering ripping in WMA (up to 160kbps) or MP3 (up to 320kbps, using the bundled Fraunhofer codec), plus full online database facilities and playlisting. It even lets you burn custom CDs with your favourite song tracks direct from its playlist! (Macintosh users get the equally convincing Casady and Green Soundjam MP software).

Essentially then, S3's new Rio 600 is God's gift to design, but how does it actually sound? I ripped three MP3s at 320kbps and then compared them to both the original CDs played on a Meridian 506-24 CD player, and a Sony MZR-91 MD portable. Ancillaries included World ▶▶



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The Rio's new jukebox software is easier to use than that of earlier MP3 players. Songs are gathered in a playlist, compiled from audio CDs played in the computer's CD ROM drive, or from internet MP3 files.



The Rio can be programmed in software to decode all popular compression formats, including Windows Media Audio, MP3 and AAC.

Audio Design KS881 and Musical Fidelity XA-200 power amps, plus my Yamaha NS1000M monitor loudspeakers.

The S3 had the brightest balance of the three, yet never did it sound harsh or forward like cheap CD players. Mercury Rev's 'Holes' showed it to have a very wide, clean, open soundstage with good detailing. The Sony's acoustic sounded a little squashed in by comparison, with narrower left-to-right imaging. In other respects it was better, with a richer and creamier tonality than the rather dry and analytical sounding Rio 600. Rhythmically and dynamically, the Rio nudged ahead again, making the music more propulsive and getting into the swing better. Indeed, even compared to the slightly laconic sounding reference Meridian CD player, the S3 Rio proved very good at capturing the spirit of punchy power pop.

Move to the smokin' jazz of Lou Donaldson's 'Alligator Bogaloo' however, and CD really pulled away from both the Rio and the Sony. Here, their respective compression systems worked earnestly but just couldn't quite pull it off - the former sounded pleasantly smooth but unengaging, the latter too cerebral and clinical. Basically, both players were too 'overcooked' for subtle music making.

A snippet of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony (Karajan, DG) had the Rio again pulling slightly ahead of the Sony, thanks to superior detailing and more atmosphere. Still, the Sony's warmer bass, sweeter treble and more effortless nature didn't go unappreciated. Moving back to the CD reference and things improved still further, with bags more atmosphere and an unforced, beguiling musicality that marks out real hi-fi in action.

Overall, S3's new Rio PMP600 is a fine sounding player as portables (MP3, MD, CD or otherwise) go. True, it's a touch on the lean side compared to rivals like Samsung's YP-E64 and the Thomson Lyra, but it's still an entertaining listen. One word of advice, though. Don't go out on the road with its harsh bundled headphones for too long - best replace them with small in-ear Sonys or over-ear Sennheisers. Oh, and put in your order for a memory backpack while you're at it. This done, you'll have one of the most advanced portable music players around, and will soon learn to love its excellent ergonomics, low (80g) weight, superb quality, long battery life (from a single AA cell) and fine sound. Whatever format you play, this machine comprehensively advances the 'digital music portable' art. ■▲

S3 Rio 600 £169
www.riostuff.com



WORLD VERDICT

 Stunning design that takes digital music players one step closer to perfection. Despite disappointing memory size, it's still top value for money.

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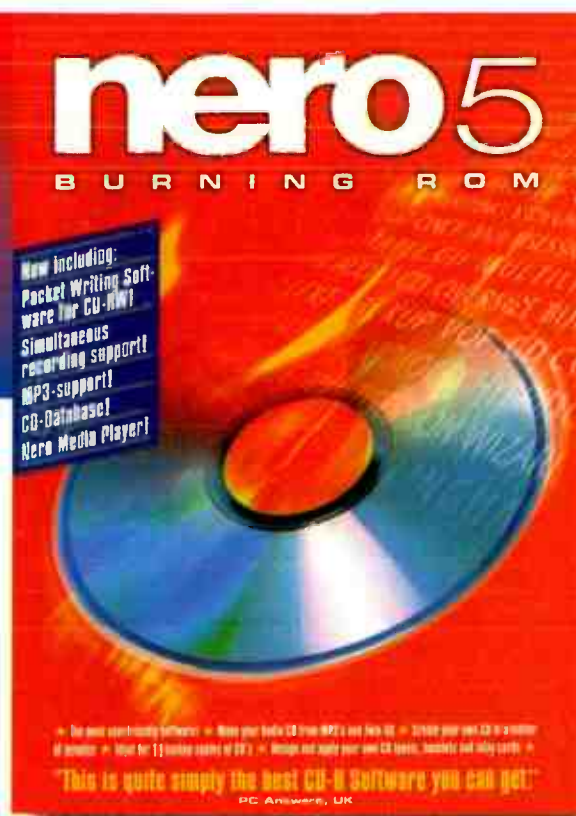
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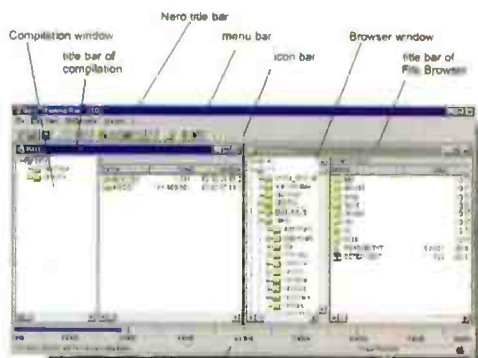
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getting ahead?



Nick Tate goes for a burn with Ahead Software's Nero Burning ROM 5.0.



This is the CD authoring package the professionals use. I shall refrain from commenting on whether it's professional CD mastering engineers or professional CD pirates, but the point is that Ahead Software's Nero Burning ROM 5.0 is an awesomely powerful and comprehensive product.

If you're a casual burner of audio CDs, you'd be best advised to turn over the page now, because Nero will be of little interest to you. The programme is a pig to use, with fussy ergonomics and a Wizard that feels like it's been bolted on as an afterthought. Only when you've got used to Nero does it fall easier to hand, and then you're ready to explore countless advanced features, which this review can only touch upon.

Being a serious CD mastering application, Nero works by reading a CD in your PC CD-ROM drive and saving an image file of it to hard disk. Only after this has been done is the image file written to a blank CD in a CD writer. This laboriously slow modus operandi is used because it's simply the most reliable way of doing the job, end of story. Oh, and you also get the chance to play with Nero's myriad clever tricks like jitter correction and digital signal processing too.

GOING FOR BURN

The act of making music compilation CDs highlights the differences between Nero and rivals like Adaptec's Easy CD Creator in no uncertain terms. Nero's a pain, and requires a number of pre-burning parameters to be set before you can get down to business. After loading Nero up, pressing on the left most button on the menu bar calls up the NEW COMPILATION box, which presents you with several options. Along the left of the box is a scrolling bar which lets you choose your compilation source, which is in our case 'Audio CD'. You can then click on the INFO tab to get useful information, like size and number of tracks, and any CD Text present. Even if there isn't any, you can add your own at this point, assuming your burner supports CD text, that is.

CDA OPTIONS lets you set up your CD-ROM drive for reading audio, offering variable read speeds, selectable hard disk caching (for a smoother, more reliable write) and you can even opt to remove the automatic silences at the end of CD audio tracks (this is the bit where a CD player counts down -0.01 before the next track starts). BURN offers further recording options, including selecting one of several

CD writers you're wanting to use, and the number of discs to be made. If you don't want to make any changes here, the options can be left on their default settings.

Then it's finally time to click on the WIZARD button, and specify what type of CD you want to burn - audio or data. After this, click on FINISH at last and you go to a Windows Explorer-style Compilation Window, where music files to be recorded are simply drag'n'dropped into place.

The last part of this long tedious ritual is to click on the BURN button. Nero then takes over and does a write-speed test where the music data is transferred to the CD-recorder without the laser beam actually writing to the CD. This lets the programme check whether you're likely to run into problems when going for the burn.

Next comes the running commentary, which is the bit I like best about Nero. As it simulates the burn process, it logs what's going on in a little status window, complete with the start and stop time. Assuming all's well with the source disc, Nero then powers up the CD burner's laser and begins the final writing procedure, including all preselected options. Details of your compilation are displayed in the

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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 KIT88 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 KIT88 it offers a virtually unmatchable 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 - 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).



£425

Kat88 VALVE
POWER AMPLIFIER KIT

£440

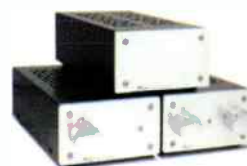
KIT88 VALVE
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ALL NEW SERIES II MODULAR PRE-AMP KIT

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 x5 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.

Power Supply Unit (PSU-II)	£175.00
Pre-amplifier (PRE-II)	£175.00
Phono Stage (PHONO-II)	£100.00
Moving coil step-up transformer	£49.00



THE ALL NEW 300B PSE MONOBLOC KIT

Our Parallel Single Ended amplifiers offer the ultimate sound quality, featuring two of the beautifully linear 300B directly heated triode in the output stage (per monobloc) pushing out 20 watts into an 8 ohm load. At the front we have a 6AU6 pentode and the famous ECC82 as the driver valve and the kit utilises a 5U4 rectifier valve for the power supply in combination with a 10H choke, giving an extremely quiet supply. For the mains and output transformers we have used the E/I type. Feedback is

switchable for all those purist out there and the kit is totally hard-wired. For those that require valves we provide the superb Tesla 300Bs, Russian 5U4s and European 6AU6s & ECC82. Simon Pope says, "Not to put too fine point on it, the sound these monoblocs create is among the finest that can be encountered in hi-fi." Our 300B PSE kit bears an affordable price of £795.00 (UK price) excluding valves. Each monobloc weighs 23kgs., external dimensions with valves: 25cm(w) x 38cm(h) x 22cm(d) per monobloc.



NEW

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).



£315

£265

KEL34 Upgrade Kit - with a superb Panasonic volume control, stargate electrolytics & paper in oil capacitors and fast recovery diodes. - £120 (REDUCED)

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, lightning fast reactions, that emphasises musicality as well as power, at 590.00 GBP a pair, a definite valve winner. Each monobloc weighs 12kgs., external dimensions with valves: 14cm(w) x 8cm(h) x 43.5cm(d).



£590
A PAIR

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(1) x 8cm(h) weight 4kg.



£175

parts directory

mains transformers
KIT88/Kat88 mains toroidal transformer
120mm dia. x 60mm(h).
Secondaries: 195V-0V-195V,450mA/0V-27V,100mA/3.15V-0V-3.15V,9A

Kel34 mains toroidal transformer
115mm dia. x 60mm(h).
Secondaries: 195V-0V-195V,390mA/0V-27V,100mA/3.15V-0V-3.15V,7.5A

Kel80 mains toroidal transformer (encapsulated)
130mm dia. x 65mm(h).
Secondaries: 195V-0V-195V,390mA/0V-27V,100mA/3.15V-0V-3.15V,7.5A

HD83 mains toroidal transformer
80mm dia. x 35mm(h).
Secondaries: 0V-150V,75mA/3.15V-0V-3.15V,1A

PSU-II mains toroidal transformer
80mm dia. x 35mm(h).
Secondaries: 0V-270V,60mA/0V-10V,2A

TRANS1 mains toroidal transformer
95mm dia. x 50mm(h).
Secondaries: 0V-370V,150mA/0V-6.3V,3.5A

output transformers
KIT88/Kat88 E/I push-pull output transformer
80mm(w)x95mm(l)x100mm(h).
Primary-secondary 10K - 8ohms, max o/p-40watts, max current-160mA valves-KT88, 6550, EL34

Kel34 E/I push-pull output transformer
80mm(w)x95mm(l)x82mm(h).
Primary-secondary 8K - 8ohms, max o/p-40watts, max current-120mA valves-EL34,5881,6L6

Kel80 E/I parallel-push-pull output transformer
95mm(w)x115mm(l)x133mm(h).
Primary-secondary 4.6K - 8 & 4ohms, max o/p-80watts, max current-250mA valves-EL34,5881,6L6

HD83 E/I single ended output transformer
40mm(w)x50mm(l)x55mm(h). Primary-secondary 4K - 4 x 64ohms windings, max o/p-1watts, max current-25mA valves-ECL83etc

Pre-II E/I driver transformer
80mm(w)x60mm(l)x65mm(h). 6:1 step down transformer. max current-10mA valves-6922etc pre-amp. stage

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- c. AEROVOX 220uF 500Vdc v. high quality electrolytic (solder tag radial)
90mm(h) x 35mm diameter
- d. TROBO 470uF 450V high quality electrolytics (snap in radial)
50mm(h) x 35mm diameter

- e. TROBO 100uF 450V high quality electrolytics (snap in radial)
40mm(h) x 20mm diameter
- f. LCR 22.5uF 440Vdc polypropylene capacitors (wire leadouts radial)
100mm(h) x 45mm diameter
- g. ANSAR 22.5uF 630Vdc polypropylene capacitors (wire leadouts radial)
85mm(h) x 43mm diameter
- h. AMPOHM 0.47uF 630Vdc paper in oil capacitor (axial)
45mm(l) x 20mm diameter



printed circuit boards

KIT88/KaT88 Printed Circuit Board
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Kel34 Printed Circuit Board
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Kel80 Printed Circuit Board (a pair)
120mm(w) x 215mm(l) x 2.4mm(d)

HD83 Printed Circuit Board
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PSU-II Printed Circuit Board
105mm(w) x 130mm(l) x 1.6mm(d)

PRE-II Printed Circuit Board
105mm(w) x 130mm(l) x 1.6mm(d)

PHONO-II Printed Circuit Board
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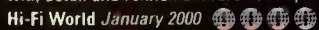


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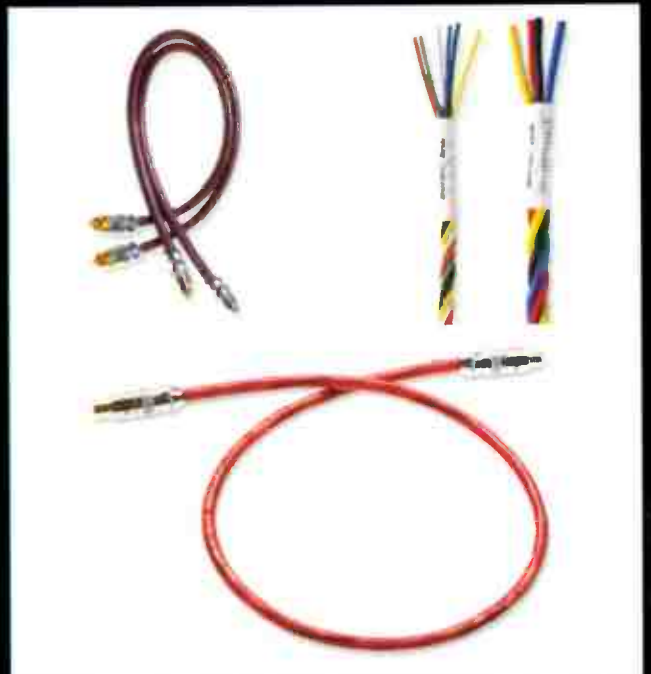


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amplifier kits description

amplifier kits description	order No.	qty	uk (inc vat & carriage)	overseas (exc. vat & carriage)
Kit88 Valve integrated amplifier kit (with valves)	Kit88-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£440	£375
Kit88 Valve integrated amplifier kit (without valves)	Kit88-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£325	£275
Kat88 Valve integrated amplifier kit (with valves)	KaT88-K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£425	£365
Kat88 Valve integrated 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 Monobloc amplifier kit (with valves)	Kel80 -K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£590	£500
Kel80 Valve Monobloc amplifier kit (without valves)	Kel80 -K240/120	<input type="checkbox"/>	£520	£445
Kel34 E&I 40W push-pull integrated amplifier kit (with valves)	Kel34 E&I-K240/120 (with valves)	<input type="checkbox"/>	£265	£230
Kel34 E&I 40W push-pull integrated amplifier kit (without valves)	Kel34 E&I-K240/120 (no valves)	<input type="checkbox"/>	£230	£190
Kel34 E&I Transformer set (1 main & 2 outputs)	Kel34 E&I-K240/120 (T.set)	<input type="checkbox"/>	£140	£120
Kel34 E&I Output Transformer (pair)	Kel34 E&I-K240/120 (OPT)	<input type="checkbox"/>	£70	£60
300B PSE Valve Monobloc amplifier kit (with valves)	300B PSE-K240/120(with valves)	<input type="checkbox"/>	£1070.00	£910.00
300B PSE Valve Monobloc amplifier kit (without valves)	300B PSE-K240/120(no valves)	<input type="checkbox"/>	£795.00	£680.00

loudspeaker kits

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KLS3 Drive Units	KLS3D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£230.00	£200.00
KLS3 Drive Units + Crossover Kit etc	KLS3C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£350.00	£300.00
KLS3 Gold mkII Drive Units	KLS3G-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£450.00	£392.00
KLS3 Gold mk II Drive Units + Crossover Kit etc	KLS3G-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£575.00	£500.00
KLS9 Drive Units	KLS9D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£160.00	£140.00
KLS9 Drive Units + Crossover Kit etc	KLS9C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£230.00	£200.00
KLS10 Drive Units	KLS10D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£358.00	£311.00
KLS10 Drive Units + Crossover Kit etc	KLS10C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£394.00	£343.00
KLS10-Subwoofer Drive Units	KLS10-subD	<input type="checkbox"/>	£71.00	£61.00
KLS10 Drive Units + Crossover Kit etc	KLS10-subC	<input type="checkbox"/>	£149.00	£130.00

parts description

parts description	order No.	qty	uk (inc vat & carriage)	overseas (exc. vat & carriage)
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Kel34 mains toroidal transformer	Kel34 - mains T	<input type="checkbox"/>	55.00	40.00
Kel80 mains toroidal transformer(encapsulated)	Kel80 - mains T	<input type="checkbox"/>	70.00	52.00
HD83 mains toroidal transformer	HD83 - mains T	<input type="checkbox"/>	35.00	25.00
PSU-II mains toroidal transformer	PSU-II - mains T	<input type="checkbox"/>	35.00	25.00
TRANS1 mains toroidal transformer	TRANS1	<input type="checkbox"/>	25.00	17.00
Kit88/Kat88 E/I push-pull output transformer	88 - O/P T(pair)	<input type="checkbox"/>	130.00	104.00
Kel80 E/I parallel-push-pull output transformer	Kel80 - O/P T(pair)	<input type="checkbox"/>	170.00	136.00
HD83 E/I single ended output transformer	HD83 - O/P T(pair)	<input type="checkbox"/>	85.00	65.00
Pre-II E/I driver transformer	PRE-II - driver T(pair)	<input type="checkbox"/>	70.00	54.00
Kit88/Kat88 Printed Circuit Board	88 - PCB	<input type="checkbox"/>	37.00	32.00
Kel34 Printed Circuit Board	Kel34 - PCB	<input type="checkbox"/>	16.00	13.00
Kel80 Printed Circuit Board	Kel80 - PCB(pair)	<input type="checkbox"/>	47.00	39.00
HD83 Printed Circuit Board	HD83 - PCB	<input type="checkbox"/>	18.00	15.00
PSU-II Printed Circuit Board	PSU-II - PCB	<input type="checkbox"/>	18.00	15.00
PRE-II Printed Circuit Board	PRE-II - PCB	<input type="checkbox"/>	18.00	15.00
PHONO-II Printed Circuit Board	PHONO-II - PCB	<input type="checkbox"/>	18.00	15.00
Tag board 2 x 16 connections (hard wiring)	TAG	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.50	3.00
Alps blue audio grade 50K dual log potentiometer	ALPS - 50K	<input type="checkbox"/>	11.00	9.00
Alps blue audio grade 100K dual log potentiometer	ALPS - 100K	<input type="checkbox"/>	11.00	9.00
AEROVOX 150uF 500Vdc v. high quality electrolytic	AERO - 150U	<input type="checkbox"/>	12.00	9.50
AEROVOX 220uF 500Vdc v. high quality electrolytic	AERO - 220U	<input type="checkbox"/>	17.00	15.50
TROBO 470uF 450V high quality electrolytics	TROBO - 470U	<input type="checkbox"/>	8.50	7.00
TROBO 100uF 450V high quality electrolytics	TROBO - 100U	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.00	5.00
LCR 22.5uF 440Vdc polypropylene capacitors	LCR - 22.5U	<input type="checkbox"/>	10.00	8.50
Ansar 22.5uF 630Vdc polypropylene capacitors	ANSAR - 22.5U	<input type="checkbox"/>	16.00	13.00
Ampohm 0.47uF 630Vdc paper in oil capacitor	AMPOHM - 0.47U	<input type="checkbox"/>	9.50	8.00
K5881 chassis	K5881 - CHAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	55.00	45.00

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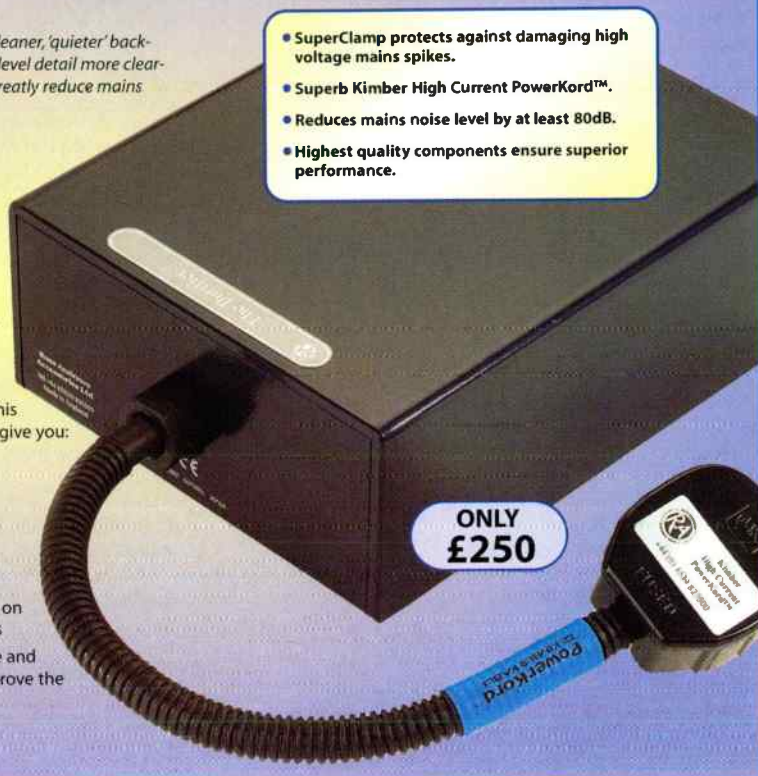
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These are exciting times. And they are going to get more exciting! A raft of new audio products are due to hit the market, many quite different from today's hi-fi. Computer companies like Microsoft and Compaq are getting into audio. Major audio companies like Philips and Sony, both doing very nicely in computers, will be fighting back. This month I'm going to consult the crystal ball to see what's coming.

Let me start with Philips. They are working on a new generation of products based around hard disc storage and programme compression. Philips manufacture the fascinating TiVo video recorder (see www.tivo.com). It converts incoming tv signals to digital, compresses them using MPEG-2 (and more) and records and replays continuously to and from hard

disc using multiplexing. A programme being watched in real time can be paused for 30 minutes, without loss. So if you're watching the Nine O'Clock News and the doorbell rings,

press Pause, come back five minutes later, press Play and the programme continues without a break. Action can be slowed at any time or instantly replayed at any speed - great for football or Formula 1.

Philips are talking about recorders that store seven days of programme so you'd always be able to look back on a week's tv. Currently the TiVo recorder manages 30hrs (NTSC) on 30GB, Philips tell me. Expect to see the idea surface with a vengeance soon! Televisions could come with such a recorder built in.

I should add that TiVo is a whole service, not just a recorder. However, it illustrates how hard drives and programme compression are central to new products due to arrive soon.

How does this affect audio you might ask? Recently I tested Terratec's innovative M3PO CD player and this too can be fitted with a hard drive. The M3PO plays conventional CDs and compressed MP3 files and it can store music to the hard drive. Expect a flood of 'jukeboxes' from other manufacturers soon where MP3 files

are similarly stored to hard disc. A 10GB disc stores around 150 MP3 encoded albums. I believe Philips will be fitting their CD recorders with hard drives soon to store and edit music for transfer to recordable CDs, an extension of the jukebox theme. The greatest problem they'll face here is complexity at the user interface.

Then there's Expanium, a portable CD player recently released by Philips, which leads onto other new ideas. It plays conventional audio CDs or MP3 files burnt to CD-R/RW, like Terratec's M3PO. Ten albums, MP3 compressed, can be crammed onto one Compact Disc. You compile MP3 files on a computer with a CD recorder, ripping from an audio CD or downloading from the internet. How many conventional

based PC". What for? It "uses its powerful 32-bit RISC processing engine to implement audio decompression algorithms in software" says Cirrus, with "up to 25 MHz of CPU processing power available (after digital audio decoding) for custom features such as software EQ or tone control, volume control, spectrum analyzer, random play order, etc."

Maverick is for portables. However, it embodies the idea of upgradability. High power on-board processors like Maverick will appear in hi-fi products, because the benefits are enormous. Hi-fi purists may well sneer at MP3, but as internet bandwidths increase (ADSL, cable modems) and the cost of storage - solid state and hard drive - decreases, the high compression ratios (10:1) of MP3 and AAC will become unnecessary. Users could slot in a bigger Memory Stick or SD Card and reprogramme to read MiniDisc ATRAC for example, with just 5:1 compression for better quality. Arcam have just released a DVD player with upgradable memory that will read DVD-Audio when a new board is installed. See what I mean?

Audio is entering the computer and computer technology is entering audio. My crystal ball says there's a lot more to come, much of it very exciting. Hi-fi is on the move like never before. Watch this space. ●

As internet bandwidths increase and the cost of storage decreases, MP3 and AAC will become unnecessary

CD players can handle MP3s? Equally interesting is the player's ability to recognise MP3 bit rate right up to an unusually high 320kbps. That's just one quarter normal CD at 1.2MB/s, giving much better quality than normal MP3 at 128kbps.

All Expanium lacks is the ability to run alternative codes. It does not have upgradable firmware, unlike Compaq's PA-1, Sony's MC-PI0VAIO Music Clip or NW-MS7 Memory Stick Walkman, or the new Rio 600, reviewed by David Price in this issue (p52). So it cannot be upgraded to play AAC (Advanced Audio Coding from MPEG) or WMA (Windows Media Audio) file formats, due soon.

Upgradable firmware? Yes, here's where computers meet audio. In fact U.S. chip manufacturers like Motorola, Analogue Devices and Cirrus, who moved from analogue audio to digital and then computing years ago, are bringing their experience back to audio. Cirrus say their new EP7209 Maverick processor has a "Performance matchIng 100 MHz Intel® Pentium-



Noel Keywood

XX marks the spot

Fancy a bit of Japanese high end vinyl esoterica? David Price tries Dynavector's madcap DV XX-1L moving coil cartridge for size...



“Unless a phono cartridge, regardless of price, can sound better than CD, it is obsolete” says the press release. Don't you just love the Japanese spirit? In a country of 125 million people and the world's second largest market for Compact Discs, there are still guys around in tiny specialist audio manufacturers writing stuff like this!

Dynavector, lest we forget, is the creation of Noburu Tominara, a Professor at Tokyo University and leading expert in coil winding and magnetic flux deviation. This, one of the company's high-end products, was inspired by research he did into the effects of unwanted flux fluctuation in the magnetic circuits of moving coils. This was found to affect intermodulation distortion in higher output MCs employing powerful magnets like samarium cobalt or neodymium. Tominara argues the subjective effect of this distortion is harshness, edginess and a general lack of musical cohesion. The £1000 XX-1L's answer to this is to use a switchable flux damper, specially developed to remove this magnetic fluctuation.

That's not the end of the story though, because the DV XX-1L also comes with a highly tolerated Micro Ridge stylus courtesy of the Namiki Precision Jewel Co., polished into a line contact profile and set on a laser machined, solid boron cantilever. Tracking weight is quoted at 1.9 to 2.3g, and the overall mass of the cartridge is 12g. This lower output L version of the XX-1 puts out a very modest 0.25mV output, which required maximum gain through my reference

Michell Delphini phono preamp.

Theories, specs and measurements aside, do the good professor's thoughts on the subject of flux damping amount to more than a hill of beans? To answer this question I pressed my Michell Orbe/SME Series V into service and cued up LTJ Bukem's latest vinyl outing, 'Journey Inwards'. First impressions with the Flux Damper off were of a very sweet and refined sounding cartridge, which quite frankly is exactly what I expected from Dynavector!

My reference Ortofon MC30 Supreme (several hundred pounds cheaper, it must be said) definitely had the edge for speed and detail, serving up a tighter, tauter, drier bass with faster attack transients. Only in the treble region did the DV get the better of it, giving a more organic reproduction of hi-hats. Even so, the XX-1L still had a slightly samey timbral quality that I'd personally ascribe to all boron cantilevered cartridges - whether you like it or not, sweet'n'smooth is what you get.

Rhythmically it was another ball game. Although the Dynavector sounded less fleet of foot than the Ortofon, it still managed to hang things together better. Randy Crawford's 'Rio de Janeiro Blues' was a less cerebral experience through the DV, with a better sense of the song starting softly and moving to a climax. The Ortofon by contrast seemed more disjointed and less of an emotional experience.

Flicking the flux damper switch brought a subtle but obvious improvement. Rather like running Densen's Demagic through your CD player, it cleaned up the sound and gave a bit

more space and atmosphere to proceedings. This innovation is demonstrably worthwhile then, but I really wonder if it's necessary to provide a switch for something that should be on all the time anyway. It reduces it to the status of gimmick - something it decidedly is not.

Running the gamut of my black plastic collection, the DV XX-1L proved a satisfying listen at all times. I love its subtlety, its beguiling, unshowy nature, and its innate musicality. Quite simply, whatever you feed it, the Dynavector just pulls you in and keeps you. Ortofon's MC30 Supreme is a more accomplished all rounder, with noticeably superior dynamics, stage depth and image location. By comparison the DV sounds a bit vague and imprecise, especially in the bass which could really do with some extra speed and grip. Nevertheless, I still found myself enjoying the Dynavector more on all types of music except hard'n'fast techno.

A fine cartridge then, but an expensive one that's bettered in some respects by considerably cheaper designs. The problem is that when put against close price rivals like Linn's superb Lyra-designed Arkiv II, it really struggles. Make no mistake, it's well worth an audition and could prove just your cup of tea but, as always, listen closely before you part with your hard earned cash ■

Dynavector DV XX-1L £998
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 Tel: 01665 830862

WORLD VERDICT



Warm, sweet, beguilingly musical cartridge with a charming personality, but not quite the class of the field.

Measured Performance see page 111

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World Radio History

wired for sound

David Price encounters a couple of audiophile upgrades for your mains supply and your Rega arm.



TRICHORD POWERBLOCK 500

Okay, I'll put my hands up and admit that I find it hard to take mains conditioners seriously. However, the idea that the fruits of the national grid are riddled with noise, surges and other assorted nasties is totally plausible. You only have to listen to your system late at night when most people aren't using it to hear the miracle transformation that clean AC power makes to any half decent hi-fi. The problem is that the solutions to this undisputed problem are often little more than the hi-fi equivalent of snake oil, and over-priced snake oil at that!

Last year Trichord Research's Graham Fowler asked me to listen to his new Powerblock 500. I have to say that while I'm definitely a fan of his products, I had about as much enthusiasm for this one as I do for getting my car wheels balanced. Eventually, a while after the large

(105x357x220mm) and heavy (13kg) black box assaulted my doorstep, I found time to plug it in.

I was gobsmacked. Not because it transformed my Amstrad into ten grands' worth of Audio Research, but because it worked at all. Usually what you gain on the swings with these things you more than lose on the roundabouts, but here was something that effected a subtle but useful improvement to my system.

Trichord claims that several types of mains distortions are reduced, with specific improvements to 'common mode' noise (which is noise and distortion equal to both the live and neutral wires on the incoming mains). As I've no desire to get into theoretical electronics right now, I'm simply saying that it removed a layer of mush from the music, making it sound more immediate and engaging. There's also a useful smoothing of treble and upper midband. The



soundstage also drops back a bit further, and things project out clearer.

I've tried the Powerblock in a variety of systems in locations as varied as Brighton, Bristol and Cumbria and found it made a useful change for the better in all of them. Before you try it you may not realise you need it, but after you've plugged it in, it's very hard to go back to life without it. Overall then, a great system tuning aid that's realistically priced at £299.

Michell-Trichord: 0208 953 0771

WORLD VERDICT

£ Sifts the silt out of your system without costing the earth.



ORIGIN LIVE REGA ARM REWIRING

It was almost five years ago that Origin Live announced its counterweight modification for Rega tonearms. By bolting a rigid end stub onto the arm tube and running an Allen bolt through a shaft in the side of the counterweight, a cooking RB250 or RB300 could be transformed. So great was the improvement that the £75 cost seemed totally out of proportion to the performance gained.

Since 1997 I've used one of these arms on my Michell Orbe. I started with an OL RB300, but then Mark Baker mentioned that, in his opinion, the RB250 was even more capable than the RB300, thanks to its stronger bearing housing, lack of counterweight spring and brass

mounting base. Intrigued, I put an OL RB250 against my OL RB300, and sure enough he was right - if anything he'd understated the difference! Well, OL also do a Rega arm rewiring service using a special type of Litz cable (which will remain secret). The cost is £70 for the internal wiring, and another £70 if you want the external cable and plugs done, plus an additional, discrete earth lead fitted.

The difference between the standard Rega wiring and OL's bespoke stuff depends entirely on the system you're currently running. On a standard Rega 3 (no mean performer at its price) you'd barely notice it, but hear the change through a high end turntable and cartridge (like Ortofon's MC30 Supreme) and it's night and day. You get a wider, deeper



and more spacious acoustic, dramatically cleaner and more detailed midband and treble and a firmer, more musical bass with just a touch more wallop. It's one hell of an upgrade, even if it isn't quite of the revelatory nature of the counterweight mod.

Origin Live: 02380 442183
www.originlive.com

WORLD VERDICT

£ An essential mod for all Rega users, but only after you've had the counterweight done first.

While talk of the death of CD could still be a tad premature, there's no doubt that the poor old Compact Cassette is finally getting its last rites. Back in 1989, little sister wasn't buying her Johnny Hates Jazz and Curiosity Killed the Cat albums on Compact Disc. For Britain's music buyers at least, cassette was the medium of the moment. No less than 83 million prerecordeds were sold that year (according to the BPI), running LP in its heyday a close second (in 1975, 91.6 million long players were shifted). Contrast that to 1999's cassette sales - down to 17m and falling at a rate of 24.7% comparing the second quarter of 1999 with the same period this year.

This is depressing reading to fans of Philips old format.

These days, many of us have bought MiniDisc players to do the same job as cassettes once did, a role it performs more than admirably. I don't

step outside the house without my Sony MZ-R90 portable, which has given me many hours of fine sounding, fuss-free mobile music. Similarly, in the car I've been using a Kenwood 7070 CD tuner, which has proved an absolute joy. Unfortunately though, someone recently decided to 'liberate it', leaving yours truly with no option but to go back to my old cassettes in the car.

It was a strange experience returning to a format I'd once taken so seriously but had then left behind. My trusty Rover 216 GTi got its 'original equipment' Philips stereo radio cassette reinstalled, and my cassette drawer was duly opened for the first time since 1997. Out came a motley selection of Sony Metal ES and That's cassettes, bought in the early nineties when I lived in Japan, at knockdown clearance prices - this country left the old format behind some five years before the UK even considered the possibility.

Seeing my old music again was a surprisingly poignant moment. From an old Smiths tape I'd take to school back in 1983 (always been a happy chap, then - Ed), to a House compilation that accompanied me

on a touring holiday of Japan's Izu prefecture in 1990, all my musical memories were before my eyes and ears again. And I was surprised how good they sounded. Even played on my steam-age Philips car stereo, there was an atmosphere and clarity to the sound I frankly hadn't expected. Dare I say it, many sounded better than my swish, modern car CD. True, many had been recorded by a Sony Walkman Pro onto high quality metal tape, and having been taken straight from, variously, a Rega Planar 3, Linn LPI2, Michell GyroDec and Orbe, they were all analogue too. But the clarity, musicality and warmth of these audio fossils proved a tremendous ear-opener. To my shame, I'd forgotten just how great analogue tape could be.



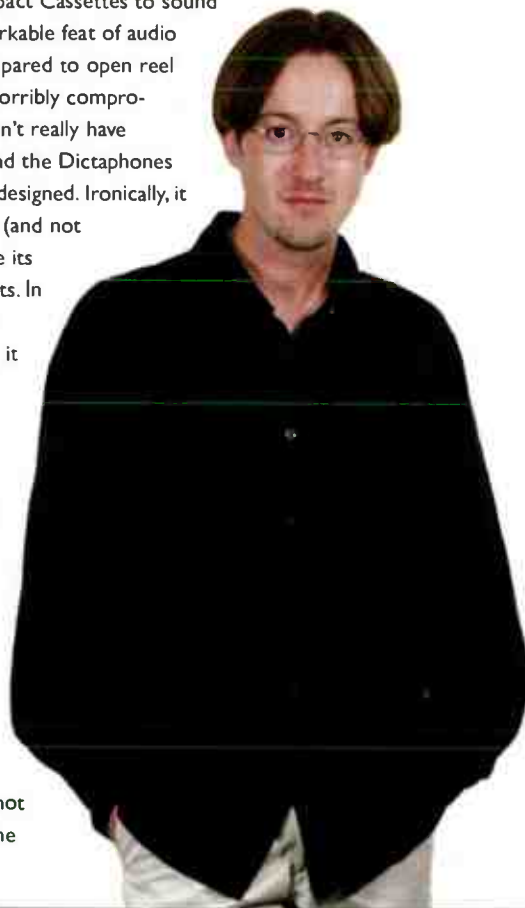
To my shame, I'd forgotten just how great analogue tape could be.

Getting Compact Cassettes to sound good was a remarkable feat of audio engineering. Compared to open reel the format was horribly compromised and shouldn't really have progressed beyond the Dictaphones for which it was designed. Ironically, it was the Japanese (and not Philips) who were its greatest exponents. In the late seventies they transformed it with high precision, servo controlled, dual capstan tape transports which got the music onto the tape with minimum distortion. Machines like Pioneer's CTF-950, Sony's TCK-75 and Aiwa's AD6700 shot the format into the

audio stratosphere, offering an amazingly good sound if you were prepared to pay for it.

In many ways cassette never really got much better. Doing it well was about expensive engineering rather than the latest electronic developments. True, Nakamichi pushed the game forward further with the CR-7 some ten years later. With an awesome direct drive, quartz-lock transport and fantastic heads that practically never saturated, it was a star for sure but still very much a niche, high end model. By the mid nineties, when cassette had reached its swan song, popular 3-head machines like Sony's TCK-611S weren't any better than the late seventies high end stuff, just cheaper.

So it's "so long to cassette", and thanks for the memories. For me at least, it's sad to see a format once so strong now in terminal decline. At its very best it can still beat all its digital rivals to a straight fight, CD included. But as Philips noted after their digital replacement for the cassette (DCC) flopped, tape has had its day. ●



David Price

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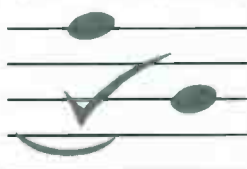
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Back in February of this year I wrote about the growth of hi-fi sales over the internet. My conclusion then was that whilst there would be a demand for such services it would be some time before retailers, in their current form, disappeared altogether. Nine months on, with the hi-fi industry just having entered "the season", I thought it apt to take another look at the progress and developments of sales through the 'net. This, after all, is the first season where there is a broad range of online sellers and widespread usage of internet connections.

Many UK companies are disappointed by the lack of response from internet sites, especially because hi-fi customers are likely to be in tune with new technologies and ways to purchase goods. Contrary to the general experience though the hi-fi retailer I work for has had great success with the internet. Sales on the site match or exceed some of the busiest stores in the high street. But here's the rub. Are these entirely new sales from

customers brought in by the 'net, or are existing customers simply changing their method of purchase? Either way, what has struck me as crucial to the site's success is the fact that it is backed up, in our case, by a group of retail stores.

I've lost count of the number of times friends and customers have told me of ordering and paying, for a product over the internet, only to find that delivery then takes weeks, or worse still, does not take place at all, due to lack of availability. This leaves the purchaser open to being offered an "alternative" which is often nothing like as good value or appealing as the original. Without a retail outlet, of course, it's impossible to compare the suggested alternative to rivals. There are sites that appear to offer unbelievably cheap prices, and there are now even search engines that can find specific products at the lowest price. The problem here is that not all retailers or even products are represented.

Logically then, it would seem the best route for hi-fi retailers to take is a combination of internet site and store.

This is what the latest venture from ex-Tannoy MD, Alex Munro, would suggest too. He has just launched a new service combining the best of both worlds: Buyline.

The idea behind buyline.com is that potential customers are given three options once they've logged into the site. The first is home delivery, not from a central warehouse but from a local dealer. This gives the buyer a local contact should things go wrong. For an additional charge the unit(s) can be installed too.

Alternatively, the cheapest option is to simply collect the goods directly from the nearest dealer who acts as a buyline agent.

Why, you might ask, should buyers not go directly to their nearest dealer in the first place? Well, the choice of products is

” Either way, what has struck me as crucial to the site's success is the fact that it is backed up by retail stores.

unlikely to be as great. More importantly buyline's price will undercut the typical in-store selling price. The logic may seem a bit odd and unfair to non-internet users, yet as those in retailing know, there's been dual pricing policies in retailing for years. For example a Daily Mail reader might be able to buy an iron from Comet for £30 rather than £35 with a particular voucher.

There's nothing new here. The dealer may lose profit, but because this is new business (we hope!) it can be offset against reduced advertising costs.

It seems to me an ideal way for smaller retailers to become involved with the internet without the cost and time needed to manage a fully independent site. As a way to preserve the fine

tradition of independent dealers I wish it every success - and that's coming from a rival!

So it appears that the whole internet sales structure is beginning to fall into place. Sites offering mega-cheap deals will still exist, as they have always done via mail order. The larger chain hi-fi retailers will continue to offer advanced on-line services backed up by nationwide stores. They may not be as cheap as some, but they do offer the customer a return base for the product should they experience difficulties. Through operations like buyline independents now have an outlet too.

What we have then, is the sort of structure that prevailed in the days before the World Wide Web, a difference being that there are many people out there who want to buy in the evenings, or other out-of-hours times, who can now be catered for.

As to whether this will make any difference to overall sales or not, we shall see. I shall pencil in my diary for a full report in February 2001! ●



Dominic Todd

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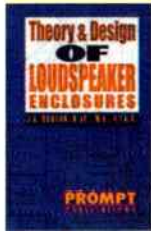
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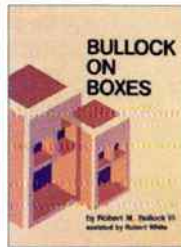
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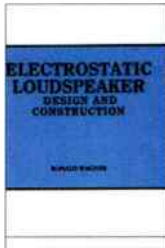
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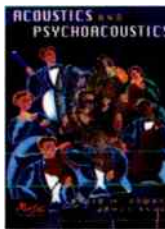
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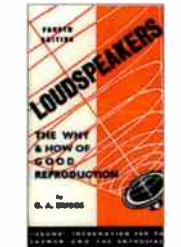
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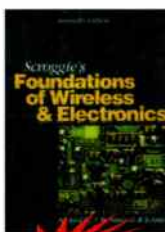
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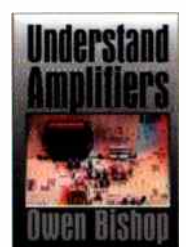
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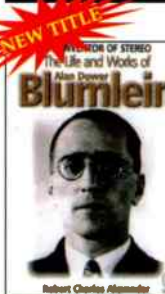
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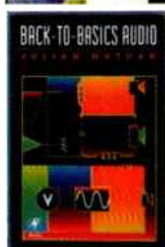
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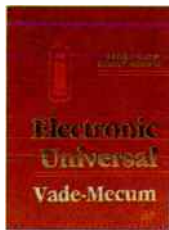
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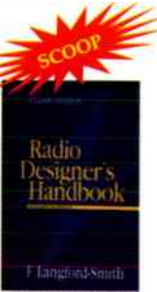
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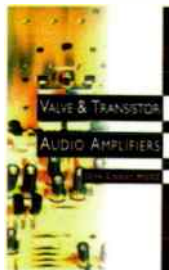
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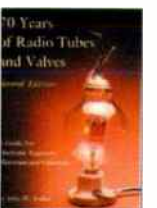
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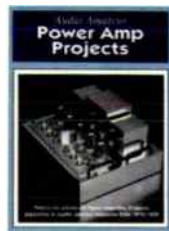
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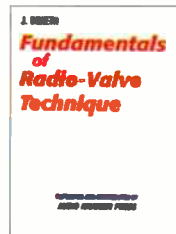
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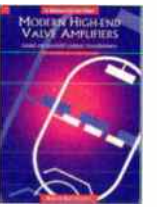
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ROKSAN CASPIAN £895
The Caspian has a smooth, slightly bright sound with some of the clearest treble in the business. Very engaging, dynamic character. (Aug 97)

ROTEL RCD 951 £300
HD CD capability at a midrange price. Plain Jane looks but solid construction. There is some higher than average measured distortion which may take the edge off this otherwise tempting product. (Aug 99)

COMPACT DISC TRANSPORTS

SONIC FRONTIERS TRANSPORT £6999
Cutting-edge design and technology combine to make this one very desirable product. The only problem is the fantasy hi-fi price. (Sep 98)

TEAC P-30 £2500
Cheap it isn't, but then it sounds like a million digital dollars. Nothing short of superb. (Jun 97)

TEAC VRDS-T1 £600
Excellent mid-price silver disc spinner with a powerful, expansive and warm sound. Easily beats most sub-£1000 designs. A good choice for the budget conscious who want the best. (Feb 95)

CD TRANSPORTS

CAMBRIDGE AUDIO DACMAGIC 3* £99
Superb value for money with extensive facilities and solid, detailed sonics. Upgrades any sub-£300 player.

DCS ELGAR £8500
Future-proof convertor which will handle 24/96 and 24/192. Extremely open and natural performer. (Nov 97)

DPA LITTLE BIT 3* £299
A taste of the high end on a budget. Rich, clean, punchy sound transforms budget CD players.

MIDIMAN FLYING COW £299.9
Excellent as a DAC and doubles as an ADC for archiving to CDR. (Jun 98) Great value, as is junior version Flying Calf at £109. (Feb 99)

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-DAC* £300
A bargain for normal CDs and even better with HD CDs. (Nov 97)

SONIC FRONTIERS PROCESSOR 3 £6999
Quality never comes cheap! This DAC oozes class and when matched with the Transport 3 is certainly up with the best. (Sep 98)

TURNTABLES

LINN SONDEK LP12 BASIK £1100
Off the pace these days in many respects but still an extremely sweet and engaging listen with a quintessentially analogue sound.

MICHELL GYRODEC SE £775
Exquisitely built, infinitely upgradeable deck that gives true high end sound at mid-fi prices.

MICHELL ORBE £2000
Fantastically capable all rounder with commanding, powerful, detailed sound that gets the best from almost any arm and cartridge. Supreme build, brilliant value. (Apr 95)

ORIGIN LIVE STANDARD (KIT) £145
Good in standard form with AC motor; frighteningly good with a DC motor and battery PSU.

PINK TRIANGLE TARANTELLA £680
Not only does the Tarantella have more style than a catwalk full of models, it also combines PT's usual clarity with real authority. (Oct 97)

PRO-JECT DEBUT £110
Straight out of the box and onto the shelf! Nothing short of a bargain. Vinyl's never had it so good, so cheaply!

REGA PLANAR 2 £214
Brilliant starter deck with extremely polished manner. Better built £274 Planar 3 is a great all-in-one package that eats mid-price CD players for breakfast.

ROKSAN XERXES X £1295
DSU or XPS 3.5 power supply £150/170 extra. Excellent pitch stability from a new Swiss motor and outboard power supply. Very tight bass, fine dynamics and revealing clarity. (Jan 97)

SYSTEMDEK IIX900/RB250 £330
A fine all-rounder and easy to upgrade too. More depth and breadth than Rega Planar 3. (Sep 94)

VESTAX BDT-2000 £225
A stylish looking deck with infinitely variable speed 16-90 rpm, DC belt drive and built-in MM phono stage. Good value, with plenty of chassis room for alternative arms, if required. (Sep 99)

TONERARMS

HADCOCK 242 5E £649
Latest of a long line of in-pivot arms. Added mass makes the 242 suitable for both low compliance MCs and straw-in-the-wind high compliance types. Revised geometry and chromium plating completes a first-class job. (Jun 2000)

NAIM ARO* £975
Truly endearing and charismatic performer - wonderfully engaging mid-band makes up for softened frequency extremes

REGA RB300 £180
Some may prefer the simpler RB250 at £130. Detailed, tight, rhythmic sound but tonally rather grey and cold-sounding. Still excellent value, though.

MINI-TOWER

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The best performance / value cables - Quiet, dynamic and natural, with incredible imaging and detail!
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 MI 3 "Divinity / Big Boy" speaker cable, fabulous high-end performer at £32.95/meter.
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 including the excellent new "Triode Quartz 2" pure Silver interconnect, top end bargain at £124.95/1m pair
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E88CC JJ	£4.95	6SN7/6SL7	£4.95	EL34L JJ	£5.95	6AU6WC Jan Philips nos	£3.50
ECC99 JJ	£9.95	6AS7G Sov.	£5.50	12AX7LPS	£8.95	5814a (ECC82) Jan Philips nos.	£5.95
6922 Sov	£7.95	5881 Sov	£4.95	ECC81 Jan	£4.95	5687WB Jan Philips nos	£5.95

Full matching and burn-in service available @ 80p/valve. Factory selected pairs and quads also available

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Panasonic pots 100k dual log stereo pot £29.95 **Wonder Solder** £1.95/m (heavy gauge)

InfiniCap SETI - absolutely superb! (0.01 through to 10 uF) e.g. 0.47uF @ £8.95 **Kiwame carbon resistors** 2 watt / £0.95
 Superb for crossovers and valves! 5 watt / £1.95

Nordost hook-up wires - only available from Audio Direct! Totally stunning cables of the very highest quality - guaranteed to blow away any other copper or silver chassis wires available!
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 Silver Night - full copper braid screened twisted variant of Silver Note with black overall outer sheath. £13.95/meter.
 Blue Vulcan - screened twisted pair with drain wire, 8 nines copper/silver 26 AWG cable with pure Teflon £14.95/meter
 Blue Diamond - screened quad, 8 nines copper/silver cable, with pure Teflon dielectric and outer sheath £24.95/meter
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Musical Fidelity X-Cans2: Warm, sumptuous, sweet sound!

SME 3009A £299
Once king of the art, but no longer. Weak at frequency extremes and detail, but its legendary serviceability makes it a call in Japan. Can be picked up for peanuts second-hand. (Jan 93)

SME 309 £489
A down-market version of the IV and V with aluminium armature and detachable headshell. Tight, neutral sound with good tonality, but lacks the IV's grace and presence. Like the older SME 3009 series, this arm is also available in 10" and 11" versions. (Jan 93)

PHONO CARTRIDGES

AUDIO TECHNICA AT-110E £39
Great starter cartridge that's refined, detailed and musical beyond its price. Best value MM under £50

GOLDRING 1012GX £74
An accomplished MM with a solid bass, slightly forward midrange and clean transients. Very reasonable price for such an able performer. (Jul 93)

ORION MICA £185
Beaters Goldring's 1042 and costs only £135 on trade-in. An assured and transparent MM. (Feb 98)

DYNAVECTOR DV20X-H £299
The best modern budget MC combines delicately sweet sound with forensic get-up-and-go. High output version works a treat with valve phono stages too.

MUSIC MAKER £575
When paired with a good quality arm, this frond finished high-output pick-up gives an ear-boggling account of itself. Very high compliance ensures maximum information retrieval. An absolute (grain orientated) gem. (Feb 99)

ORTOFON MC 7500 £2000
Conclusive proof that there's hope for the world. It's a long time ago now but this high-priced favourite still earns its niche - CD lovers would die if they heard it. (May 94)

ORTOFON MC 15 SUPER II £140
Not quite as good as the dearer Supremes but the Super II is a splendid introduction to the joys of moving-coil cartridges.

GOLDRING 1042 £130
One of the best Moving Magnet cartridges going, with beautiful treble and muscular bass. New low price makes it a bargain.

ORTOFON ROHMANN £1000
In a way it's MC 2000 meets MC 7500 with great tonal strengths and a dynamo sound. (Apr 98)

INTEGRATED AMPLIFIERS

AUDIO ANALOGUE PUGGINI SE £595
This superbly-built Italian integrated has a luscious and control which leaves others nowhere. Sound stage a wow. (Dec 97)

AUDIOLAB 8000s * £495
Well rounded integrated with smooth and detailed sound plus a huge feature count. Great build makes later versions a top used buy.

DENON PMA-250SE £160
It might not have bags of grunt but the Denon can sound awfully natural and open. (Feb 97)

HEINTOSH MA8800* £3735
The MA8800 not so much plays music as takes control of it, with effortless bass drive. (Sep 95)

MISSION CYRUS 2 * £299
Classic slightest minimalism combines arresting styling with clean, open, lively sound. Further upgradable with PSX power supply.

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-CANS2 £160
Warm, sumptuous, sweet sound h/phone amp. gives startling results with a decent set of headphones.

NAIM NAIT 3 * £575
Superb rhythms and dynamics make for great music making, but tonally monochromatic. Super optional phono stage makes it ideal for vinyl junkies.

ROKSAN CASPIAN £695
Smooth, warm integrated with remote control that works happily into most 'speakers. (Dec 97)

SONNETEER ALABASTER £995
Builds on the strengths of the Camphon with ample control, colour and drive. (Oct 97)

PHONO STAGES

CREEK OBH-8 SE £180
Punchy, rhythmic character with oodles of detail makes this a great budget audiophile product.

LFD MISTRAL PHONO STAGE * £300
The Mistral has a warmth and involvement that make many pricier stages sound overpriced.

MICHELL DELPHINI MONOBLOCS £1995
Analogue tour-de-force gives supremely clean, detailed and finely resolved sound with breathtaking dynamics. Great value, even at this price.

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-LP £125
One of the famous MF X series. Full marks throughout for clarity and detail. Switchable between MM and MC. Indestructible build! (May 99)

PROJECT PHONO BOX £39
Not the last word in many respects but a thoroughly honest piece of work. Inexpensive introduction to all that vinyl has to offer. MM and MC provision plus choice of two impedances.

ROKSAN ARTAXERXES X £950
With the Atessa PSU the Artaxerxes X MM/MC stage still shines. Great stage depth, neutrality and tonal colour. (Oct 97)



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AVI Neutron Speakers(499.00)	£369.00	Naim AV1 Surround Processor (1Yr G/tee)	.(1835.00)	£895.00
Cyrus 2/PSX Amplifier S/H	.....(649.00)	£299.00	ProAc Response 2 Speakers S/H	.....(1995.00)	£1399.00
Linn Wakonda Preamp S/H(1Yr G/tee)	... (750.00)	£399.00	Quad ESL63 Electrostatic Speakers S/H	.(2500.00)	£795.00
Linn LK140 Power Amp (2Yr G/tee)	.....(750.00)	£469.00	Rega Brio Amplifier (2Yr G/tee)	.....(298.00)	£225.00
Linn Kaber Passive (Black - 2yr G/tee)	..(2000.00)	£995.00	Rega Luna Amplifier (2Yr G/tee)	.....(375.00)	£279.00
Linn Kaber Aktiv (Walnut/Grey) inc cards	.(2850.00)	£795.00	Rega Planet CD Player (2Yr G/tee)	.....(475.00)	£349.00
Linn Isobarik Active Speakers (Latest spec)	(3500.00)	£1095.00	TAG CD20R CD Player	.....(1249.00)	£799.00
Linn Helix 2 Spkr inc stands S/H	.....(449.00)	£219.00	TAG 60i Integrated amp	.....(799.00)	£449.00
Mission 772e Speakers (As New)	.....(229.00)	£159.00	TAG 60i RV Integrated amp (Remote)	..(1099.00)	£699.00
Mission 773e Speakers (As New)	.....(399.00)	£329.00	TAG T20 Tuner (2Yr G/tee)	.....(1099.00)	£749.00
Naim NAC92/NAP90 Combo (S/H)	.....(995.00)	£675.00	TAG PA10 Pre Amp (2Yr G/tee)	.....(899.00)	£469.00

world favourites I

SONNETEER SEDLEY £399
Combines transparency and fine dynamics, with excellent rhythmic ability. (May 98)

PSE AMPLIFIERS

AMC 1100 £150
Suffers from un-defeatable tone controls but an extremely good value piece of kit. Partners the similarly budget level AMC 2200 power amplifier, also at £150. Comfortable beginners' choice. (Mar 97)

AUDIO ANALOGUE

BELLINI £475
Snowcrail AA's characteristic mix of clarity and musicality and beats the competition. (Apr 98)

CHORD CPA1800 £1800
Clarity, weight and control are second to none - an addictive mixture. (Mar 98)

CROFT VITALE £350
A modestly priced valve pre-amp with exceptionally transparent performance. MM phono stage plus three line stages are standard. Volume controls are separate for each channel, thus giving balance adjustment. A remarkable item in all respects. (Feb 2000)

XTC PRE-1* £1000
Almost value-free in its smoothness, the line-level Pre-1 is warm and seductively clear. (Nov 96)

POWER AMPLIFIERS

ASCAH 9* £400
With 200W on tap, the 9P will drive most loudspeakers with a decisive and detailed sound. Good bass welly too. (Dec 96)

CHORD SPH400 £1400
There's a sense of effortless power to the Chord that gives music real scale and presence. (Mar 98)

MARANTZ MODEL 9* £800
Authentic reproduction monoblocks still more than cut the sonic mustard. Highly expensive and highly sophisticated. (Mar 97)

MICHELL ALECTO £1989
Crisp, clear and beautifully controlled with gorgeous styling. Partnered with the £1650 Orca this is a superb winning combo. (Oct 98)

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-A200 £1000/pair
200W of high-end monobloc power in a grooved tube. (Aug 98)

NAIM NAPI80 £1060
Partnered with a NAC82, this has classic Naim control, and a superbly rhythmic presentation.

TUNERS

CAMBRIDGE T500 £180
An extremely engaging tuner with a performance at odds with its low price. Not exactly a Troughline, but you may not notice. (Feb 99)

CREEK T43 £399
Excellent detail, separation and dynamics. A great little tuner and unbeatable at this price. (May 98)

MARANTZ ST17 £600
A positive dreadnought of a tuner. Sweet and refined but with a heavy punch when needed. A tuner of this quality demands a decent aerial. (Jul 99)

MISSION CYRUS FM7* £300
Clear and lucid sound puts it up with the best. Superb build too. (Apr 94)

NAIM NAT03 £595
The NAT03's warm, atmospheric sound is further proof of Naim's proficiency with tuners. (Sep 93)

SONY ST-SA3ES* £250
Bewitching RDS tuner for the sonically discerning. Good ergonomics and sensitive too. (Apr 97)

CASSETTE DECKS

AIWA AD-S750* £200
Sonically a very decent machine at the price. Comes fitted with Dolby B, C and the dead handy Dolby S. (Apr 96)

AIWA AD-S950* £300
A stable transport, superb head and Dolby S make the AD-S950 an excellent all-rounder. (Feb 95)

KENWOOD KX-3080* £160
A simple deck, but excellent-quality head and transport give top quality sound. (Oct 96)

PIONEER CT-S740S £430
A great piece of engineering from Pioneer, with first-rate sound. (Jun 96)

YAMAHA KX-580SE* £250
The 'SE' tag is more than a marketing gimmick. Sound is solid and clear with Dolby S. (Sep 97)

LOUDSPEAKERS

CASTLE EDEN £469
Impressively vice-free 'speakers that offer great transparency and involvement. One of a select band that simply makes music regardless. (Mar 97)

EPOS ES12* £495
Strong, punchy bass is allied to finely detailed, articulate midrange and sparkling treble. (Oct 96)



KEF CRESTA I loudspeakers
A very musical sound

KEF CRESTA I £100
Delightfully sophisticated presentation for the price. Won't blow the roof off, but will deliver a very musical sound. (April 2000)

KLIPSCH HERESY II £1100
An outstanding high sensitivity loudspeaker with midrange and treble horns coupled with infinite baffle 12" bass driver. Effortless, fast and accurate. (May 99)

MISSION 752* £495
Cracking mid-price mini towers combined HDA drive units and metal dome tweeters with surprisingly warm results. Benign load characteristics makes them great for valves.

MISSION 771 £170
Characteristically fast, punchy Mission sound from the Aerogel mid-bass and silk-dome tweeter. (Jul 98)

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QUAD ESL 63 £3450
A reference against which all other loudspeakers are judged, the '63s have superb imaging and genuine transparency

TANNOY AMS8 £2700
Solid sounding pro active monitor with solid bass, clear midrange and delicious treble. (Aug 96)

TANNOY MERCURY m2 £140
A true audiophile bargain which embarrasses many more expensive boxes. Never mind the price, let your ears decide. (May 97)

MINIDISC PLAYERS

KENWOOD DM-9090 £500
One of the best MD players yet. ATRAC 4.5 gives clean and very musical recordings from this Kenwood. (Jan 98)

SONY MDS-JB930Q £250
Great mid-price machine that adds better build and facilities to the '530's already excellent sonics.

SONY MDS-JA50ES £1300
This Sony can put the wind up Nakamichi cassette decks when used with better blank MDs. (Apr 98)

SONY MDS-JE555ES £520
MiniDisc recorder
The best sounding MD deck made so far, thanks to awesome build and heroic ATRAC-DSP Type R coding.



Alesis Masterdisk
A glimpse of the future

SONY MDS-JE510 £300
An impressive sound and unmatched convenience make this MiniDisc player an excellent buy.

DIGITAL RECORDERS

ALESIS MASTERDISK £1400
A groundbreaking hard disc recorder with a built-in CD drive. An amazing bit of kit, and a glimpse of the future. (July 2000)

KENWOOD DMF-9020 £500
An excellent tool for home recording, combines convenience, superb sound and a fair price. (Aug 99)

MARANTZ DR-17 £1100
Probably the best sounding CD recorder on the market. Built like a brick out house with true audiophile sound. HDCD compatible. (July 2000)

PHILIPS CDR-765 £360
One of the first twin deck recorders/players that boasts high speed dub facility. Playback could be warmer, but still a bargain. (Oct 99)

PIONEER PDR-555RW £480
Excellent mid-priced CD recorder that both plays and records with equal panache. (Oct 99)

SONY TCD-8 DATMAN £599
Super clean and detailed sound makes this an amazing portable. Not as robust as it should be though.

DVD PLAYERS

DENON DVD-5000 £1600
Monster build, as you'd expect at this price. Facilities and gadgets galore and drop-dead high end looks. A very smooth and sophisticated sound, although not as good as similarly-priced CD players. (Mar 99)

PIONEER DV-717 £700
Well built and a solid performer, with a 'true' 24/96 digital output. Facilities in abundance and a controlled, exciting way with CD replay. Shame it lacks a Dolby Digital decoder! (Sep 99)

SONY DVP-S725 £490
One of the best buys in the DVD market. Available in a dodgy white case, but the facilities and performance more than make up for this. Excellent with both music and visuals, and a whole host of up to the minute facilities to keep you occupied. (Mar 2000)

HEADPHONES

JECKLIN FLOAT MODEL TWO £99
Wonderful panel-like and open sound from these esoteric-looking headclamps. Do not wear in public unless you like being made a fool of!

SENNHEISSER HD-490 £50
Good value cans with an exciting and bassy sound. Everything one should look for in headphones at a sensible price.



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A simple and effective upgrade

INTERCONNECTS

CHORD COMPANY CHAMELEON 2 £90/m
One of our favourite favourites, the Chameleons are musical performers with a smooth yet open sound.

DNM RESON £40/m
Neutral and transparent, and a steal at forty quid!

NORDOST BLUE HEAVEN £150/m
Some of the fastest and most transparent cable around. A simple and effective upgrade.

VAN DEN HUL ULTIMATE THE FIRST £260/0.6m
Carbon interconnects that help you forget the electronics and concentrate on the music. Miraculous transparency.

LOUDSPEAKER CABLE

CHORD COMPANY RUMOUR £9.95/m
The Rumour is our reference at the price. Tight and tuneful bass mixed with air and space results in a cracking cable for the money.

DNM RESON £6.95/m
This cable has a transparency of sound that's rarely heard at the price. Excellent value for money.

NORDOST BLUE HEAVEN £375/3m pair
This isn't cheap, but it sounds absolutely fab. An open and spacious sound that simply carries music.

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60lRsl Integrated remote ..£999.00
PA10 Preamp£849.00
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100Psl Power Amp£1099.00
125Msl Monoblock Amp ..£1199.00

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CASSETTE

NAKAMICHI DR-2

A great machine with Nakamichi's legendary heads. The lowest cost 'true' Nakamichi at the time, retailing for £600.

NAKAMICHI CR-7

The last of the great ones, and definitely the best Nakamichi ever (yes, better than a Dragon)

YAMAHA TC-800G

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

Beautifully-built two-box with pre-amp stage. Very musical although not as refined as modern Bitstream gear. No digital output.

PIONEER PD-91

Built-to-last player with easy upgrade routes for modifiers. Not knockout as it stands but get one cheap and have a go!

CAMBRIDGE CD1

The first two box player with weighted mechanics and even an optional Dropout/error counter. Radical and effective at the time - a classic.

AMPLIFIERS

LEAK POINT ONE, TL12 & TL10

Ancestors of hi-fi, consequently expensive nowadays. As with all vintage valve stuff, overhauling is de rigueur before use, using original parts if possible.

LEAK PRE-AMPS

Line of 'good for their time' pre-amps. Use of EF86 pentode valve for high gain rules out ultra performance. Not the highest-fi.



Garrard 401
A legendary turntable.

LEAK STEREO 20

Excellent workaday classic valve amp. In good order the 20 will not disgrace itself. Various upgrades are available from specialist repairers.

LEAK TL12+

Plentiful monobloc equivalent of Stereo 20. Reasonably inexpensive and a tweakers' dream. Genuine valve hi-fi on a budget.

NAD 3020

You can't argue with success! NAD's budget transistor integrated gave thousands their first taste of hi-fi and remains great value.

QUAD 33/303 PRE/POWER

Great style and construction, also bullet proof. Warm and wooly sound, but easy going. A good introduction to early transistor audio classics.

QUAD 22/II PRE/POWER

One of the all-time classic valve amplifiers. Unusual circuit but it works beautifully. 22 pre-amp not up to today's standards.

SUGDEN A21

Seventies transistor integrated has an eminently likeable smoothness and musicality. Limited inputs via DIN sockets.

TECHNICS SE-A5 Mk2

Nice transformer and electronics, shame about the casework. With tweaking, this 150watter can sound sweet.

LOUDSPEAKERS

KLIPSCHORN

Not exactly plentiful or cheap but a splendid beast. For efficiency they have seldom been equalled. Space hungry!

LEAK SANDWICH

Rather warm sounding big infinite baffle but cheap with it. With a reasonably powerful amp can sound quite satisfying.

LOWTHER PM6A

High quality full-range driver; still manufactured. High sensitivity, as fitted to many classic horn designs.

MAGNEPLANAR SMGa

Touch dry in the bass but a technological loudspeaker with genuinely musical abilities.

MISSION 770

Father of the 77 range which continues to this day. Well mannered with a warm sound and a kind load to amplifiers.

QUAD ESL57

Unrivalled. Properly serviced there is nothing like them. Their natural presentation may make them caviar to the general.

YAMAHA NS1000M

Hi-tech favourites of the Japanese and Americans. Viewed more warily in the UK but can give excellent results.

WORLD CLASSICS

TANNOY GRF & AUTOGRAPH

Folded horn monsters which certainly sound good if you have the space. For Tannoy vintage see HFW November 1998.

WHARFEDALE SUPER 8 RS DD

Ideal experimenters' driver. High sensitivity ~14,000 Gauss magnet and extended frequency range. Inexpensive too!

TANNOY YORK, LANCASTER ETC.

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

Very honest piece of kit, well made and easily adjusted. Vinyl beginners could do very much worse.

ALPHASON HRI00S

First class arm, up to present-day standards. Buy carefully, though, as there's no service available now.

ARISTON RD11

A one-time king of turntables very similar to the Linn LP12. Now deposited but worth a look at the right price.

LINN AXIS

Uncomplicated, lower-price version of the famous Sondek. Less expensive than some of its stablemates.

GARRARD 301 & 401

Legendary turntables, once fairly plentiful. Excellent back-up available; many different custom plinths available. High quality.

GOLDRING Lenco 88 & 99

Great deck for the kitchen table enthusiast. Garrard fans won't look at 'em but cheap and capable. Servicing available.

HADCOCK 228

Recently out-classed by Hadcock's updated 228 Special Edition but a proper hi-fi arm for all that. Makers still service.

MICHELL FOCUS ONE

20 years and still going strong. Early runner in the 'modern' turntable cycle with a first class arm. Factory servicing available.

SHURE M75

Recent line-contact improvements have left the M75 behind but the wide range of needles make it a handy tool.

SME 3009 IIS

Everlasting classic tone-arm. Spares permanently available from SME. No longer the last word but peanuts second-hand.

THORENS TD124

Best classic deck ever? Judging by the prices they fetch it's possible - 78rpm too!

THORENS TD150

Mid-price deck with a keen following. No real difficulty with servicing - novices may find the suspension system unnerving.

TRIO L-07D

Knockout heavyweight from 1980 with stainless bearing and 11lb platter! Not a give-away and beware! - spares scarce.

TUNERS

LEAK TROUGHLINE (ORIGINAL)

Interesting ornament but no longer hi-fi. Limited coverage of 88MHz to 100MHz only.

LEAK TROUGHLINE II & III MONO

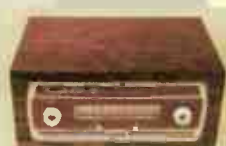
Arguably the best-sounding tuners ever. Adaptation for stereo easy via phono multiplex socket.

LEAK TROUGHLINE III STEREO

Excellent tuner with indifferent stereo decoding circuit. Best when adapted to use modern outboard decoder.

MARANTZ ST-8

Possibly the ultimate Tardis console, including an oscilloscope for checking the strength of signal. Expensive even now.



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Audiolab 8000 DAC D/A Converter 20 Bit	950	349
Densen Beat 400 CD Player (New & boxed) HDCD	1280	999
Lab 47 Progression DAC	1800	995
Monrio 18B2 DAC	950	399
Monrio Bit Match Transport	950	499
Nakamichi DV10 DVD DTS/5.1	799	549
Rega Planet CD Player (New & Boxed)	475	379
Rega Jupiter Transport/I/O DAC	975	750
Resolution Audio CD50 HDCD CD Player (with volume)	3000	2250
Resolution Audio D92 24/96 Dac/Processor	1500	995
Resolution Audio VT960 DVD Transport	3500	1999
Roksan Atessa DP2 Mk2 CD Player	1599	899
Wadia 850 CD Player (Ex-Demo)	4999	1750
Wadia 860iX CD Player (Ex-Demo)	7499	5999

Turntables Tonearms & Cartridges

Ariston RD40/RB250/Blue Point	569	199
Audio Technica OC7 MC Cartridge	N/A	75
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Basis 1400/ RB250 Ex Demo (99)	1200	849
Decca London Gold (J.Wright Re-Built/Podded)	N/A	250
Densen DP02 Drive MC Phono Stage	350	229
Garrard 401/Aphelion/RB300 (As new)	N/A	599
Garrard 401/Aphelion/SME 3009/V15	N/A	499
Linn Troika (no cantilever)	N/A	150
Mantra Manticore Reference/Musician	2100	995
Michell Iso HR/Hera MC Phono Stage	950	450
Rega Planar 3 Turntable	289	199
Roksan Artemiz Tonearm (Latest Version)	895	650
Roksan DS 5 Atessa PSU	549	399
Roksan Radius 3 Turntable (98)	470	250
Roksan Shiraz (Latest Black Version)	1000	699
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DPA Bigger Bit 2 DAC 7	£800	£429
KENWOOD DP9010 Trans	£500	£270
LFD Minstrel CD Player	£650	£328
LINN Karik CD	£1850	£1098
LINN Karik III CD	£1850	£1197
LINN Mimik CD Player	£880	£599
MARANTZ CD67SE	£279	£150
MERIDIAN 203 DAC	£499	£258
MERIDIAN 206 CD Player	£999	£398
MERIDIAN 206b CD Player	£995	£398
MERIDIAN 207 CD/Pre	£1200	£548
MERIDIAN 208 Trichord 3 CD	£1300	£898
MERIDIAN 263 DAC	£650	£248

MERIDIAN 518 DAC	£1350	£698
MICROMEGA DAC 1	£599	£320
MICROMEGA Drive 3 (Trans)	£970	£529
MICROMEGA Duo 3.1 (Trans)	£1800	£850
MICROMEGA Stage 2 CD	£700	£399
MICROMEGA Stage 6 CD	£900	£598
MICROMEGA T-DAC	£999	£550
MONARCHY DIP (De-jitterer)	£299	£198
PINK TRIANGLE Ordinal DAC	£800	£399
PINK TRIANGLE De Capo DAC	£1500	£548
PIONEER Precision PDS505 CD Player	£549	£258
PIONEER PDS904 CD Player	£450	£228



PRIMARE
204 Top Loading CD £4999 £2998

PROCEED DAP DAC	£2400	£1198
PROCEED PD2/PT2 Trans/DAC	£4500	£2498
PROCEED PDT3 Trans	£3500	£1998
QED Digit Reference DAC (Chrome)	£450	£199
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RADFORD WS2 CD Player	£1200	£698
REGA Planet	£423	£300
REGA Planet	£423	£327
REVOX B225 CD Player	£1100	£349
ROKSAN DP1 Trans	£1100	£558
ROKSAN Caspian CD Player	£798	£498
SUGDEN SDT-1 CD Player	£1300	£798
THETA Data Basic (Trans)	£3000	£1498

AMPLIFIERS - SOLID STATE

THETA Data Basic 2 (Trans)	£2699	£1698
ACCUPHASE 200 Pre	£1279	£698
ACCUPHASE 266 Power	£1800	£858
ARAGON 24K Pre	£1600	£799
ARCAM Alpha 6 Plus	£379	£238
ATC SPA2 Power amp (200 wpc)	£2699	£1998
AUDIO INNOVATIONS P1		£248
AUDIO INNOVATIONS Series 1000 Passive Pre-amp	(Est)£399	£198
AUDIOLAB 8000a Integrated	£499	£358
AUDIOLAB 8000LX (Amp)	£479	£348
AUDIOLAB 8000c Pre	£498	£298
AUDIOLAB 8000s 75wpc Integrated	£699	£498
AVI 2000 (Mono's)	(Est)£1500	£948
CAMBRIDGE AUDIO P50		£95
CAMBRIDGE AUDIO P70	£400	£150
COUNTERPOINT Solid One (Power)	£1400	£499
CREEK A52 Power	£599	£298
CYRUS 2 Integrated Amp	£399	£168
CYRUS Pre-amp	£650	£399
CYRUS Straight Line Integrated	£399	£299
DENON AVP-1A Processor	£2500	£1299
DENSEN Beat 100	£650	£448
DEVA 250 Integrated + Matching Power	£1000	£450
DNM PRE2 / PA1 Pre & Power	£2800	£1099
ELECTROCOMPANET 4.5+100 Pre/Pwr	£3500	£2250
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HAFLER DH220 Power-amp		£350
HARMON KARDON Citation 17 pre	£699	£199
HARMON KARDON AVP1A Processor	£2000	£249
ION Obelisk Integrated	£299	£197
KRELL KRC-HR Pre	£6999	£3899
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LINN LK2	(Est)£595	£299
LINN LK100 Power	£650	£358
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LINN Klout Power	£2600	£1348
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MARANTZ SC80 Pre	£599	£300
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MICROMEGA Tempo 2 Amp	£900	£499
MUSICAL FIDELITY MVT Pre	£799	£350

MUSICAL FIDELITY 3a Pre	£379	£229
MUSICAL FIDELITY F25 Pre	£2400	£1500
MUSICAL FIDELITY XA-1 Amp	£495	£350
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NAIM NAP 140 Power (Old style)	(Est)£600	£168
NVA A60 Power	£495	£329
NVA A80 Power Mono Blocks Pair (New)	£1460	£959
NYTECH CPA602 Power	£400	£120
NYTECH CTP102 Pre/Tuner	£360	£120
ORELLE SP150 Power amp	£500	£298
PS AUDIO PS4 Pre	£500	£298
PS AUDIO VK Pre		£85
QUAD 33 Pre	From	£69
QUAD 34 Pre	From	£180
QUAD 44 Pre	£495	£240
QUAD 77 Integrated	£699	£348
QUAD 303 Power	£400	£120
QUAD 306 Power	(Est)£449	£228
QUAD 405 Power	£499	£220
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REGA Elex 50wpc	£350	£218
STEMFOORT SF60 Integrated	£799	£368
SONOGAPHE SC1 Pre (By Conrad Johnson)	£499	£220
SUGDEN AU51 Pre		£390
SUGDEN Symetra Class A monoblocks	£1600	£950
TECHNICS SEASii + SUA6ii 100w Pre/Pwr	£1100	£420
TESSERAC Pre	£1500	£798
TOWNSEND Elite 600 Pre	£500	£199
YAMAHA DSP A1 Dolby Digital Amp	£1599	£800
YAMAHA CX2/MX2 Pre/Pwr	£1500	£750

GOLDEN TUBE SEP1 + 2X SE40	£3299	£1998
LUMLEY Megavox 75 Mono's	£1989	£1179
LUMLEY VTA1030 Power	(Est)£1250	£698
MICHAELSON Odysseus 40w Integrated	£1150	£699
MUSICAL FIDELITY F22 Pre	£1500	£898



PAPWORTH TVA50 £2700 £1948

SONIC FRONTIERS Anthem Integrated	£2000	£1398
SONIC FRONTIERS Assemblage 40w Pwr	£999	£698
UNISON RESEARCH Feather 1 Pre	£800	£558

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CYRUS Tuner	£399	£178
HARMON KARDON TU-9400	£249	£128
LUXMAN T210L (Classic)	£269	£159
MAGNUM Dynalab FT101 + Sleuth	(Est)£1500	£748
MICROMEGA Tuner	£550	£398
NAIM NAT101 + SNAPS		£398
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QUAD FM2	IN STOCK	
QUAD FM3	IN STOCK	
REVOX B260S (Black)	£1100	£699
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SANSUI TU-710 (Black)	£299	£149
TRIO KT815		£200
TRIO KT-9xi	£289	£128
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NAKAMICHI 582 Cassette	£799	£368
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NAKAMICHI CR2E Cassette	£499	£200
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TANBERG TCD 320 AV Cassette	£349	£149
TEAC CX650R Cassette	£300	£129
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TANNOY Devon	£750	£329
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PS AUDIO ReferenceLink Pre AD/DA	£4550	£2495	MUSICAL FIDELITY X-DAC	£299	£176	AUDIO RESEARCH BL1 (Balance Line Converter)	£699	£496
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PROAC Response CC1 (Cherry) Ex-dem	£599	£445	HELIOS Model 3 CD Player	£600	£485			
PROAC Response One Sc (Oak) Ex-dem	£1199	£945	MONRIO ASTI Line Level Amp	£400	£315			
PROAC Studio 250 (Mahogany) Ex-dem	£1699	£995	MUSICAL FIDELITY XA200 Mono Power Amps (Pair)	£999	£795			
PROAC Tablette 2000 (Mahogany)			MUSICAL FIDELITY XA50 Mono Power Amps (Pair)	£499	£395			
Both left handed	£699	£485	MUSICAL FIDELITY XA200 Mono Power Amps (Pair)	£999	£795			
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PROAC Mini Towers (Black)	£799	£495	TALK ELECTRONICS Tornado 2 Power Amp	£599	£475			
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OPERA Super Pavarotti (Black Ash) New	£995	£795	CASTLE Kendal	£399	£297			
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UNISON RESEARCH Performance One Ex-dem								
GRAAF 50.50 Power amp	£1995	£1545						

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*Subject to Status

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CYRUS daD 3Q 24 Bit CD Player	£900	£770
MERIDIAN DSP5000 24 Bit Spks (Cherry)	£3885	£3290
MERIDIAN DSP5000C Centre - Black	£1999	£1630
MERIDIAN D2500 96K Digi Sub (Blk)	£1949	£1590
MERIDIAN 556 Power amp	£949	£790
MUSICAL TECHNOLOGY Harrier (Including Rock Resin Supports)	£635	£530
MUSICAL TECHNOLOGY Merlin (Centre)	£225	£180
NAIM NAIT 3R Integrated amp	£799	£680
NAIM CREDO Speakers (Ebony)	£1285	£1080
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ART AUDIO QUINTET stereo power amp	1500	1000		sugden a21 ORIG MODEL WITH WOODEN SLEEVE	200
AUDIO NOTE M2 RIAA phono stage EX DEM	1050	750		SUGDEN AS1 original class A power amp	135
AUDIO NOTE M2 PRE	1600	900		TECHNICS SCA2000/5A2000 PRE POWER	350
AUDIO NOTE QUJEST monoblocks	2600	1600		years old battery pre, 200 watt power with big VU meters, makes you feel like a teenager again 4 years old mint and boxed with remote.	1800
AUDIO NOTE P25e power amp	1500	800		TOCA Z2 class a power amp	1900
AUDIO NOTE S4 monoblocks	4200	2400			
AUDIO NOTE ZERO pre/monoblocks silver finish ex dem with full warranty		900		LOUDSPEAKERS	
AUDIO RESEARCH SP11 mk2	5311	1750		APOGEE CALIPERS in taupe (beige) colour	3000+
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AUDION PREMIER line preamp	800	500		AUDIOGRAM ELLE1 electrostatics slim and elegant	1080
AUDION Z4 watt monoblocks e184		300		AUDIOPLAN KONTRAST MARK 2	2800
AUDIO INNOVATIONS 1st Audio monoblocks	1500	650		AUDIONOTE AN Z TWO cherry new on demo	500
BEARD BBA10 line integrated	400	250		BANDOR BANDORA in light oak	1350
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CROFT IVS power amp	1500	600		Celestion 5000 with ribbon tweeters	700
CROFT VI power amp		400		DALI GRAND COUPE	2500
CROFT MICRO pre amp		250		CHARIS HYPHER 2 with matching stands	850
COUNTERPOINT SA100 100 watt valve/mosfet hybrid excellent sound	2000	900		DIERS SOLITAIRE	150
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GAMMA ERA REFERENCE preamp with phono	3500	1500		KEF k235a raymond cooke ltd edition piano black	500
GOLDEN TUBE AUDIO SE 40 power amp, parallel single ended	1200	600		KLIPPSCH LA SCALAS, black, deluxe, biano	2500
HBC "BEASTIE" 211 triodes in zero feedback stereo power amp	1500	1000		LINN ISOBARIKS black old type with stands, big amp obligatory	500
LUMLEY M75 monoblocks 75 watts	1200	1000		LINN KELEBIDI boxed	300
LUNARIAN 304 valve pre and mc3600 power amp	3000	2000		MISSION T54 FREDDOMS boxed	1300
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ARCAM ALPHA old model		80		ARCAM DELTA 100	850
ARCAM ALPHA 32		100		QUAD FM3 tuner	400
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AVI 52000MP/52000mm preamp & monoblocks	2350	1200		LEAK TROUHGULINE III STEREO	80
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AUDIOLAB 8000A		400		REVOX A77 mk4 2 track	200
BURMESTER 838xk V phono stage silver front	1500	250		REVOX b77 mk2 2 track	500
CYRUS STRAIGHT LINE integrated amp	400	250		TEAC X-10R reel to reel 4track stereo	400
Cyrus TWO with PSX	650	250		NAKAMICHI BQ2 cassette deck	180
CRIMPSON 610 battery powered Pre/630 monoblocks grey finish	400	300		NAKAMICHI tuner/amp TA-2E	100
DPA DSP2005 pre amp	1400	700		YAMAHA CR 600 silver with wooden case	350
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LINN MAIK	1000	400		AUDIO NOTE CD ZERO/DAC ZERO 24 bit with valve output stage our demo pair in silver	868
LINN STRATOS 100 watt monoblocks		400		AUDIO NOTE DAC3 sig	2850
MERIDIAN 101/105 pre & monos boxed		450		AUDIO ALCHEMY DIGITAL DRIVE 3 transport	700
MERIDIAN 101/105 pre & monos boxed		400		AUDIONOTE T3/ANSI wired with anxx 6 months old	4450
MISSION CYRUS TWO & PSX	650	250		CELLO cartridge mc	200
MONARCHY 100se 100 watt monoblocks single ended class A boxed as new	2000	1200		GARRARD 301 in green marble plinth with SME V arm, a serious combination	1000
MOTH 60 WATT power amp wood mint boxed	650	300		JBE slate deck with mayware formula 4 arm, compared to a Linn in its day	1400
MUSICAL FIDELITY E100amp	700	350		KOETSU RED SIG boxed	200
MUSICAL FIDELITY SYNTHESIS integrated, a forgotten budget classic		100		LINN AXIS	250
MUSICAL FIDELITY THE PREAMP original model		100		LINN lp2 black with aro circus armageddon prefix and dynavorer spx11 wow boxed and as new condition, trade in your old deck	4000+
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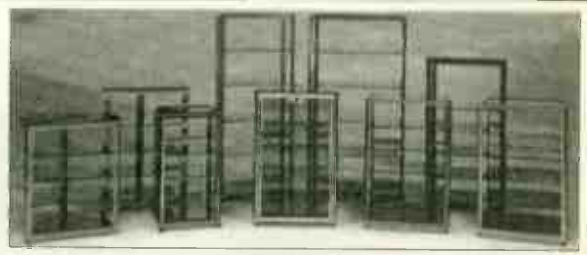
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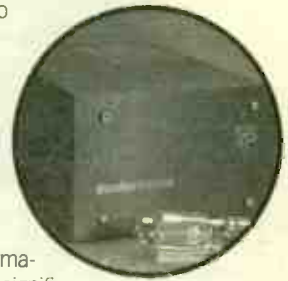
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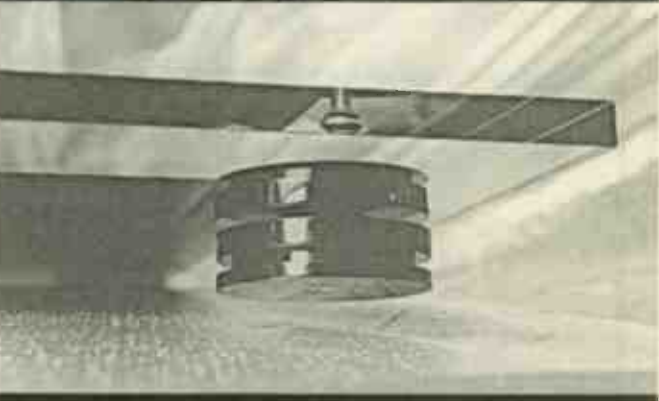
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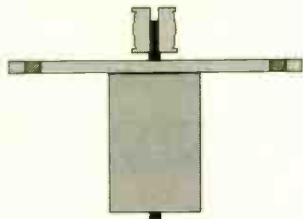
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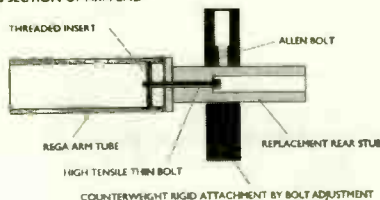
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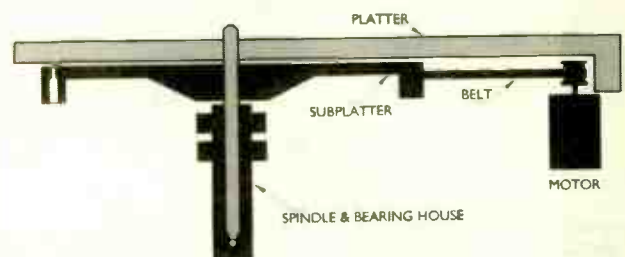
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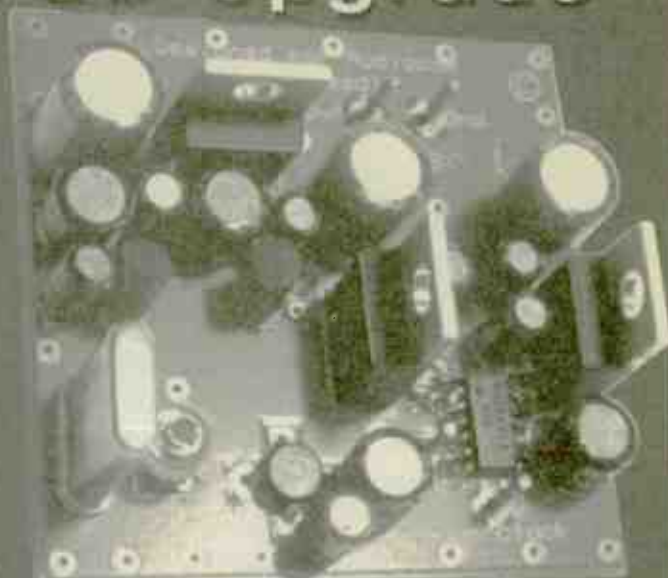
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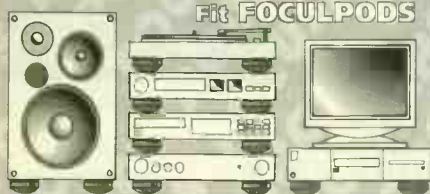
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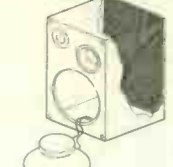
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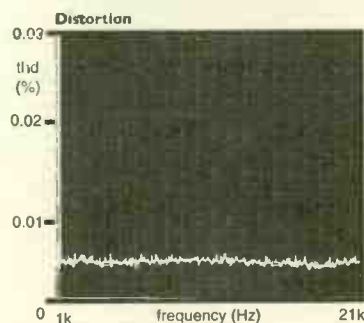
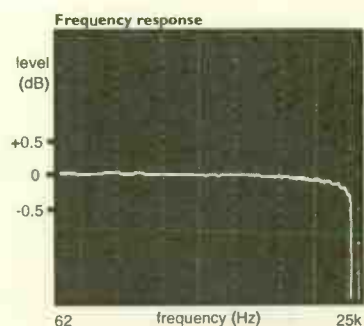
CD & DVD PLAYERS

CREEK CD43 II

The CD43 II has a smooth, well tailored frequency response that reaches from 4Hz up to 21kHz our measurements show. Creek have engineered in a slow top-end roll off, just enough to ensure the player lacks the bite or sting that often comes from ruler flat treble response or, worse, treble lift.

Much like Philips DVD960, the distortion analysis of this player shows not only a welcome absence of distortion spikes and quantisation noise, but also a low noise floor. This held right down the audio range, from 0dB to -90dB, and on both channels, which were identical. The converter is as good as they come, giving the best possible measured performance from CD. With normal output and good channel separation the Creek measured well in all areas. **NK**

Frequency response	4Hz -21kHz	
Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.005	0.005
-30dB	0.008	0.008
-60dB	0.39	0.38
-90	27	27
Separation	left	right
1kHz	101	102
20kHz	76	77
Noise with emphasis	-108dB	
Dynamic range	110dB	
Output	2.2V	



PHILIPS DVD960

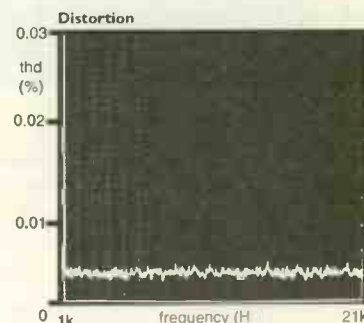
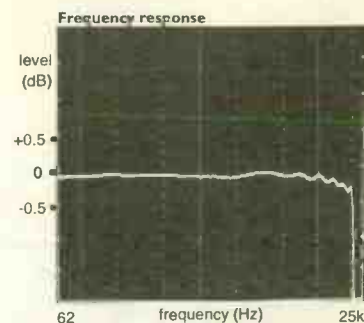
Measured performance of this machine as a CD player bears out Philips claim that it has been engineered to give excellent results. The distortion figures were very low on both channels and noise was low too, as the low noise floor in the distortion analysis reveals. A small amount of lift from 2kHz to 10kHz may account for its 'obvious' treble and a tendency to project sibilance quite strongly, but overall it sounded smooth and quite sweet as 16 bit goes.

The '960 refused to play the test tone section of a Chesky 24/96 test disc, but so do other DVDs at present - an unresolved problem. It did play 24/96 music but the spectrum analyser showed music energy was sharply cut off at 21kHz, on tracks that a Sony DVP-S725D showed had smoothly falling energy right up to 48kHz. This was disappointing. The player may well give 24 bit resolution (not measurable until test discs become available), but it hasn't got the analogue bandwidth promised by 96kHz sampling rate.

As a CD player playing 16bit/44.1kHz code the DVD960 measured well. Its inability to realise the full potential of high

resolution 24bit, 96kHz sampling rate recordings, which gives an analogue bandwidth that extends to 48kHz, was disappointing for a technology leader like Philips, especially since the DVD960 has been designed to realise the full potential of high quality audio. **NK**

Frequency response	4Hz-20.5kHz	
Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.007	0.007
-30dB	0.007	0.007
-60dB	0.3	0.3
-90	27	27
Separation	left	right
1kHz	132	130
20kHz	125	125
Noise with emphasis	-113dB	
Dynamic range	110dB	
Output	2V	



HITACHI DV-P505

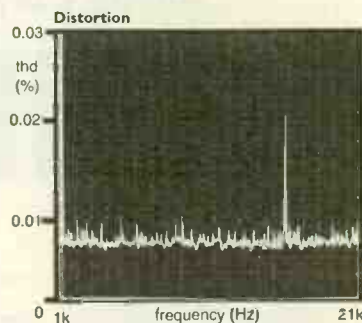
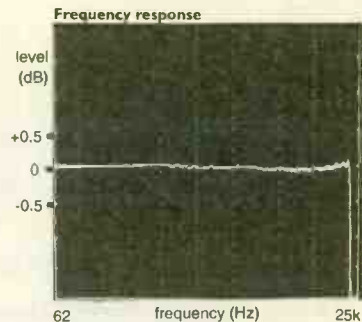
Our analysis shows the Hitachi has a slight rise up in frequency response above 10kHz, enough to give a little brightness or sharpness to its sound at times. The filtering at 21kHz looks especially steep.

In terms of distortion and noise it's interesting to compare this player to Philips DVD960 also tested this month. The Hitachi produces fairly high levels of distortion by current CD standards, approaching 1% at -60dB for example, a relatively poor result. The distortion analysis reveals quantisation noise, and more analogue noise than the DVD960. However, although the Hitachi's DV-P505 measured performance doesn't meet today's CD standards the machine is reasonable in an absolute sense, and it did produce information right up to 50kHz from 24bit/96kHz recordings. This elevates it above those players like the Philips when playing high resolution discs.

NK

Frequency response 4Hz-21.2kHz

Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.005	0.005
-30dB	0.034	0.033
-60dB	0.84	0.86
-90	36	37
Separation	left	right
1kHz	106	107
20kHz	101	102
Noise		-103dB
with emphasis		-103dB
Dynamic range		101dB
Output		2.3V



LOUDSPEAKERS

NHT SUPER ONE

The forward response of this loudspeaker was fairly consistent over a large vertical range of microphone position, so it will sound consistent irrespective of listener height, where the direct sound predominates that is. This demonstrates good phase matching between bass/midrange and tweeter, always a plus point.

The response itself is a bit lumpy by today's standards, mainly due to behaviour of the bass/midrange driver. It peaks up by +3dB in the midband, around 1.5kHz, an effect that will add some brightness but also aid vocal projection. The effect may become a bit wearing in the long term though and whilst adding character it will detract from smoothness.

By way of contrast the tweeter provides an especially smooth response right up to 20kHz. A ruler flat trace like this usually translates into natural, survivable treble in practice.

Down at the bass end the Super One is different by being an infinite baffle, once the loading of choice, but now replaced by ported reflex which usually goes lower, albeit with more waffle. All the same this compact loudspeaker reaches down to 40Hz, low enough to reproduce bass fundamentals. It peaks strongly around 100Hz, an effect that increases bass speed and liveliness.

Sensitivity was very low at 83dB

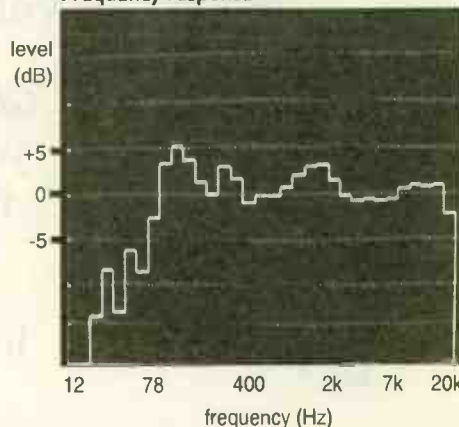
sound pressure from one nominal watt of input power. With an overall impedance value of 8.6ohms and a minimum set by a DCR of 6ohms the Super One draws lightly from an amplifier and there's little reactance to store energy too. However, a lot of volts are needed for high volume, around 60watts being a minimum to get the necessary swing. Nowadays, loudspeakers this size get up to 87dB from one watt. This is a weakness.

The Impedance curve puts bass resonance at a high 80Hz, whereas ported speakers peak around 60Hz. There's trade off here against sensitivity, which demands a light cone, whilst low bass demands a heavy cone. The Super One doesn't do well on either parameter. The bass unit probably has an inefficient motor, due to high tolerances or a weak magnet.

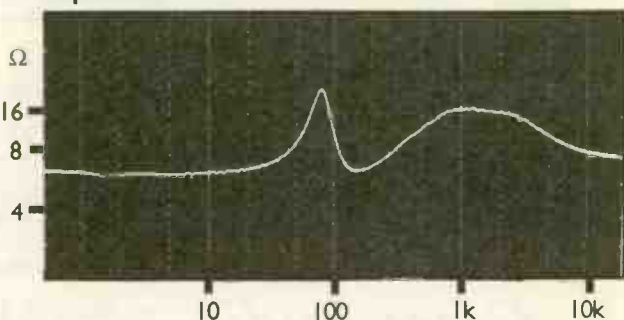
The Super One will sound characterful. It will likely have fast, clean bass. It does need a powerful amplifier for high volume though.

NK

Frequency response



Impedance



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OPERA SUPER PAVAROTTI

This tall, slim loudspeaker has twin bass drivers loaded by a reflex cabinet, the port firing out through the base, Castle style. The front-to-rear dimension of the cabinet is small. It might look good but it raises the problem of reflections from the rear wall returning out through the cone, adding time delayed colouration and response peaks. The forward response of the loudspeaker suffers a lot of undulation, with sharp-ish peaks suggestive of discrete resonances. The Super Pavarotti is likely to be characterful, or just coloured.

The loudspeaker has a reasonably smooth, extended treble response though and should have an easy, natural treble as a result. It's quite important for relaxed long term listening.

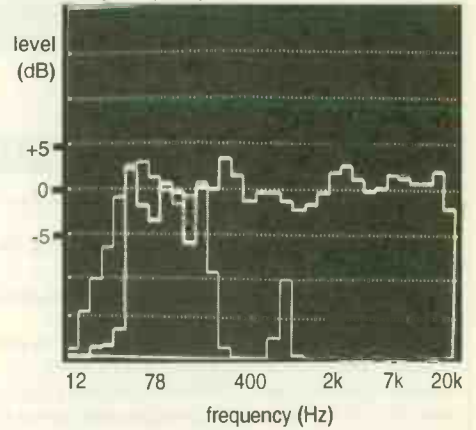
The Pavarotti also goes down low - very low in fact. Forward output hits 30Hz and the port takes this down to 25Hz or so. It's good, room shaking stuff and will ensure the small one makes a sound as large as the big one.

Over most of the frequency band this loudspeaker has a benign impedance curve, so it will not upset amplifiers. There are some undulations at around 40Hz, with an unusual pattern, showing

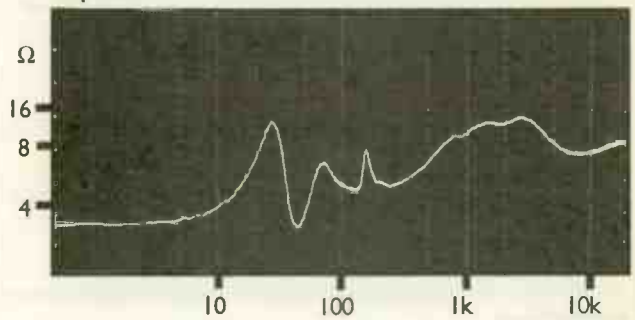
the bass loading differs from normal, but floor loaded reflex ports tend to differ, as they should. Sensitivity was good at 86dB from one nominal watt of input, overall impedance measuring 6ohms. This means efficiency is good, if not exceptional. A DCR of 3.4ohms represents the minimum load value offered, which is low. The loudspeaker will give consistent results between amplifiers but it needs current, so a beefy amplifier of 60watts or so is best

The Super Pavarotti will not sound as uncoloured as other good, modern loudspeakers because of its shallow cabinet, but it does have deep bass and smooth extended treble. It has been well engineered and will sound impressive in many areas, if not all. **NK**

Frequency response



Impedance



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Quad 33/303 (not working)	Shure ME97HE (used)
Quad 405/2 (boxed)	Shure V15II (no stylus)
Quad 44 Pre-amp (serviced)	A.K.G. P6E (boxed)
Quad 66 CD Player (mint)	A.K.G. P6R (boxed)
Quad QC II Pre-amp	A.K.G. P25 MD (boxed)
Quad ESL57 Electrostatic (single)	Golding G910 (boxed)
Quad FM1 Tuner	Golding G1010 (boxed)
Quad II mains transformer	Sony XL MM1 (boxed)
Quad II output transformer	Sony XL MM2 (boxed)
Quad II choke	Sony XL MM3 (boxed)
	Pickering TL2S (boxed)
	Pickering XLZ7500S (boxed)
	Ortofon OM30 (boxed)
	Decca London Blue (used)
	Decca London Gold (boxed)
	Decca FFSS Heads -

Leak	Moving Coil
TL12+ (pair)	Ortofon Type C (mono)
Stereo 20 (mint)	Ortofon MC2000 (cantilever bent)
Stereo 60	A.D.C. MC1.5
Trougline 3 Stereo Tuner + Teak Sleeve	Sony XLMC1 (boxed)
	QED Moving Coil pre-amp
	Pickering P-20 Moving Coil pre-amp
	Audio Technica AT637 electronic stylus cleaner
	Golding electronic stylus cleaner

Valves (G.E.C. Mullard etc.)
PX25, RT66, ECC81/84, EF80
Many Others. Please Phone For Details.

Most Models Of Leak Mono + Stereo Pre-Amps In Stock

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Mayware MkIV arm	£40	Goodmans Trebax Tweeter Units	£75
Audio Technica AT1120 arm	£50	Goodmans Midax Units	£75
SME 3009 II Arm	£75	Mordaunt Short MS600's with Decca Kelly ribbons (pair)	£150
Nakamichi 582 c/deck (3-Head)	£175	Goodmans Axiom 150 12"/15 ohm /15watt (single)	£50
Nakamichi 610 Pre-amp/ 620 Power-amp/ 630 fm tuner	£500	Tannoy 3LZ 10" Monitor Golds (mint)	£450
PYE HF58 Amps (pair)	£650	Spendor BC1 (pair)	£180
Thorens TD124 II + SME 3012 II + plinth and cover	£500	Tannoy 12" Monitor Red crossovers (pair)	£200
Tannoy HPD15" gold crossover (single)	£50	Tannoy 15" monitor reds (pair) no crossovers	£750
Thorens TD125 II + S.M.E. 3009 II improved + fluid damper (mint)	£175	Tannoy (GRF) 15" Bass Driver (single)	£120
SME 3009 Series 1	£175	Tannoy Lancasters (various)	please phone for details
Thorens TD124 Turntable	£150		

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CREEK	SAMUEL JOHNSON
CRIMSON	SME
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FINAL	TEAC
HEYBROOK	TRICHORD
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MICHELL	UNISON RESEARCH
MONITOR AUDIO	etc.

hi-fi world

Private Ads

Special Internet offer
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Dealers must not advertise in the Private Classified section.
Merchandise insertions will be considered Trade
advertising. The Publisher reserves the right to judge submissions.

FALCON MAXIMUS speakers
93.5dB sensitivity 123 litres 5
watts for 100dB focal drive
units Audiom 15VX Audiom
7K2 TC120TDX £800.
Magnum iA170SE amplifier
phono stage 6 months old
£175. Tel: 020 8531 5979
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'CASTLE HARLECH'S'
under a year old, finished in
yew, mint. Boxed £500.
Audiolab 8000A £280. Tel:
01276 452 581 or 07971
587 516 (Nov/1)

KRELL KPS-20i/L reference
CD player with integrated
linestage preamp, digital out-
put, 4 digital inputs, single-
ended/balanced outputs,
remote control, owner's manu-
al, boxed £3995. Tel: 01449 676
335 evenings (Dec/1)

AUDIO RESEARCH D70
power amplifier 60 wpc, fan-
tastic sound & drive, recent
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N.O.S. valves included. £900 or
nearest offer. Tel: 01509 215
230 (Nov/1)

AVI S2000 MP pre-amp £500
ono. AVI S2000 MCD CD play-
er £500 ono. AVI S2000 MM
monoblocks £700 ono. AVI
S2000 MT tuner £400 ono.
Megatron speakers £2500. Or
all @ £4200. All very good
condition. Tel: 020 7439 1365
or 07773 777 777 (Nov/1)

SPEAKER DRIVE Units:
Dynaudio 17W7SXL bass/mid
£75. Vifa M21W0-15 bass £40.
Celestion copper tweeters
£10. Aluminium coned
bass/mid MB180A8 £25. Ally
tweeter £5. Tel: Mark 01923
838 294 (days) or 020 8467
2353 (weekends) (Nov/1)

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offer. Tel: 01509 215 230
(Nov/1)

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Passive pre silver wired,
Vishays, perfect, boxed £300.
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SPENDOR SPI BBC monitors.
Little used, black ash, boxed,
£350. Large quantity Hi-Fi
News, Gramophone maga-
zines. Offers. Tel/Fax: 01983
297 903 (Nov/1)

LINN AKTIV Kabers (special
finish) £875. Linn Aktiv cards
£230. Linn LK100 power amps
£300 each. 11m Linn K60
cable £95. All items boxed,
mint condition. Tel: 01482 618
116 (evenings) (Nov/1)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS7,
(black) pre-amp, VT60 power-
amp. All re-valved, 3 years old,
as new £2400 ono. May P/Ex.
Tel: 01903 723 031 or 0797
404 9543 (Nov/1)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS8 pre-
amp, 5 months old, very little
use £1200. Musical Fidelity
Explora tuner, never used
£399. Denon DMD 1000 mini-
disc, never used £100. Tel:
01438 359 600 (Nov/1)

TEAC VRDS-T1, Classic
superbly built transport, mint,
boxed £380. 24k DAC Musical
Fidelity, exceptional reviews
96/48/44 bps+, mint, boxed
£220 (£550 sold together).
Rogers LS7 loudspeakers, vgc,
big sound & staging, boxed,
£150. Meridian 203 DAC, mint,
£120 offers considered. Tel:
023 9233 7269 (day), 01590
672 451 (evening) (Nov/1)

LINN LP12 Armagedon, Ittok,
MC10, £1000. Musical Fidelity
F25, F16 pre/power £1600. Kef
Reference Three, Rosetta Burr
£1400. AVI Biggatrons, boxed,
new £400. van den Hul inter-
connects £80. Tel: 01558 650
115 (Nov/1)

NAIM SEPARATES for sale.
32.5 preamp with 72 boards,
dual rail power supply as
HiCap. Naim 250 power amp,
old case £950 ono. Tel: 01423
528 247 after 6pm. (Nov/1)

MICROMEGA TEMPO pre and
power (£2500) £1100.
Meridian 501 pre, + MSR
£395. Audio Note CD2 valve
player (£1000) £550. All boxed,
as new. vdH 'Source' intercon-
nect, 5 x 1m £20 ea. Tel: 01425
655 940 (Nov/1)

NAIM NAC72 pre-amp, mint
condition, new style, 2 years
old, boxed with manuals £465
ono, must sell. Dunlop system
deck turntable 1970s model,
offers. Tel: 01444 455 593
(Nov/1)

MAGNEPLANAR 1.6 QR
speakers. New model.
64x19x2 high end ribbon
quality. Mint, boxed, bargain
at only £975. Tel: 01438 225
249 (Nov/1)

B&W 802N light cherry, 15
hours use, as new £4300.
NuVista 300 amps, 15 hours
use, as new £3200. Audio
Research CD2 stunning sound,
pristine condition £2100. Tel:
01438 359 600 (Nov/1)

WANTED: BANG and Olufsen
turntable, Beogram 4002, 5000,
5500, 7000, 9000 Series con-
sidered. Tel: John Knott 01562
742 317 (Nov/1)

MUSICAL FIDELITY MVT Mk3
pre-amp, mint (£1200) £400
ono. DPA Enlightenment pre-
amp £350 ono, mint. Musical
Fidelity E600 CD (£600) £350
ono, mint. B+VW 802 Series 3.
£1250 ono. Tel: 0121 742 2015
(Nov/1)

MISSION 753 floorstanding
speakers, rosewood finish
£330. Won many recommenda-
tions and accolades. £800 new.
Unconstrained dynamics and
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Albans or Abergavenny. Tel:
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CASTLE HARLECH loud-
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mahogany, boxed, will deliver,
£365 ono. Tel: Allan 01827 288
444 or 07970 036 128 (Nov/1)

NAIM 102 pre-amp, MC
boards £850. HiCap £495.
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Alchemy DDS III £395. DDE
V30 £300. Power Station 2
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sale. Tel: 01708 760 571
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LEAK TROUGHLINE tuner,
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case, £275 ono. Arcam Delta
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ified by Audio Synthesis. Co-
axial output only. £175 ono.
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NAIM CD3 £400. NAC92
£225. NAP 90.3 £225. Flat Cap
£150. Rotel RQ970 BX phono
£65 or £850 the lot. All vgc
and boxed. Tel: 01732 840 265
(Kent) (Nov/1)

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boxed and in excellent condi-
tion, £800. Tel: Chris 07773
341 145 (Nov/1)

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5m terminated Pair £509.99

We think TCI Python is so good we have permanently wired our Dolby Digital / THX demonstration room with it!!



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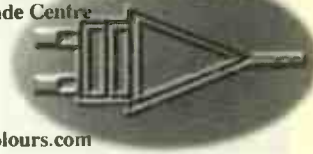
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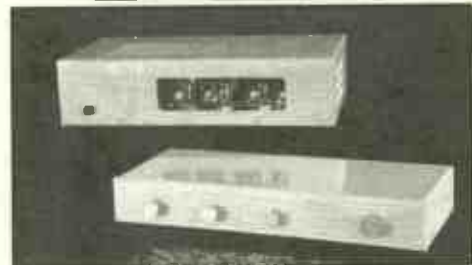
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Rothwell Electronics 60 Pennington Road, Great Lever, Bolton BL3 3BR
Tel/Fax 01204 654614

Special Internet offer
see page 130 for details

WANTED FOR Tandberg TR220 receiver. Circuit diagram and instruction manual. Loan for photocopying gratefully accepted. Tel: 01341 422 111 (Gwynedd) (Nov/1)

NAIM ORIGINAL NAP T60 full service by Naim May 2000, £395. NAC 62 £175. Linn Index Mk2 with dedicated Kustone stands £150. All excellent condition, boxed. NAD (award winning) 4225 tuner £75. Tel: 01484 841 482 (Dec/1)

KIMBER HIGH current mains cable. Can be made into 8TC power cords or distribution blocks. 5ft x 2 £40 each. 8ft £60, 1 1/2ft x 4 £10 each. Tel: 01484 841 482 (Nov/1)

REVOX 8760 amplifier £200. Thorens TD160LVX £100. Marantz CD63 £40. Mission 763 loudspeakers £150. Denon DR33HX cassette £75. Arcam C200 pre-amp £100. Electrocompaniet power amp £100. Radford ZD22/ZD100 £250. Tel: evenings 01704 530 928 (Nov/1)

MICHELL ALECTOS £1145 (£1950) - awesome monobloc amplifiers. Combine valve-like mid range with transistor base. Excellent reviews. 125W 8ohm and 200W 4ohm. Pristine condition. Tel: 01296 747 852 (evenings/weekends), 01189 446 544 (weekdays) (Nov/1)

WILSON AUDIO 5.1 loudspeakers. Desert Taupe finish. Easily the best pair in UK. Serial No's 6643-4. New Nov. 98. Cost £18,000, £9,500 ono. Mint condition with shipping crates. Tel: Mike 01902 786 818 (Nov/1)

KEF 105/3 rosewood immaculate £1100. Michaelson Odysseus valve integrated £600, Meridian 200/203 £600. All with boxes, receipts, fabulous! Tel: 01527 543 753 Worcestershire (Nov/1)

EXPOSURE 25 integrated amplifier, piano finish front panel £475. Exposure 18 Super power amplifier £475. Both boxed and in vgc. Sonic Link AST200 speaker cable two metre lengths £27. Tel: Stephen 01865 254 249 or 01865 243 464 after 6pm (Nov/1)

WANTED: HITACHI HA8500 MkII power-amp with or without pre-amp. Would consider MkI. Can collect. Tel: David 0116 244 0593 or 07787 158 791 (Nov/1)

AUDIO ANALOGUE Pucinni Special Edition integrated amplifier, black, boxed, £300. Nottingham Analogue Interspace turntable, Mission 774 arm, £250. Tel: 0121 344 3598 (Birmingham) (Nov/1)

LINN LP12 including Lingo electronic. Syrix PU2 arm. Audio Technica AT-OC7 played about 100 albums. Make sensible offer. Tel: 01905 770 810 evenings. 01635 562 806 daytime (Nov/1)

NAIM 32.5, Naim NAPI60. The most musical Naim power amp. Recent full Naim service update, £625. Linn Sara (Isobarik) speakers, dedicated stands, Afrosoma unmarked £280. 4 x 7m NAC04 cable £20 pair. Tel: 0121 258 1607 (Nov/1)

WADIA 16 CD Player £1650 ono. Tel: 020 8771 7106 (Nov/1)

GOERTZ M2 Veracity speaker cable 4/m. Bi-wire terminated with bananas £250. Sumiko B.P.S. as new £150. Chord Cobra II interconnect £30. Straightwire Chorus interconnect £20. Deflex speaker panels unwanted surplus. Tel: 020 8690 4122 evenings (Nov/1)

TANNOY REV. R3 speakers £300. QED profile silver 12 biwire two 4m lengths £40. Tel: 01925 852 316 (Warrington) (Nov/1)

LINN KAIRN pre/ LK100 power amps. Remote interconnects, manuals boxed absolutely immaculate. Reason, upgrade. £1150. Tel: 01924 871 769, Email: steve.ehsoprano@lineone.net (Nov/1)

UNISON SMART 845 monoblocks. New output valves superb £1900 ovno. Avantgarde 217BR Pro active subwoofers cost £2200, £1100 the pair. Audio Synthesis Passion £345 ovno. Tel: 01922 477 682 Email: geoffrey.dunn1@btinternet.com (Dec/1)

LOWTHER LOWTHER Acousta twin speakers wanted. Made 1960's. Also wanted working drawings, leaflets, Lowther drive units, twin speaker feet, drive unit screws, PM2A L/S drive units. Tel: Jeff 020 8220 0380 (Nov)

FREE ROKSAN Caspian control amplifier. Free R. Caspian power amplifiers 3 pieces. Free Audioquest Quartz x 3 = 4 pairs + indigo speakers cables. Free rack stand Unique. When you buy my Mordaunt-Short performance 860 speakers and Roksan Caspian CD player £2800. Tel: 01463 236 211 or 715 428, Email: ieef@hotmail.com (Dec/1)

LINN MAJIK I line amplifier. Excellent condition, remote and instructions, changed system to Cyrus/Mission hence sale £250. Tel: Andy 07760 127 049 or evenings 01273 494 037 (Nov/1)

FM ACOUSTICS 300A power amplifier £1495. Exposure 18 monoblocs £795. Exposure XV super integrated £395. AVI integrated £495. Yamaha NS1000 loudspeakers £595. Audioplan Kontrast 3 loudspeakers £975. Koetsu black £300. LFD MC2 phono stage £595. All excellent. Tel: 01747 853 372 Dorset (Nov/1)

EPOS ES22, ES30, only few months old, Audio Research SP8, Beard PI00 MkII valve power amp. Micromega Premium DVD plus CDF1 transport. Will split. sensible offers only. Tel: evenings 020 8644 7494 or 0468 402 144 (Nov/1)

ACOUSTIC ENERGY AE-520 excellent boxed £425. Thule PR-200 pre-amp with PA-200 mono-blocs just serviced excellent condition cost £2700 asking £575. Upgrade forces sale. Tel: 01904 763 157 (York) (Nov/1)

TRICHORD TRANSPORT £345 - stable platter, 3 power supplies, Clock3, AES/EBU and BNC. Trichord Pulsemaster £195 - Jitter Buster, BNC. Audioquest 3.5m Midnight & 3.5m Cobolt biwire speaker cables, £129/£179 respectively. Tel: 01296 747 852 (Nov/1)

PIONEER PD-91 CD player and Panasonic NV-V8000B S-VHS VCR dual full/compact size cassette. Both as new condition very little use. Original manuals and packing. £400 each. Tel: 01945 463 077 (Nov/1)

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ECC81	CV4024	6.00	5Z4G		6.00
ECC82		2.50	6CH6	Brimar	2.50;
ECC82	MULLARD	8.00			£200 for 100
ECC82	CV4003, MULLARD	12.50	6F07		9.45
ECC83	SOVTEK	3.35	6L6G	CV1947	30.00
ECC83	MULLARD	15.00	6L6	METAL	9.80
ECC85		2.30	6L6GC	SYLVANIA	14.90
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E88CC	MULLARD	16.95	6SN7GT	BRIMAR	8.00
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ECL82	GERMAN	4.50	6X4WA		3.30
EF37A	MULLARD, GREY	2.50	12BH7	BRIMAR, BLACK PLATE	15.00
EF86		4.35	12E1	STC	10.00
EF86	MULLARD	11.00	807	CERAMIC BASE	20.00
EL34	SOVTEK	6.00	807	USA	5.00
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EL84	SOVTEK	2.15	813	RCA	35.00
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EZ80	MULLARD	6.00	6550A	GE	24.15
EZ81	MULLARD	6.00	6550A	MATCHED PAIRS	32.00
GZ33	MULLARD	13.00	6550-B2	SVETLANA	12.75£EA
GZ34		3.50	B4 BASES		1.00
GZ37	MULLARD	7.00	B5 BASES		1.50
KT61	GEC	25.00	INTERNATIONAL OCTAL, CERAMIC		
KT66	GEC ORIGINAL	65.00	3.00		
PCL86	14.5V, HTR, ECL86	0.50	B9A, CERAMIC,		2.00
£35 / 100;	£250 / 1000 PT15 MARCONI		UX4 / UX5, CERAMIC		2.50
35.00					
PX4	POA				
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RCA Heater transformer for 211VT4C
Primary 190-210-230-250
Secondary 10V centre tapped @ 3.25A X 2
Fully enclosed, £20

RCA transformer
Primary 110-125-150-210-240
Secondary 345-0-345 @100Ma
5V 2A 6.45V @ 4.5A
Fully enclosed £25

Oil filled Transformer, Gardeners
Primary 110-240V;
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250-0-250; 180mA 6.3V, 7A, 5V, 3A £50.00 EA

Primary 115-250-440V Secondary 640-0-640V
160mA 330-0-330 225mA £50.00

Oil filled Chokes by Parmeko/ Gardeners
2.5H, 220mA; 2.5H, 350mA; 4.5H, 150 mA; 4.5H, 220mA; 4.5H, 280mA; 5H, 110mA; 5H, 200mA; 5H, 250mA; all at £30.00 ea.

5H 100mA Oil, Parmeko, £15.00

5H, 400mA £38.50 ea; 7.5H, 250mA £30.00ea

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Loudspeakers
Sonus faber Signum with A/Stands £1350
EAR Skiff 301 (Beech) £1000
Klipsch KG5 5 (Light Oak) £650
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Triangle Scalene (Black) £300
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ARCAM DELTA 250 CD transport and BB50 DAC £750. Tel: 020 7231 3518 (London) (Nov/1)

LIVING VOICE 'Auditorium' speakers, cherry finish. 'Hi-Fi Choice' best buy. Superb sounding speakers in mint condition £795 (£1500 new). May consider other equipment plus cash in part exchange. Tel: 023 8073 8935 (Southampton) (Nov/1)

MUSICAL FIDELITY

Reference series switchable Class A system Nu-Trik balanced in/out and standard RCA connectors FCD CD player £750 (1500). F25 pre-amp £750 (1500). F16 power amp £1500 (2500). Fantastic sound, awesome dynamics unmarked. Tel: 020 8857 9490/07939 948 750 (Nov/1)

VAN DEN Hul The Wind Mk2's speaker cables, 4 x 2m lengths, banana plugs, read the reviews! Beige in colour, hardly used, £350 new, accept £175 ono. Tel: Brady 01582 765 215 (Herts), Email: harpenden@ntlworld.com (Nov/1)

NAIM NAT01 original tuner £600. Quad 33/FM3/405 £250. 33/FM3/306 £250. Radford STA25 SC22/FM2 £500. Rotel Michi RHA10 pre-amp £250. Sugden SDAID-A converter £200. Nakamichi 8 x 1 £75. Sony TC366 £75. Tel: 01704 530 928 (Nov/1)

QUAD 405 II and 44 pre-amp refitted with phono's and Audio op-amps £300. Leak Troughline Stereo serviced £85. Sansui AU/517 amp £60. Quad 57's new panels etc £700. Tel: 02476 460 729 or 07769 707 847 (Nov/1)

KEF REFERENCE One loudspeakers, rare Santos rosewood finish, excellent condition £850. Tel: 01628 783 176 (Maidenhead) (Nov/1)

CASTLE HARLECH speakers in cherry, immaculate boxed £450. Audio Alchemy DitB giveaway £95. 5m pair Ixos Pakora 606 speaker cables £40. Stunning sound from all items offered. Tel: 0121 733 1961 (Nov/1)

UNISON RESEARCH Simply-Two valve amplifier re-valved with Svetlana power and Mullard pre-amp tubes £450 or will part exchange for Copland CTA401. Arcam Alpha 8SE good condition £230. Both items boxed. Tel: 01206 747 474 (Nov/1)

QUAD ESL63 speakers, plus Quadrapod stands, (September 2000 £1600 spent replacing every element). Fully guaranteed by Quad and boxed. Rare opportunity (£3650) bargain £2295 may p/x smaller speaker plus cash? Tel: 01472 329 668 (Nov/1)

EXPOSURE 25 integrated amplifier, piano finish front panel £475, Exposure 18 Super power amplifier £475 both boxed and in vgc. Sonic Link AST200 speaker cable two 5 meter lengths £27. Tel: Stephen 01865 254 249 or 01865 243 464 after 6pm (Nov/1)

KEF REFERENCE Model One speakers, black ash vgc boxed £500. Tel: 07989 898 247 (Bristol) (Nov/1)

TANDBERG TR 2055 stereo receiver 55w. Twin tape phono inputs four speaker outputs recent test by R.D.E. Tandberg excellent condition. Manuals. £350. Pair Tandberg speakers £50 Type 113/106. Tel: 0113 286 2296 Leeds (Nov)

GARRARD 401 professional turntable SME fixed arm model 3009 Ortofon MC20 cartridge with amplifier spare MC20 and amplifier kit SME housing cabinet (rare) spare motor board (oak) manuals. Pristine condition. Tel: 0121 360 0177 (Nov/1)

DYNAUDIO CONTOUR 1.3 Mk2 standmount speakers 8 months old boxed £760. Arcam Alpha 10 amp boxed £450. KEF Coda 8 bookshelf speakers £80. Tel: 01452 610 466 (Gloucester) (Nov/1)

KEF REFERENCE Model 4 speakers in rosewood £2000 and Reference Model 2 speakers in rosetta burr £1000. All immaculate and boxed. Tel: 020 7231 3518 (London) (Nov/1)

WADIA X32 D-A Converter. 18 Bit/44.1-48 kHz conversion. RCA & ST optical output. Original box plus manual. Mint condition. Has warranty £650. Day: 01646 680 156. Mobile: 07779 403 499 (Nov/1)

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-A200 mono's 18 months old. Cost £1000, yours for £700. MVT Mk3 pre and power supply £350. Upgrade bug. Tel: 01273 605 310 (Brighton) (Nov/1)

SUGDEN AU41 Signature remote pre AU41 power £600. Naim MC stage with separate power supply and MM boards £200. Trichord Clock 3 including power supply and instructions £80. Tel: 01733 810 516 (Nov/1)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS7 (black) pre-amp VT60 power amp (re-valved) 3 years old, one owner £2400 ono. May p/ex. All as new. Tel: 01903 723 031 or 0797 404 9543 (Nov/1)

AUDIO INNOVATIONS L2 recent valves as new £250. Moth wall mounted tables x 2, brand new £20 each. Ortofon S40 cartridge brand new stylus fitted £60, cost loads. Upgraded. Tel: 0121 745 6516 (Birmingham) (Nov/1)

B&W P5's in rosewood £450 ono. Micromega Stage 6 CD player £400 ono. Regar Planar 3 with Goldring Eroica LX cartridge £175 ono. Tel: 0115 913 4961 (Nottingham) (Nov/1)

RARE OPPORTUNITY! Pristine Mk1 Snell Type K superb oak cabinets excellent with valves £225. Matching Huygens stands £75. Boxed, Nordost Flatline gold bi-wire 5 metre. Wanted: Audio Physic Spark 2/3 Tel: 01429 429 953 (Hartlepool) (Nov (1))

AUDIONOTE DAC3 Signature £1050 (£2800) or swap for good pre-amp. Proceed Amp 2 (Mark Levinson) power amp 150 wpc £900 (£2000). Good reviews. Kimber Select 1020 interconnect £220 (£410) 3/4m. Wanted: Audioquest Diamond x 3 interconnect. Tel: 01372 468 266 (Nov/1)

AUDIONOTE SPEAKERS

Type E/B on MAF stands £650 (£1300). Lehmann Black Cube preamp £250 (£395). Tel: 0131 220 0780 (Nov/1)

B&W P5 cherrywood floor standing speakers 90dB sensitivity superb with valves boxed £425. Quad II's refurbished £350. Musical Reference American valve pre-amp £200. Tel: 01432 275 203 (Hereford) (Nov (1))

PROJECT 7 amp boxed as new five years old £75 ono. Tel: 01386 793 432 (Nov/1)

MICROMEGA DUO CD3 player and BS2 DAC £1199. Tel: Steve 01494 433 750 (Amersham) Email: srodd@btinternet.com or steve.rodd@cts-ltd.co.uk (Nov/1)

AUDAX LS/KIT £20. Quad: FM4 £120, 33-303 £120, FM2(V) £40. Thorens 125, SME arm, plinth, £100. Roksan Xerxes (rosewood), RB300, £200. Rotel Michi phono £400. Radford SC26-35 £800. AT-OC7, mint £50. Massive (!) Wharfedale corner (1950s?) £100. W3's £70. B/W DM4's £125. Tel/Fax: 01452 750 242 anytime (Nov/1)

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HI-FI AND HOME CINEMA

So autumn approaches and by the time you read this the 'Hi-Fi Show 2000' will be upon us, or just gone. At the moment therefore there's not much new to write about except to report that AVI have recently modified both the Nu-Neutron (now called Neutron III) and the Bigatron, now suffixed 'Red Spot'. Old Nu-Neutrons can be upgraded to III standard for £135 inc. return carriage, while the new III's still cost £499. AVI state that the 'Red Spots' are '2dB more efficient, have greater bass extension, a better stereo image, more clarity and greater neutrality'. In both cases the major change has been a lowering of the crossover frequency. All the AVI speakers make excellent A/V speakers, and should you be interested in combining Hi-Fi sound and Home Cinema. Do give us a call.

Sale Items (P/E and Ex-Demo)

Tannoy DC3000 Floorstanders (black) - P/E	£300
Linn Tukan (black ash) - P/E	£275
ATC SCM 50A SL's, Teak - P/E	£2800
Ruark Broadsword's, Walnut - P/E (slight damage)	£300
Triangle Zays (Black/Walnut) - Ex-Demo (£1200)	£800
Alon Petite (Walnut) - Ex-Demo (£1100)	£700
Linn Sondeck/Mechanic/Kiesiki Blue - P/E	£1500

(Note: Cost of Red Spot upgrade same as for Nu-Neutron)

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Hi-Fi World October 99*

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LINN ISOBARIKS active walnut stands, cables, LK280's x 3 boxed LK1 pre-amp with Dirak power supply remote Linn Aktiv crossover with Dirak power supply, excellent sound, leads, interconnects etc. Price £1550. Tel: 00 35 31 295 4076 (Nov/1)

CROFT 5 monoblocks modified to 4 ohms will drive difficult speaker. Asking £650. Technics 205 phono cartridge mint condition boxed with head shell rare. Asking £100. Apogee Centaur ribbons for sale. Asking £1000. Tel: 01323 729 971 (Nov/1)

KEF 103/4 black ash £400. Rotel Prologic processor 5 channel power amplifier £100. Tel: 01253 702 116 from 6pm (Nov/1)

CYRUS DAD 7 CD £350 ono was £900. Triangle Titus T2X speakers £150 ono was £379. Incatech Claymore amplifier Mk1 £185 ono. All immaculate. Wanted Rega Kytes. Tel: 01422 310 464 after 5pm (Nov/1)

TUBE TECHNOLOGY
Genesis monoblocks £1200. Tube Technology Seer pre-amp (phono) £400. ATC SCM10 black ash loudspeakers, December 99 £500. May P/X for quality turntable and arm. Tel: 01423 866 370 (Nov/1)

MARANTZ - MA24 Pure Class A monoblocks. Stunning high end sound £1650. Deltec Blacklink Interconnects £115/pair. Offers considered. Tel: 01727 866 908 (Nov/1)

LINN ISOBARIK DMS walnut o/board x/overs stands £900 ono. Exposure XI pre Two VI One IX power supplies dual regulated IV £1400. Might split. Pioneer PD91 CD £400. Tel: 01708 457 691 (Nov/1)

FOR SALE: Meridian M60C centre speaker, highly rated speaker, cost new £1150, mint condition, bargain £400 ono. Tel: 0777 993 5921 (Nov/1)

AVI S2000 MC CD Player £650. AVI S2000 MT FM Tuner £350. Both units hardly used and as new, with boxes and receipts. Tel: Mike 020 8870 3630 or 07790 909 728 (Nov/1)

AVI 2000MM 150 watt monobloc power amplifiers £750. AVI 2000T FM tuner £350. Meridian 201/209 pre-amplifier and remote £295. Pair Jamo Concert 8 speakers £750. Tel: 01892 536 919 (West Kent) (Nov/1)

ART AUDIO Mk2 Triode monoblocks Class A operation fitted with Border Patrol power supply units £3600+ new, bargain at £1000. Tel: 01454 418 997 (Bristol area) (Nov/1)

LOWTHER DX4 module based horn loudspeaker based upon Lowther LDX-100 cabinet design, 6 months old, a modern Lowther classic with slim but deep cabinets RRP £3500, accept £895 ovno. Tel: 020 8341 7268 (Nov/1)

NAIM NAP 250 x 2 Naim service guarantee £650 each. NAC 32.5 £130. Linn Isobariks Active + stands £600, all boxed, mint. Nakamichi cassette deck 2, mint (£350) £100. Tripod 8 shelf (Naim) £70. Tel: 0161 764 8888 or 0161 762 9884 (Nov/1)

B&W, 801 Matrix walnut Abbey Road monitors beautiful £1400. MPA1 monoblocks (balanced) 100w £400. Linn Sondek Ittock K9 low use £380. Sony Pro Walkman WMD6C boxed mint £150. Tel: 0161 764 8888 or 0161 762 9884 (Nov/1)

TUNERS RADFORD, Leak FM, Troughline 3, Quad FM3, QUAD 33, Reel/Reel G36, Teac Tascam tapes new/used pre-amp Meridian 101 transformers, chokes, microphones, Mission 771 speakers, magazines, Audio Research MD90. Tel: 0131 332 7536 (Nov/1)

LATEST DNM 3C Primus pre-amp, only months old, mint, under warranty, crated, superb transparency, excellent phono stage, c/w specially terminated DNM interconnects. Genuine bargain, £850 (£2100). Ion Obelisk 3X/X-Pak1, 70wpc high current amplifier/psu, similar to, but better than, Cyrus 2/PSX.VGC, boxed, £175 (£750). No offers or time-wasters please. Tel: Adil 020 8673 3850 or 020 7919 8559 or 07979 538 841 (London) (Nov/1)

KUZMA STOGI Reference tone arm, boxed, cost £800 new, accept £350. Audionote A.N.S. interconnect 1 mtr £50. Ixos 103 interconnect 1mtr cost £45 accept £20. Tel: 01634 268 660 (Nov/1)

MICHELL ALECTO monoblocks + Michell Argo HR pre-amp + PSU excellent condition/sound £3100 accept £1200 ono. Jamo Concert-8 mint condition, fabulous sound 3 months use £1365 new, bargain £800. Tel: 0115 911 8176 (Nov/1)

NAIM CD3 excellent condition boxed with instructions leads lightly used bargain £395. Sonus Faber Electa speakers walnut very good condition boxed with matching stands superb sound £795. Tel: David 0191 454 6657 (Nov/1)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS 2 pre-amp. Audio Alchemy DDE 1.1V DAC. Power Station Three. Micromega Stage 3 CD player. Roksan Darius speakers black biwire. Attic clear out so make me sensible offers please. All conditions. Tel: 01395 275 698 evenings (Nov/1)

PROCEED CDP (Mark Levinson) CD player £2450 (new £3450) Bow Technologies Wazoo integrated amplifier £1295 (new £2250). Both boxed, mint. Linn Sara 9 Isobariks £330 including dedicated stands. Tel: 020 8948 0899 (Nov/1)

AEI SERIES II walnut loudspeakers with stands £850. Alchemist Forseti integrated amp £600. Alchemist Odin power amp £300. Tel: Steve 01455 843 367 (Leics) (Nov/1)

MISSION CYRUS 7 amp, Mission power amp, Musical Fidelity X10D, 3x silver copper interconnects, boxed, under warranty, as new, cost £1700, accept £1099 ono. Tel: Ian 0777 994 5881 (Nov/1)

LINN ACTIVE system. 2 LK100s, 1 Majik pre-amp, 2 active boards, 1 pair of Keilidh speakers with Ku Stone stands, all are in mint condition, £1500. For details Tel: 01303 851 006 (Nov/1)

LAUD3 COMPREHENSIVE FFT Audio Analyser, eases design and testing of speakers, amps, output transformers and more. Runs under DOS or Windows £240. Leak Troughline 3 Stereo £85. Tonigen ribbon tweeters, one pair, new £45. Boxmodel and TLboxmodel software for speaker design £12. Black Gate ultra high grade caps. Cerafine capacitors 1000uF 63V £4 each. Alps Potentiometers 10K and 50K £5 each. 8mm heat-shrink £1 per metre. 12v sealed batteries 6AH and 3AH. 100mHz frequency counter £45. Various NOS valves. call for details. Tel: 01384 837 319 or 0976 286 365 (Nov/1)

ONE THING Audio rebuilt Quad FM2 Stereo valve tuner. One Thing Decoder installed within. Phono outputs, instructions, Musicality personified, £175. Delighted or refund. Tel: 01202 481 386 (Nov/1)

AUDIOLAB 8000Q Preamp, 2 x 8000P monobloc power amps (100w), 2 years old, in mint condition, boxed, excellent sound quality. Cost £2800. Offers around £1150. Tel: 01224 211 203, Mobile: 0794 136 8479 (Dec/1)



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JAMO CONCERT 8 loudspeakers (cost £1385) boxed and brand new and matching Jamo stands (cost £250), for £1250. Contact James on mobile: 07971 431118 or Tel: 01482 659 041 (Nov/1)

MARANTZ CD85, additionally fitted AT&T (ST) optical output for high grade CD transport £595. Revox B260 tuner £550. Both little used, in excellent condition, boxed, manuals. Tel: 01483 282 364 (Surrey) (Nov/1)

YAMAHA DSP-1A A/V amplifier, 5 months old, emigration forces sale, £499 ono. Tel: 01903 268 282 (Nov/1)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS5 Mk2 preamp, 3 years old, £1450 (£5500). Mark Levinson 333 poweramp, 18 months old £3900 (£8500). Both perfect, boxed, manuals, Stereophile Class A products. Tel: Bill 01993 851 508 (Oxford) (Nov/1)

YAMAHA NS20 speakers. Large ear shaped bass 24"x36" £250. Rogers Junior valve amp, £50. 5-10 Mullard valve amp £35. Middax 650 £30. Wanted: BTH 18" speaker. Tel: 01736 740 421 (Nov/1)

NAIM NAP 90 NAC 62 £425. CD3 £525. Sonus Faber Concerto's + stands £625. NeuNeutrons marble/ steel stands separate plinths £375. Phillips CD 850 R/C (£400) £75. Tel: 0121 246 0486 (Nov/1)

AUDIOLAB 8000A integrated amplifier vgc £200. Pro-Ac tablette speakers + dedicated stands vgc £175. Aiwa AD3800 cassette deck 3 head 2 capstan 2 motor auto cal etc. Needs attention, offers. Tel: 01442 344 362 daytime (Nov/1)

AURA (B&W) CA200 preamp. 2x PA100 power amps. All chrome. MM, phono, 100wpc, 250wpc bridged. Two years old. Very good condition. Boxed, upgrading, must sell £850 (£2250) Tel: 01903 533 069 (Worthing) (Nov/1)

ARCAM ALPHA 9 CD £400, includes AudioQuest Emerald interconnect. QEF Q65 speakers £400 includes AudioQuest Indigo birwired cable. Yamaha tuner £50. All above vgc. Tel: Martin 07787 575 633 (Nov/1)

NAIM SYSTEM CD I £1000, 82 preamp £1100, 180 poweramp £700, HiCap £450, SBL's new spec £1100, All boxed as new. Tel: 0115 940 3416 or 07974 236 677 (Nov/1)

AUDIOLAB 8000C pre-amp, boxed, as new £235 ovno. Tel: 0115 939 3175 after 4.30pm. (Nottingham) (Nov/1)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS7 £700. D200 poweramp £1200. Together £1700. Mantra turntable, power supply, motor rebuild, Musician 'S; tonearm, OC9 £600. Also Keilidh/Kaber polymer stands £25. vdH Teatrack biwire 4m pair terminated £80. Tel: 020 8361 7142 (Nov/1)

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AUDIO RESEARCH SPII MkII Superb preamp, Transparent Sound qualities £5400, £1450. Audio Research SP9 MkI, boxed, as new £750. Krell KSA50 Mk2 power-amp, as new £1,100. Marantz CD 63 KI signature, as new £190 Krell KAV 150 power amp, 1 month old £1700. Pioneer PDS 504 Trichord Clocked, bargain - £150. ATC SCM20 speakers, in yew, immaculate, boxed £699. Transparent balanced interconnect, £300 - £120 ono. XLO 4.1 DIGI cable 0.5m, new £350 - £120 ono. Nordost Blue Angel balanced cables, 1mtr £70 ono. Deltec Black Slink, 0.5mtr pair £70. Naim CDX, 2 years £1500 (£2335). Naim 52s, Supercap 2 years £3250 (£6000). Naim NAP250 8 years, rec't svcs £1100 (£1800). Naim SBLs new style bass £1150 (£2030) Oak Project Table 4 shelf, 1 year £180 (£380) Please telephone Jules on 01792 280 061 / Fax 01792 518 958 / E-mail: sales@sounddrjuleshifi.co.uk (Nov/1)

AFFORDABLE VALVE COMPANY Model EL34. Powerful 40 watts Class A valve amplifier. Mr Andrew Everard in Gramophone Magazine "delivers a sound that's both smooth and refined....allied to a good degree of clarity and finesse." Richard White in Hi-Fi World review "soothing rocked by EL34's powerful bass end....very good value for money." Richard Black in Hi-Fi Choice "it's a classic valve sound....warm and cuddly....vocals are generally lifelike and involving." Comprehensive 1 year guarantee. Free colour literature. Free delivery. 1 month home trial. Guaranteed to improve your hi-fi system or your money back. New £600 New. Credit cards accepted. Telephone 01634 373 410 anytime. www.affordablevalvecompany.com (Apr/01)

STUDER B62 Chassis, high speed, with new Studer heads, includes spares and full service manual £800. Tel: 01246 275 479, Fax: 01246 550 421 (Nov/1)

REVOX PR99 MkIII high speed with Canford wooden carry case. Includes owners manual £800. Studer A812 TC four speed 12.5 NAB spool, variable speed £1200. Tel: 01246 275 479, Fax: 01246 550 421 (Nov/1)

NAGRA IVS Stereo portable with QGB NAB spool adaptor and mains unit, £1600, includes tapes and owners manual. Tel: 01246 275 479, Fax: 01246 550 421 (Nov/1)

STUDER A730 Professional CD player, balanced line output, vari-speed with display. Includes factory test sheet and owners manual £850. Tel: 01246 275 479, Fax: 01246 550 421 (Nov/1)

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INTERCONNECTS. FED up hearing you must spend £500 for a decent cable? Two types available - The Blue £45 or The White £95 per metre stereo pair. These cables put other brands to shame! Satisfaction guaranteed or your money back. Tel: 0141 569 1069 (Nov/1)

RESOLUTION LOUDSPEAKERS Audiophile bargains to be found in sale of prototype and pre-production designs. Contact Richard Moore on 02476 375 383 for more details or to arrange a demonstration. (Nov/1)

Most cables have a sonic signature or tonal character to match specific components. In well-matched systems these cables are often found to be harsh or dull.

Petros cables were designed for AudioSOURCE to complement transparent components in a well-matched system: the goal was neutrality - musical flavour transmitted as water flows along a smooth pipe. If our cables sound bright or blurred, be confident that it is the equipment that you are hearing! Stratos cables have the greatest differentiation of all interconnects we have compared, that is to say that different recordings and different components just yield their own characters, transparently.

The design is the attention to many details, based on simple physics and many listening tests. We are now so far ahead of the game - and still moving the goal posts - that we will disclose the basic principles. The two major principles are conductivity and contamination. **Conductivity:** low resistance, capacitance, etc, using the highest purity copper (silver content acid-free solder) in very fine but many strands. In outer space, such cables would transmit Nothing But Signal (hence the esteemed American NBS brand! Incidentally, we have some of their amazing cables for sale at half-price). **Contamination:** since the invention of radio we are aware that your wires act as aerials. Designers cannot eliminate this in the equipment without serious degradation of the music signal. Planet Earth is now contaminated with EMI, RFI, you name it fields from cellular phones to AC mains. Coming from your neighbours, factories, and your own hi-fi and non-hi-fi devices. Our cables use twin axial (quasi-balanced) plus and minus wires, inside a triple-shielded braid earthed at source only and taken through to the plugs. We also apply Kontak cleaner to greatly reduce RF rectification and enhance surface conductivity. It lasts for about six months. If you haven't tried it, you don't know

what you are missing. £14.95 per bottle.

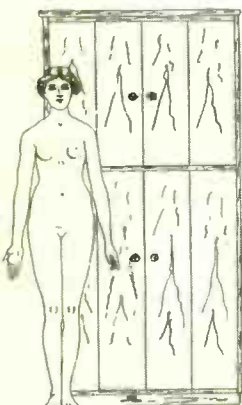
Stratos Series II (launched in August) is a major leap forward in interconnects which exceed the sonic performance of all but one extremely expensive (NBS) digital and stereo interconnects we have tried in a wide variety of equipment. Series two features our own RCA state-of-the-art phono plugs which use our tried materials (solid phosphor bronze, not bent copper) for enhanced contact and noise rejection. Do not judge the performance by the price. Customers are disposing of major brands now shamed by Stratos II because our cables are sold direct to end-users without marketing costs. This saves at least 75% when you consider that packaging and promotion double the cost of cables and dealer margins and vat double it again. One stereo metre of Stratos II thus sells for only £125. Stratos II Digital costs £59. Terminations are RCA or Neutrik Black Gold XLR from stock; others to order.

"These cables are everything you said they were ... this has been the cheapest and by far and away the most significant upgrade I've done to my hifi in years. I ordered cables, and when I opened the box, the contents looked like cables but these Stratos cables are much, much more than that. They have made such a huge difference to my listening pleasure that it's the equivalent of replacing one or more of the key items of hardware. At £120 [series II now £125] a 1 metre pair, they are the cable bargain of the decade." - Mr E.H., Aberdeen, 12/08/99.

Dirty mains has been neglected for too long in the UK but conditioners can degrade sound by limiting speed and power. The best place to clean up your mains is between your wall and the equipment. We are at beta test stage on effective AC mains cords, and can advise you on high-end products from America before you invest. Advice on speaker cables freely available.

PHONE 0141-357 5700. FAX 0141-339 9762.

E-MAIL: jack@audiosource.co.uk The web is at www.audiosource.co.uk.



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Goldring				
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1042	£115	£76	Ortofon FF 15 E II, VMS 20 E II, DM 20	£14.00
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Prestige Gold	£134	£74	N 95 ED, N 95 EJ, N 75 3 (78)	£14.00
Reference Series	EPOA	EPOA	VN 35 E	£16.50
Ortofon				
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LAVARDIN IS amplifier, ex-dem £1900. Ruark Solus (new) £475. Helios Model2 (new) £625. Castle A/V Kendal fronts, Isis rears, Keep centre + M&K subwoofer £900. Tel: 01952 502 097. (Telford) Please visit www.midshropshireaudio.co.uk

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ADVERTISERS INDEX

Vertical list of advertiser names and their corresponding page numbers, including A.V. Zone, Affordable Audio, Arcaydis, etc.

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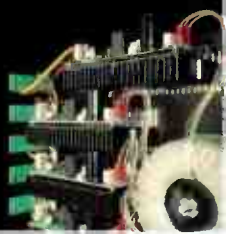
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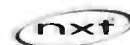
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