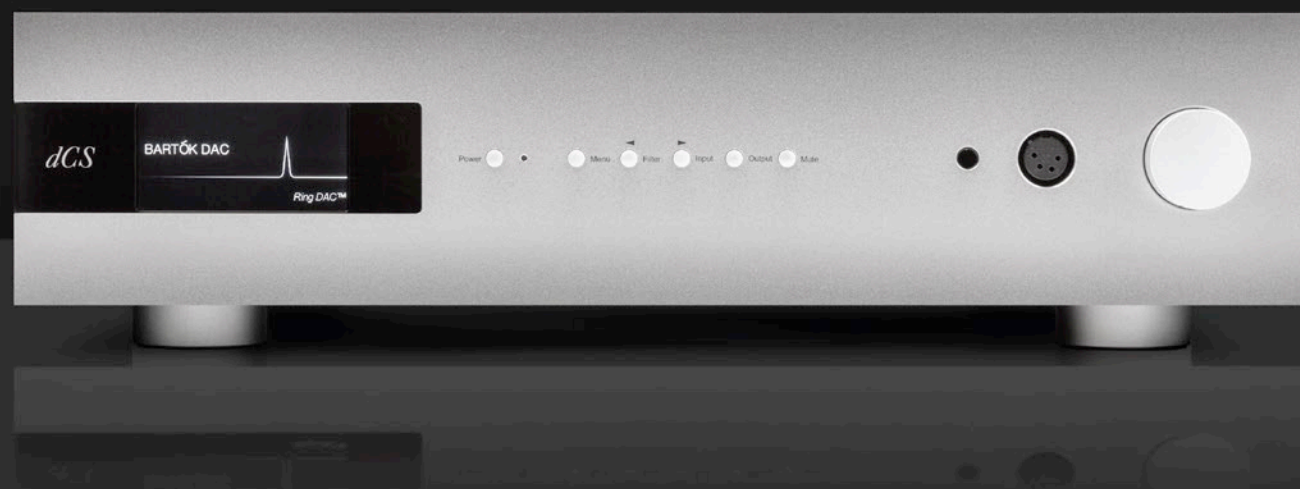


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# Audio TONE 20

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*The Golden Ear  
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no. 93

the awards

dec. 2018





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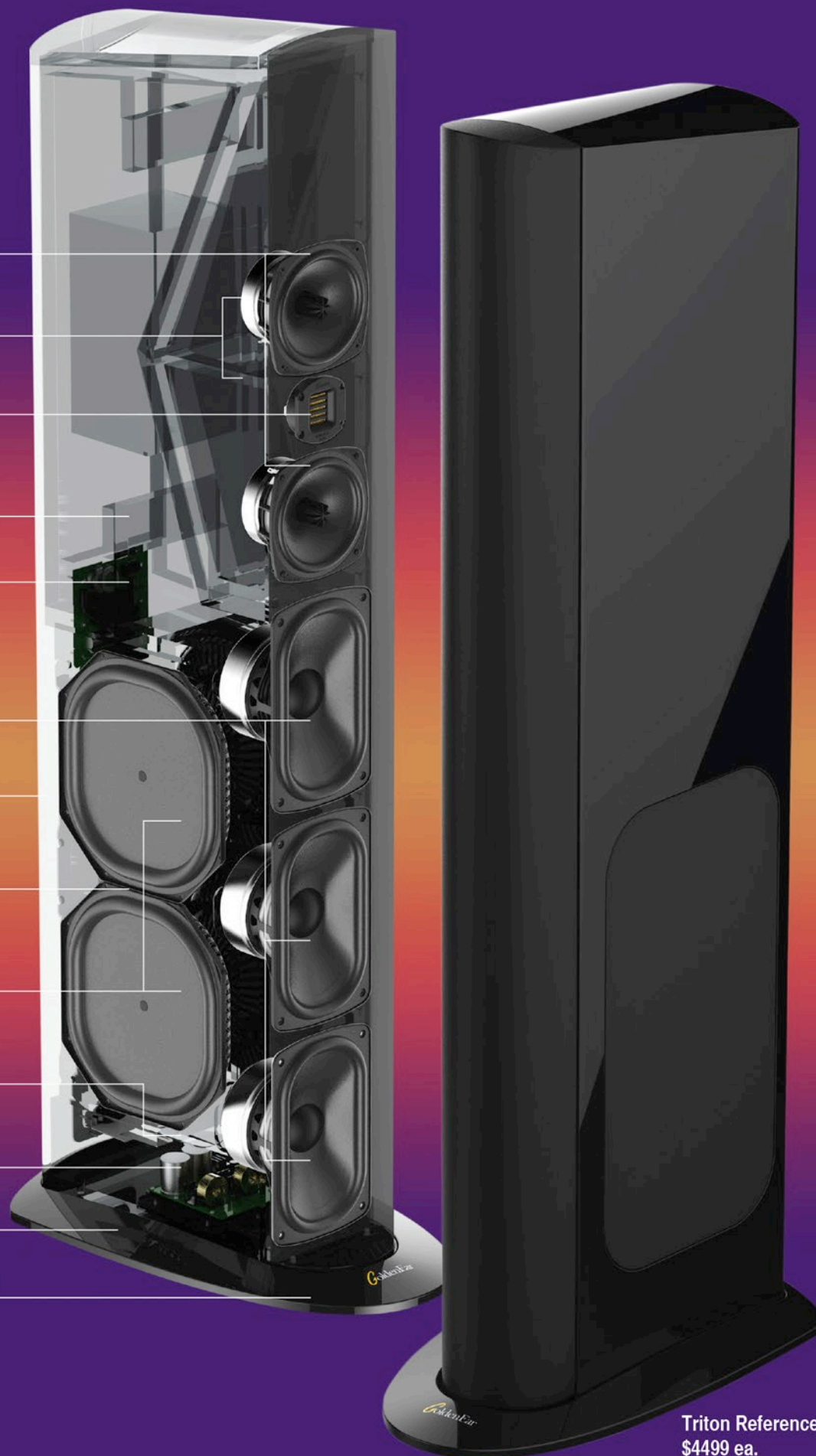
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– Jeff Dorgay, *Tone Audio*

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GoldenEar’s Triton One is one of the best selling high-end loudspeakers ever, consistently thrilling listeners and reviewers alike and winning an enviable and unmatched collection of the industry’s most prestigious awards, including “Loudspeaker-of-the-Year” and “Product-of-the-Year” from key publications all around the world.

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*“Undeniably stellar ... Yes, it does deliver the sort of performance previously delivered only by cost-no-object speakers.”* – Dennis Burger, *Home Theater Review*

The Triton Reference is an evolution of everything that we have achieved with the Triton One, but taken to a stunning new level of sonic performance and sophisticated visual design. All the components in the T Ref: including larger, more powerful, active sub-bass drivers with huge “Focused Field” magnet structures, upper-bass/midrange drivers with “Focused Field” magnet structures, and High-Velocity Folded Ribbon tweeter with 50% more rare earth neodymium magnet material, are brand new, and have been specifically developed for use in the Reference. The powerful 1800 watt subwoofer amplifier, with level control to fine tune the bass to your room, and 56-bit DSP control unit are a significant evolution of those in the Triton One and our SuperSubs.

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*“The Triton Reference presents a serious challenge to speakers in the multi \$10K range”*

– Robert Deutsch, *Stereophile*

Visually, the Reference offers a strikingly beautiful upgrade to the classic Triton styling, with a gorgeous hand-rubbed piano gloss-black lacquer finished one-piece monocoque cabinet. Sleek, statuesque and refined, the Reference is simply an elegantly gorgeous statement piece that will excite listeners with its dynamic visual presence, as well as its extraordinary sonic performance.

Sonically, the Reference has been engineered to perform with a dramatic and authoritative voice, comparable to speakers that sell for ten and more times its surprisingly affordable price. T Refs completely disappear, with superb three-dimensional imaging that will open up your room, stretching from wall to wall and beyond, and depth that makes the wall behind them seem to vanish. The astonishing bass is rock-solid, with low-frequency performance that is tight, quick, highly impactful and musical with extension flat to 20Hz and below. Another GoldenEar signature is a silky smooth high end that extends to 35 kHz with a lifelike sheen but no trace of fatiguing hardness, sibilance or stridency so common with lesser tweeters. Tremendous time and energy has been put into the voicing of the speaker and the seamless blending of the drivers, for unmatched musicality with all types of music, and home theater perfection. Rarely do speakers excel at both, but with their world-class neutrality, the Reference absolutely does. A special bonus is the Reference’s extremely high 93.25 dB sensitivity, which gives them tremendous dynamic range and allows use with almost any high-quality amplifier. You must experience T Ref for yourself!

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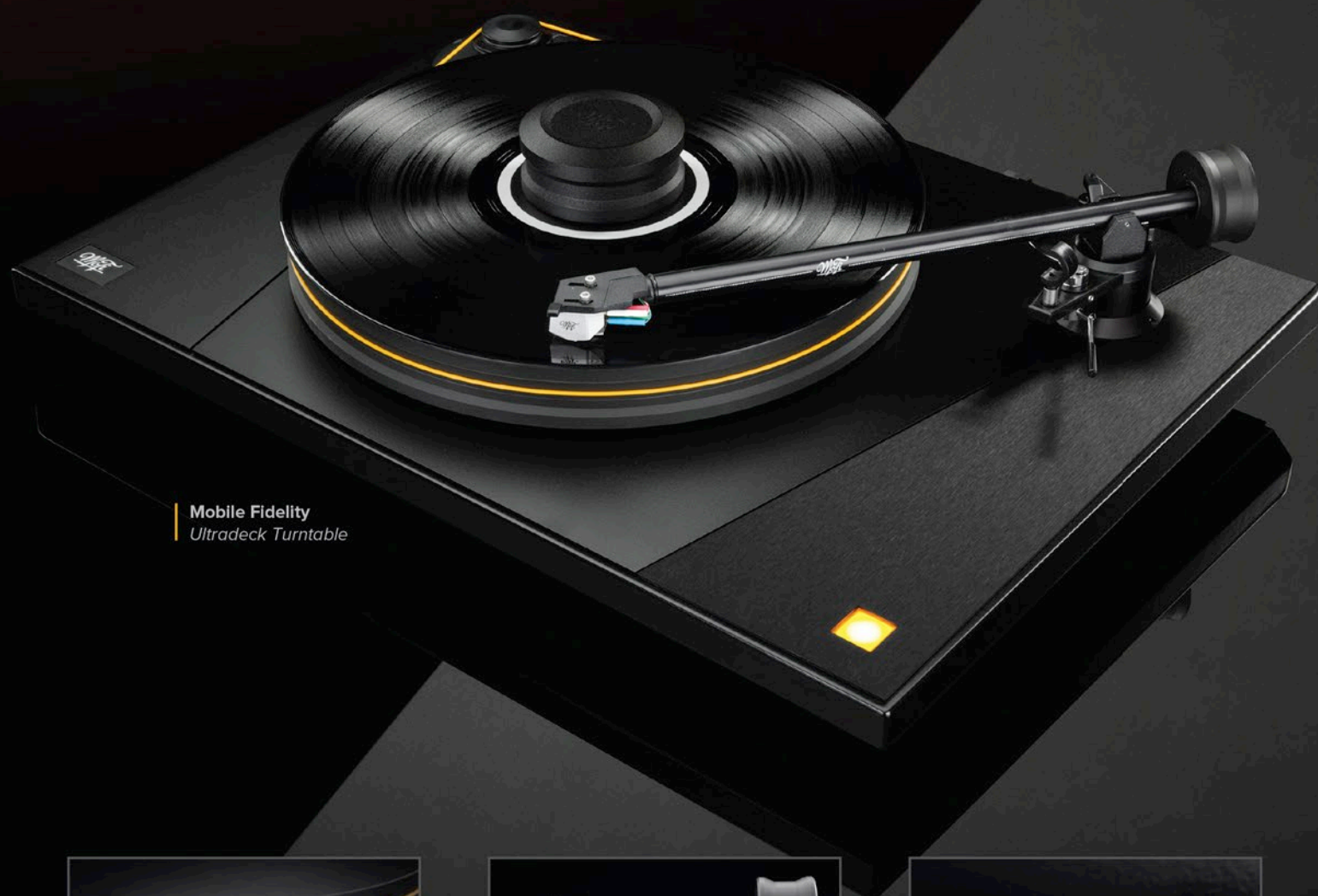
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# TONE2.0

Audio

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# In House

The soundtrack of assembling the issue...

## *The Joker*- Steve Miller Band

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## STEVE MILLER BAND THE JOKER

1. SUGAR BABE  
(Steve Miller) 4:32

1

2. MARY LOU  
(Obie Jessie) 2:24

3. SHU BA DA DU MA MA MA MA  
(Steve Miller) 5:40

4. YOUR CASH AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT TRASH  
(Charles Calhoun) 3:14

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## new arrivals...

Shanon Swetlishnoff joins us from Canada, expanding our international presence, and bringing years of hifi enthusiasm to the mix.

Sharon shares her record collection and systems with her husband and loyal cat. We look forward to her future contributions.



Lego™ Lucy is available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)(of course!)



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# TONE2.0

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### Cover:

Our thanks to Golden Ear's Italian distributor, Dario Candarella for capturing our POY-overall, the Triton Reference speakers in a stunning environment.



*"Excellent depth and rich tonal characterization of orchestral instruments"*  
Andrew Quint, The Absolute Sound RMAF 2018

*"Unanticipated ability to reveal honest instrumental textures, realistic weight, significant impact, and accurate body."*  
Greg Weaver, EnjoyTheMusic.com RMAF 2018

*"It's my take home speaker, I've never heard anything like this in this show..."*  
Peter Breuninger Terry Eringi, Avshowrooms, RMAF 2018



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# no.93

## P u b l i s h e r s   L e t t e r

Where did this year go? Wow. I don't know about you, but I spent way too much time on an airplane this year, but still did a lot of listening. Which brings us to the awards. We've always kept a pretty tight fist on the awards, only handing out about 20 between Product of the Year, Publisher's Choice, and Exceptional Value Awards, but it's doubled this year.

As we are midway through our 14th year of publication, this year was the most exciting. We had the privilege of listening to more great gear, at all price points, than any other in our history. I truly could have given everything we reviewed this year an award.

While pricing on some equipment is still heading past the distorted end of the VU meter, I think we've reached a turning point. Cost no object pieces will always exist because people want to make them, and there are enough people to buy them. It's not even the 1%, this is the .0001%, and we've never reviewed that much of it, because exciting as it is, it just doesn't serve enough of our audience.

With analog showing no indication of slowing down, budget DACs better than ever, and more streaming services available to us all, the number of truly great pieces at reasonable price is off the chart. Even components in the \$5,000 - \$20,000 range are as good or better than their predecessors of five or ten years ago. And this leads to an even better selection of secondary market gear than we've seen in a long time, though like exotic sports cars, some of the rarest pieces are now out of reach.

So, I hope you won't frown on our enthusiasm this year, thinking we've watered the mix down. And I hope you will agree with at least a few of our choices.

Thank you all again for following, and we wish you a happy holiday season, whatever it is you choose to celebrate.



# Playlist:

## What Our Readers Are Into

The Clash - London Calling  
Gang of Four - Ether  
Fugazi - Waiting Room  
Superchunk - What a Time to be Alive  
Yeah Yeah Yeahs - Dull Life  
Talk to Me - Run the Jewels  
Joy as an Act of Resistance - I'm Scum  
Goat - Golden Dawn  
Savages - Silence Yourself  
Fela Kuti - No Agreement

This issues' playlist begins with soon to be TONE contributor Roscoe Trey Nicholson...

He says that these are his top ten "songs of energy and exuberance with a touch of revolution." Right on.



no. 1 Illinois



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# Fantastico!



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## 995

Great sound for less than a G!

By Rob Johnson

Parks Audio Puffin  
\$399  
[parksaudiollc.com](http://parksaudiollc.com)

Today's Digital Signal Processing (DSP) technology finds increasing adoption among digital audio fans for a few key reasons. First, DSP enables sound-enhancing options like up-sampling, adding dither, applying a low-pass filter, and much more. Secondly, everyone's listening space has a unique acoustic "fingerprint" during audio playback.

In some cases, the music-and-room interaction causes overemphasis -- or under-emphasis -- of certain frequencies. This activity can manifest itself in the form of unwanted bass boom, high-frequency stridency, a flattened soundstage, or other artifacts which detract from an ideal listening experience. Attempts to "neutralize" a room with treatments like ASC tube traps can tame the problem. However, some spaces have stubborn sonic challenges requiring more drastic solutions. Third, some audiophiles enjoy the ability to tweak their system sound to match their listening preferences. One person might prefer a more immediate presentation while another may enjoy a warmer, more laid-back sound.

Today, DSP is relatively simple to apply to digital music streamed from sources like a computer or a Roon Nucleus. Either component can manipulate the digital bits before sending them on to a DAC. Unfortunately, these "usual" DSP tools cannot work in the analog domain. There is good news, however. Parks Audio, based in the Pacific Northwest, now offers a cost-effective solution to this problem with their \$399 Puffin.





**The Puffin** serves as a phono preamplifier, sitting in the signal path between a turntable and a linestage. As one would expect from a phono pre, the Puffin offers adjustable gain and load settings – 47 or 200 ohms – to pair with a favorite cartridge. The Puffin’s functionality goes much further, though, through some fancy footwork behind the scenes. It takes in the analog turntable signal and converts it to a digital stream. Once music transforms into a digital state, Puffin’s internal DAC and DSP capability can make modifications to the sound. The signal is then converted back to line-level analog signal and sent to your preamplifier or integrated amp.

For those who already have a favorite phono preamp, the Puffin has built-in versatility to accommodate that situation too. Because Puffin can process a line-level signal, the component can reside between the listener’s existing phono preamp and linestage. Regardless of which scenario a Puffin owner chooses, all he or she needs to integrate the Puffin into a system is an extra set of RCA-terminated interconnects.

### Adjustments abound

Through the Puffin’s LCD screen menus, users have an impressive array of sonic tweaks at their fingertips. It gives its owner the ability to adjust the balance, phase, treble, bass, apply high or low-frequency filters, and even make the sound more “tubey.” It also can be set for stereo or mono playback. When a user opts for mono, both channels feed into the same pipe, and the Puffin can reduce vinyl pops and clicks through the help of a phase cancellation algorithm. For full detail about the musical custom-tailoring features enabled by the Puffin, check out the product manual on the Parks Audio website.

While the Puffin will find most practical application in conjunction with turntables, the owner can also use it to process music from a CD player. This process takes some explaining. The Puffin has a DAC inside, but it does not feature any digital inputs of its own. Park Audio takes a different approach. During playback from a CD player, the digital bits pass through the CD player’s own internal DAC. After that conversion process, music is piped out as an analog line-level source to the Puffin. From there, the Puffin converts the analog signal into digital bits for user-chosen DSP manipulation. With that process complete, the Puffin then returns the signal to an analog, line-level state ready for the owner’s preamplifier.

Many audiophiles seek the cleanest possible signal path between music source and speakers to minimize sonic coloration. Parks Audio adopts a different philosophy with the Puffin. Despite all the Puffin’s digital-to-analog and analog-to-digital conversions in the DSP process, it does a good job of preserving the texture and dynamics of favorite music. One can expect a slight reduction in transparency, but that tradeoff is quite reasonable for all the special features Puffin enables.

While the Puffin is amazing in many respects, we do have two quibbles. First off, the Puffin’s RCA ins, outs, and the wall-wart power connection reside on the top of the Puffin rather than the usual placement on the back panel. The Puffin itself is so small and lightweight the chassis tips backward



under the weight of vertically-protruding interconnects. As a result, the Puffin perpetually “pops a wheelie” on the audio rack shelf. Perhaps some Blu-Tac on each of the Puffin’s feet would help solve this problem. Secondly, despite Puffin’s flexibility in processing either digital or analog sources, it can serve only one source at a time. If an owner uses the Puffin as a phono preamp, and then wants to listen to a CD, a few key steps ensue. One must disconnect the turntable from the Puffin’s RCA connectors, then physically connect the CD player, and then pick the Puffin’s menu settings to accommodate the CD player’s line level signal. For those listeners who use the Puffin with a single music source, that inconvenience largely moot.

On the upside, for those who use two sources – or have other family members preferring a different sonic signature – Park Audio does offer the ability to save custom “user preferences” for a source, akin to a car seat that saves multiple adjustments for driver A or B with a single assigned button.

### Listening

The Puffin is designed to tailor sound actively, so capturing its inherent “sonic signature” is like trying to define a chameleon’s color. Both the Puffin and the chameleon can adjust dynamically to best suit their immediate demands.

When used for its primary role as a phono preamplifier the Puffin performs admirably for its modest price. Leaving the Puffin’s default settings intact, it offers a dynamic and engaging presentation. Regardless of the genre the Puffin tackles, music pours forth with vibrancy. It does an excellent job reproducing soundstage depth, height, and width, giving an immersive sound experience. Listening to Daft Punk’s *Random Access Memories*, the Puffin does a remarkable job reproducing vocal subtleties on “Touch,” and the plucky punch and drive captured in “Get Lucky.”

Experimenting with the Puffin’s DSP settings is both fun and revelatory. In my listening space, reducing the Puffin’s bass and treble settings by 2db, increasing the “Air” setting, the soundstage offers a perceived improvement in breadth.

Pre-defined EQ filters like “RIAA LB” and “Teldec LP” also offer differences in overall musical presentation. The “2H Tube” setting designed to offer a warmer sound, is a bit too warm for my taste when paired with a tube amp and tube preamp. However, I expect the Puffin’s “tube” setting will be a welcome feature for those with brighter-sounding components in the audio chain.

With so much adjustability, it is impossible to offer universally “ideal” settings for the Puffin in this review. Each listener will need to experiment for themselves and decide what tweaks offer the most savory treat for their ears.

Testing the Puffin between a CD player and preamp reinforces the sonic experience enjoyed through the turntable. Putting the Puffin in the chain with its default settings introduces a touch of sonic veil and a slight truncation in the soundstage. Boosting the “Air” adjustment helps restore the soundstage width. Those seeking a wonderful phonostage with DSP flexibility, will find the Puffin a very appealing companion.



# 995

Great sound for less than a G!

By Rob Johnson

## Conclusions

At \$399, the Puffin offers great price-performance as a phono preamp even without all its DSP functionality. Of course, a listener gets a big bonus from the Puffin's ability to address a long-standing "analog DSP" challenge. Want more bass from your Vinyl? Puffin has you covered. Want a warmer sound? Check. Puffin puts the controls at your fingertips.

There will always be audio fans preferring an untouched signal between tonearm and speakers. I can certainly respect the purist viewpoint of preserving the vinyl listening experience – with pops, clicks, hiss and all.

However, I would encourage skeptics to keep an open mind about the Puffin's capability. Even if you don't have a turntable and prefer the convenience of digital music, the Puffin can help you tailor sound to your heart's delight.

When you do get a turntable the Puffin is there to help! For all the flexibility it offers at a budget-friendly \$399, the Parks Audio Puffin handily deserves a 2018 TONEAudio Exceptional Value award.



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# The Journeyman Audiophile

Sound for a bit more than a G...

## At Home With the McIntosh MA252

By Shanon Swetlishnoff (photos courtesy of The McIntosh Group)

Always in the search for more “real world” review results, what could be better than a consumer who’s paid retail, and still loves the product? Ms. Swetlishnoff wrote such a convincing review of her MA252, we’ve invited her to join the team here at TONEAudio. A lifelong music lover and audiophile, (she says that she and her husband have to wrestle over who’s going to read their paper copy of Stereophile first) here’s her first effort.

It’s a good one.



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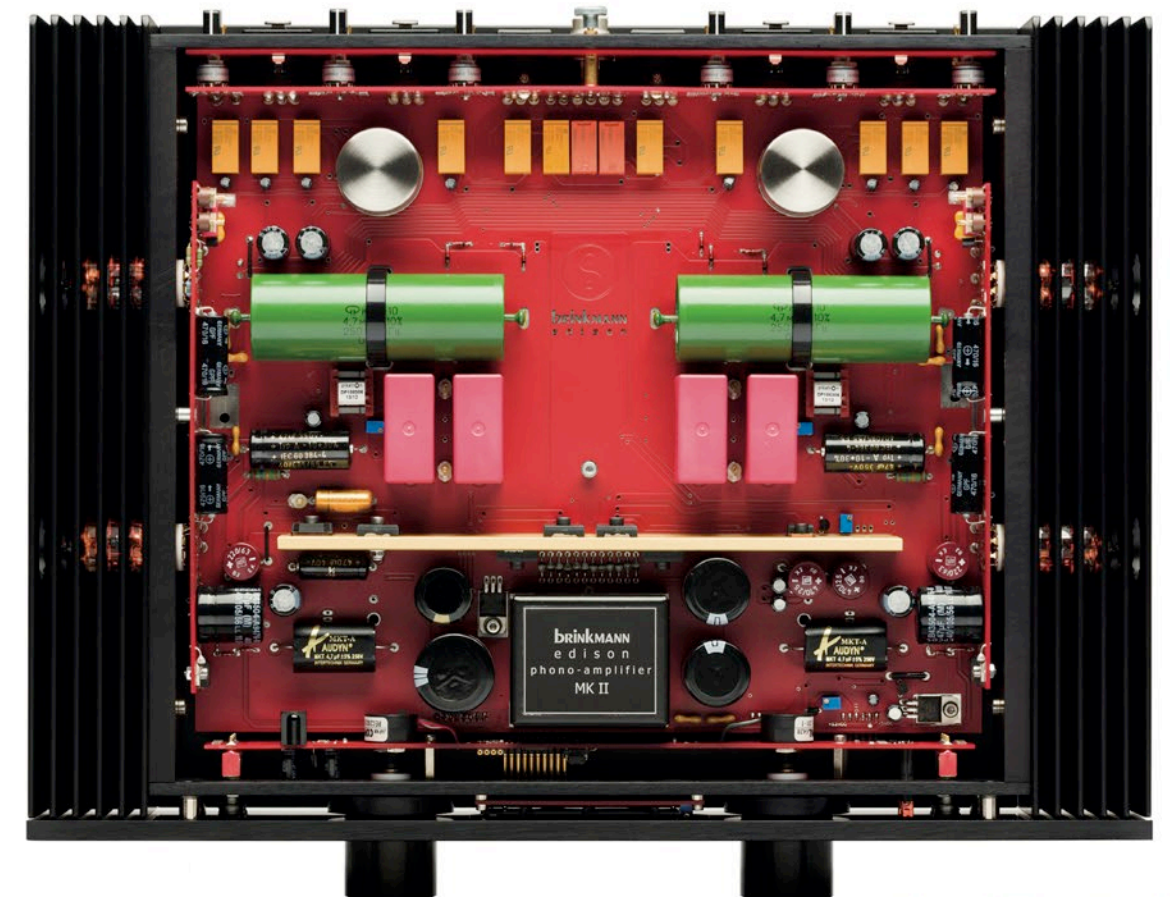


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# The Journeyman Audiophile

Sound for a bit more than a G...

Last December, my husband and I were talking gift options for my upcoming birthday, with a trip to Jamaica the top contender. Then he tossed the iPad my way; "Look at this. McIntosh's first desktop sized integrated amplifier." I knew in that moment we were not going to Jamaica, but on yet another hifi road trip.

We had read some buzz about McIntosh's new amp from audio shows where it had been presented as a prototype. I read the specs and was a bit skeptical but there was just something about it, when I saw the MA252 that day, I had to have it – that's the magic of McIntosh. A few phone calls and emails later, I connected with the good folks at Bay Bloor Radio in Toronto, Ontario. They had just ordered

two MA252's and now my name was on one of them. An unusually warm, sunny day in February had us back on the road to Toronto, loading the 40-pound box into the back seat. It didn't seem real. I had long dreamed of someday becoming a McIntosh owner and here it was, my 50th birthday gift and I was pumped. Sorry Jamaica.

The MA252 is special right out of the box.

Sharing the same level of casework finish as the legendary MC275, the new, signature heatsinks make a major statement in a compact, 12 x 18 inch footprint. With 100 watts per channel into 8 ohms (160 wpc into 4 ohms) it has power to spare for nearly all speakers.



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# The Journeyman Audiophile

Sound for a bit more than a G...

The MA252 offers two unbalanced RCA inputs, one balanced XLR input, one phono input, a subwoofer out and lovely gold plated speaker posts. The 1/4" headphone jack is right on the shiny front panel and the interface is straightforward and user friendly. The remote allows quick access to volume, treble, and bass etc., as well as seamless transition from one input to another. The pre-amp portion sports two 12AX7 and two 12AT7 vacuum tubes right out front in their badass but stylish cages, glowing orange at start up for about 20 seconds then turning that famous McIntosh green. I must admit, we have clipped the amp once. I think April Wine was involved. When pushed this hard, the tubes protest quietly, flashing orange, then green a couple times, but the sound quality never falters.

## That's why the MA252 is so special

I could brag about the 0.03% THD and unbelievable bass response, but it's more important how the MA252 makes the music feel. It's the crispness, the separation, and the presence of the music that I crave with *hit you in the chest* goosebumps that I really need. I need to hear the individual instruments when listening to Santana, Pink Floyd or Buena Vista Social Club. I need to hear Frank inhale, Eric's fingers on the fretboard and Ella's sweetness as warm as butter. I need to feel Keith Moon's bass drum in the base of my cranium. I need to close my eyes and feel Gord Downie's presence. I need to appreciate Alan Parsons' incredible production the way he intended. I need the music to sound alive in the room. The MA252 gives me all of that and more without a lick of distortion. Ever.

So you can imagine, finding the right speakers for my 'Baby' was essential. We are ardent Focal fans, so our nicely broken in, 826's turn out to be a perfect match. The MA252 makes these speakers dance at high volume, yet they lose nothing at low volume.

## The rest of the package

The MA252 has a terrific MM phono stage onboard. The only drawback is that it is MM only, but then this amplifier is already a marvel, considering how much has been included. For ease of plug and play for MM it delivered with enthusiasm and when comparing against standalone MM phono stages, it holds its own. However, I run a Rega P6 with Hana EL, so a separate MC phono stage was required. Thankfully, this allowed the true beauty of the combination when vinyl meets the MA252. The details, separation and presence of the music takes center stage in such a way that sometimes you forget there is a record playing. There have been many times when I have closed my eyes, fully immersed in the experience, convinced that the band will be sitting in front of me when I open my eyes again.

Many like the addition of a few tubes to the mix to smooth out their digital collection. Count me in that group, and the MA252 does a perfect job with my Chord Qutest DAC. Even with my preference of high resolution files, the MA252 takes that slight digital edge off the presentation without softening things. Considering the form factor, for many, the MA252 might be able to be placed in a central location to be used as a headphone listening station as well. The performance delivered to his and hers Focal Elear phones is enticing enough that we just may have a problem as to who gets to listen first. After all, it was my birthday present! I had equally musical results with a few pairs of Sennheiser phones, and the Focal Classics. Listening to the delicacy of my favorite vinyl tracks, we both had more than one OMG moment.



# The Journeyman Audiophile

Sound for a bit more than a G...

## Bottom Line

I love it. The MA252 was actually a lot less than a trip to Jamaica, and continues to deliver musical enjoyment and happiness, long after the memories of a trip begin to fade.

The more hours logged on the MA252, the better it seems to sound. It provides the necessary power and grace to accommodate all of my musical selections, and there's something wonderful about finally owning a McIntosh component that leaves me not caring about Jamaica after all. I can still enjoy Bob Marley whenever I want, right from the comfort of my listening chair.

The McIntosh MA252

MSRP: \$3,500

[www.mcintoshlabs.com](http://www.mcintoshlabs.com)

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## 10 products of the year and most wanted components

in just 2 years by preserving relative phase relationships in a signal



"If you're looking for a major jump in your system's performance, I'd suggest buying a pair of these instead of considering a hardware upgrade. Before you write this advice off to cable delusion, expectation bias, or the recent Mercury retrograde phase, please take note: I have never said this in TONE's 11-year history"

Jeff Dorgay, Tone Audio

"Well, I have just stumbled upon a speaker cable that I'm very tempted to put in a class of its own"

Mono & Stereo



"Tellurium Q have surpassed themselves here. It is often said that all cables colour the sound of a system to some extent, but the Silver Diamonds do it to a lesser extent than any other product I've heard so far."

John Myles, HiFi World

The effect of phase distortion can be likened to smearing a beautiful picture or looking at it through frosted glass. All signal cables do this to some degree and the better you tackle the engineering challenges to combat phase distortion the more natural the sound you get.



== TQ ==



# Old School

Respecting HiFi's Past...

by Jeff Dorgay

## Nakamichi 400 Series

Back in my junior year of high school, graduating from my first home grown system to a real system, (i.e., components that came from a factory, in cartons, rather than something I put together with my soldering iron and incredibly poor metalworking skills) Nakamichi was high on my list. My friend and neighbor across the street, Todd had a pair of ESS AMT-1 Towers along with a full stack of Nakamichi 600 components – the wedge shaped ones. Those were a bit out of my league, but the smaller, less pricey 400 series were not. I was on a quest to make them mine.

By the time senior year arrived, I had scraped together the necessary funds to bring home the 410 and 420. The 430 tuner would soon follow. At that point in my budding audiophile journey, using a pair of AR-7s for speakers, I couldn't tell the difference between the 400 and 600 series, so I was pretty excited about this little stack.

Revisiting this gear today, it still passes muster, though a really clean stack will set you back at least a thousand bucks, less if you don't need the tuner. And these days, in the world of streaming, most won't.

Skip the urge to get a cheap set on EBay, unless you have major servicing chops - these pieces are now 40 years old and will need a full re-cap, even if they don't blow up on initial turn on.



# Optimized or Compromised?



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**OCTAVE**  
MODERN CLASSIC



Crafted from the highest grade components



Audiophile tone control option



Perfectly optimized optional input modules



# Old School

Respecting HiFi's Past...

by Jeff Dorgay



While this recreation of my room in high school is fairly accurate, and those are my original Koss Pro 4aa phones from back in the day, the three Nak components you see here were lovingly restored by George Meyer AV in Los Angeles.

You can find him at 310.820.1113 or on the web at [georgemeyer-av.com](http://georgemeyer-av.com).

He's one of the good guys. Their shop can repair nearly anything, and they always have a great selection of new and old gear. Tell them we sent you.

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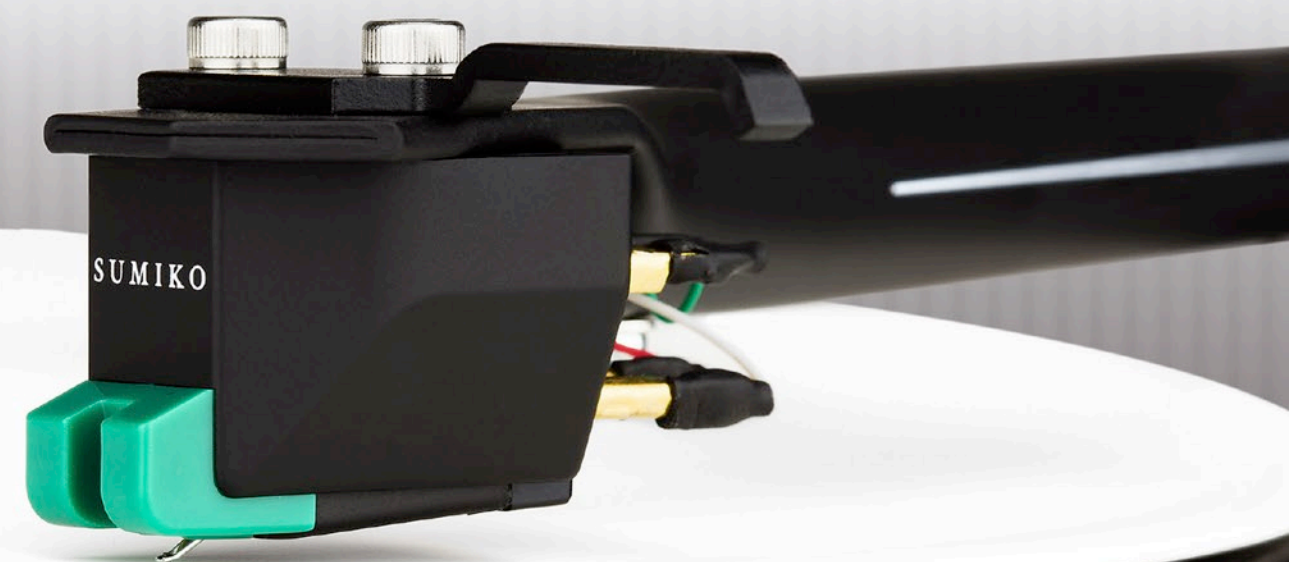


### Moving Coil

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# Old School

Respecting HiFi's Past...

by Jeff Dorgay

Much like purchasing a classic car, if forced, go for the best casework you can find, unless these are going to be used in a garage or off the main path system.

There are no spares available, and when one of these is parted out, the prices asked are out of this world. Filter capacitors are much cheaper than tuning knobs! Unless of course you can get them for next to nothing. With so many online shopping portals flooded, even ratty examples are commanding top dollar, when they weren't a few years ago.

Here in Portland, Oregon, we have a few good FM stations left, so the investment in a tuner is a sound one. Comparing the 430 to a few much more expensive models, it stands up quite well.

With the phono stage having three settings for gain, (1mv, 2mv, and 5mv) the 410 is a great match for the Grado moving iron cartridges, that usually have about 1 mv output and require 47k loading.

Personal listening fans, take note; the head phone stage of the 410 is excellent. Listening to Robin Trower's *Bridge of Sighs* put me right back in my bedroom in 1975 again, and adding a pair of well taken care of JBL L100s made the time warp even more pleasurable.

Connected to a pair of modern speakers from Focal, the Nakamichi Trio still provides more than pleasing sound. The 410 power amplifier offers good dynamic drive and thanks to its little power output indicators embedded in the heat sinks, you should be able to stay out of trouble.

All things considered, a great trip to the past and a more than decent place to start your sonic journey, should you be interested in taking a bit more "vintage" approach.

BRACE YOURSELF.

130 Watts RMS • AMT Tweeter • 5.25" Aluminum Concave Cone • Class D Amp • Bluetooth with Qualcomm aptX HD  
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Nakamichi 430





# Playlist: What Our Readers Are Into

Art of Noise - Moments in Love

Bob Dylan - Leopard Skin  
Pill Box Hat

Aimee Mann - Cigarettes and  
Red Vines

Carlos Santana/John McLaughlin -  
Meditation

Todd Rundgren - It Wouldn't  
Have Made Any Difference

The Kinks - Catch Me Now  
I'm Falling

Allman Brothers - Melissa

The Doobie Brothers -  
It Keeps You Running

Blood Sweat and Tears -  
You've Made me so Very Happy

Billy Joel - Streetlife Serenade

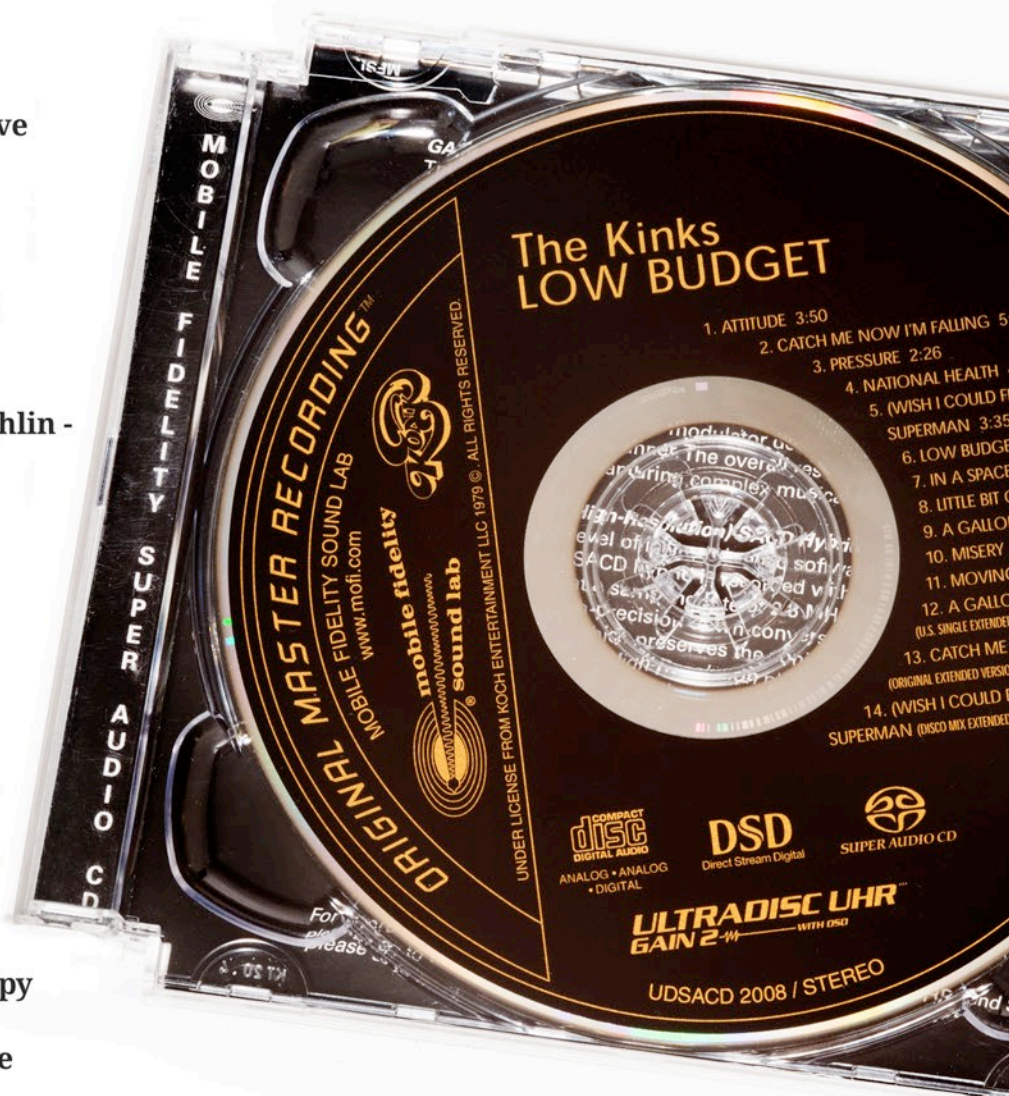
With a new SACD player in transit,  
I've been shuffling through my  
collection, deciding what I'm going  
to play first on my new dCS Vivaldi  
ONE.

Here's a few SACD faves..

no.2 Washington

TONE Playlists are sponsored by:

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**MARTIN LOGAN**  
Truth in Sound

## THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS: THIN FILM ACCURACY, DEEP BASS THRILLS.

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No other loudspeaker features the controlled dispersion radiation pattern of a curvilinear electrostatic transducer combined with our reflection-defeating PoweredForce Forward woofer alignment. The result is breathtakingly accurate and seamlessly integrated full-range performance. On-board Anthem Room Correction (ARC®) technology instantly optimizes response for the best sound in any room.

Renaissance ESL 15A is a revolutionary melding of form and function. This is exactly what we mean by *Truth in Sound*.

The reviews are in. This is our Masterpiece

[martinlogan.com/truth](http://martinlogan.com/truth)

*"Yes, I've drunk the Kool-Aid for years. But even though I'm pre-primed to like electrostatic-panel speakers, I'd never found a one-stop solution I could live with. Now that a MartinLogan active subwoofer endowed with ARC-2 has been successfully mated to an XStat panel, anyone serious about big, full, accurate sound reproduction can start here. Unconditionally recommended."*

*Renaissance ESL 15A*  
Jon Iverson, Stereophile

*"...the best bass response I've ever heard in my room in the areas of overall smoothness of response and of clarity, definition, and pitch differentiation."*

*Impression ESL 11A*  
Paul Seydor, The Absolute Sound

*"It's a powerful, dynamic, musical fun maker with the usual MartinLogan characteristics of good imagery and great detail... and terrific integration between cones and panel. Factor in the benefit of subtle DSP room compensation and this electrostatic hybrid design comes extremely highly recommended!"*

*Impression ESL 11A*  
Alan Sircom, Hi-Fi+

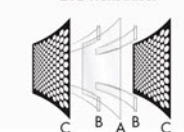
*"MartinLogan has hit a home run... This speaker improves upon the traditional MartinLogan strong points of transparency and detail and adds a much improved bass section to create a well-rounded, great-sounding speaker."*

*Expression ESL 13A*  
Brian Kahn, HomeTheaterReview.com

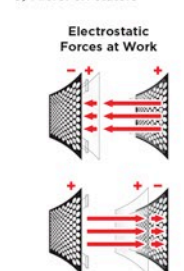
*"...a world-class speaker. It is revealing, accurate and has the huge soundstage one expects of a dipole radiator."*

*Impression ESL 11A*  
Glenn Young, Secrets of Home Theater & High Fidelity

Parts of a MartinLogan  
ESL Transducer



Electrostatic  
Forces at Work



Opposite charges attract.  
Like charges repel.  
The diaphragm holds a  
constant positive charge.



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EDITORS' CHOICE  
AWARDS

2017  
the absolute sound  
EDITORS' CHOICE  
AWARDS

GOLDEN EAR  
the absolute sound  
2016  
AWARDS

2015  
PRODUCT  
OF THE YEAR

2017  
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR

STELLAR  
SOUND  
AWARD

**Renaissance**  
ESL 15A  
by **MARTIN LOGAN**

35  
YEARS  
1983 - 2018



# In Praise of The Party Turntable

by Jeff Dorgay

**M**y favorite feature (though not a neccessity) for a party turntable is auto return. Considering how easy it is to get carried away with an adult beverage in your hand, it's easy to be all the way across the room when the record is done playing. Somehow, it seems like that is always the way it goes, isn't it?

With so much attention being paid to the legendary SL-1200, the semi-automatic 1600 can be had for a lot less. And they are usually in better shape, because they weren't used as DJ tables. You should be able to find a decent SL-1600 for about \$200-\$250. Bonus if the original mat and dustcover are in decent shape - extra credit if it has the 45 adapter.

Most acrylic dustcovers if not too deeply scratched, can be brought back to a reasonable condition with some plastic polish (we suggest visiting Chemicalguys.com) and a bit of elbow grease combined with patience.

Whatever you do, don't pitch a dustcover just because it's cloudy or scratched. In the last year, prices have gone through the ceiling. Where a year or two ago, a factory cover was \$99 on Amazon, they are now fetching

upwards of \$500. And as SpongeBob says, "that's crazy talk."

The other major difference between an SL-1200 and the 1600 is the drive system. Where the 1200 has a more modern, quartz-locked drive motor, the 1600 uses one similar to the one used in the earlier SL-1100.

I'm guessing in the middle of a party, you're not goign to be taking wow and flutter measurements, so this shouldn't be an issue.

It's a smart looking table, that thanks to the reissue of the 1200, still looks like a modern classic.

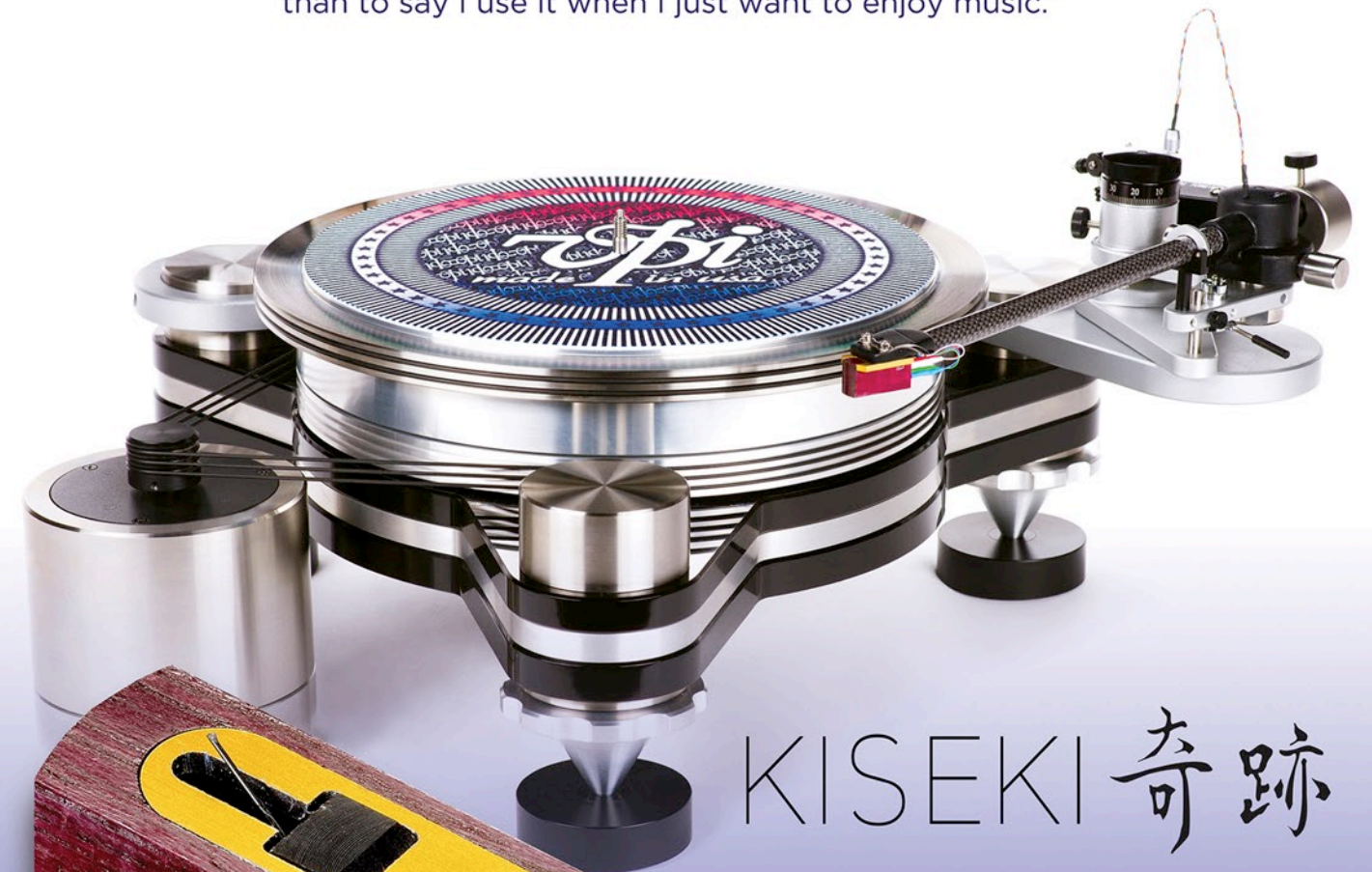
With Shure no longer making cartridges, the next best bet is Ortofon, with a number of models in the \$99-\$129 range, but if you want to be super cool, get a Concorde MKII Mix DJ cartridge.

You can buy one from our pals at Needle Doctor right here...



## VPI Founder Harry Weisfeld seeks cost-no-object performance for his own listening.

"I use the **KISEKI Purple Heart N.S.** in my personal system on my Avenger Reference and have no urge to change cartridges. It sweeps you out of your seat and into the concert hall with power, grace, and air. I cannot recommend a cartridge higher than to say I use it when I just want to enjoy music."



# KISEKI 奇跡

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Welcome to MINE:

We're not just crazy about music and hi-fi here at TONE. While we can put many labels on our ethos, claiming to be music lovers, audiophiles, or perhaps even qualityphiles, that doesn't even cover it. Having me so many of our readers from all over the globe, as we are well into our 13th year, I'd say our readers are playful and inquisitive to say the least.

You've told us you like automobiles, motorcycles, fine art, bicycles, toys, cameras... Well, you get the picture. Lumping this all under a banner labeled "Style" seems too limiting. Let's face it, we're all a little selfish when it comes to our stuff.

So, let's call it what it is - MINE! And we'll be sharing more of our favorite stuff as we go.

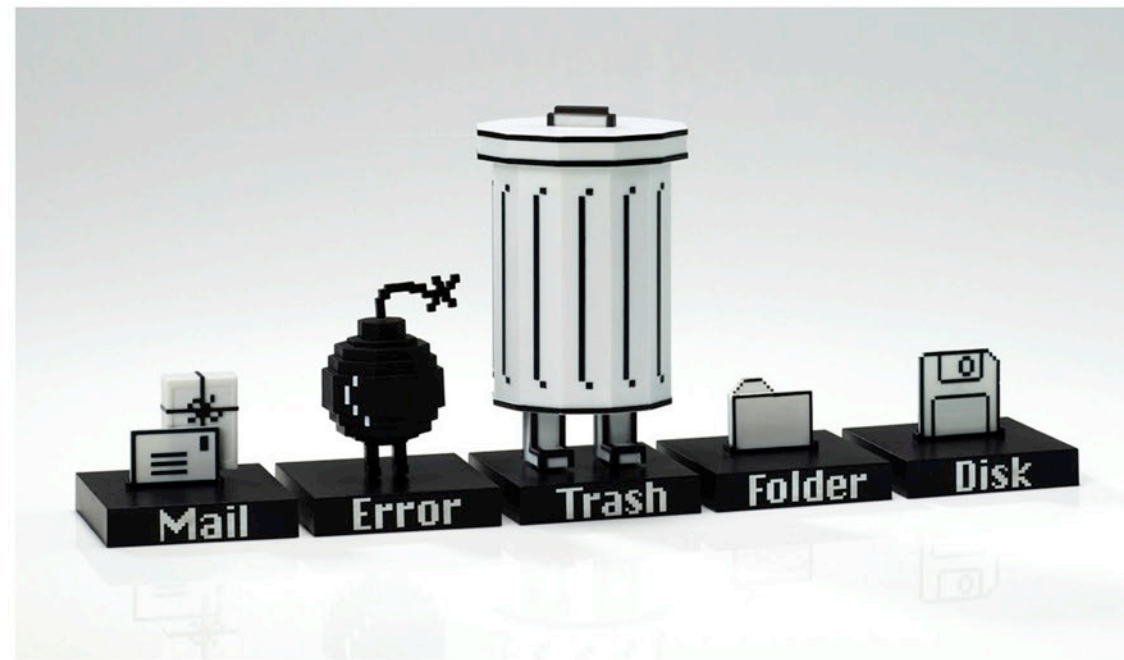
### Trashbot & Friends 3D Desk Icons

\$32

classicbot.com

If you've been computing for a fair amount of time, you'll appreciate these desktop icons from Classicbot. Reminiscent of the giant icons that used to adorn the courtyard at the original Apple campus in Cupertino, these are sure to spruce up your desk.

Where's Moof?



# Easy Peasy Lemon Squeezy



Control your entire audio environment with whatever's handy.

It all makes sense when you hear **Linn DSM**.

Find out more at [www.linn.co.uk](http://www.linn.co.uk)





# MINE: it should be yours

## SONY SD XCII Memory Cards

\$69-\$259  
amazon.com

If your digital camera uses SD cards, and if yours are more than about a year old, there's been a major advance in performance that will benefit you if you are using your camera to cover events, or shoot video.

Any situation that demands a rapid fire capture will benefit from a card that can write 300MB/sec. These XC II cards will also read equally fast, a benefit when you have a lot of data that needs to be transferred in a hurry.

When you've filled up a 64 or 128gb card, it can be painfully slow when you download the files to your computer.

Now, what took minutes takes seconds with this new wave of SD cards. But speed has its price, where a standard speed 64gb card can be had for about \$15, these will set you back just over a \$100.

As they say in car world, "how fast do you want to spend?"



## THE COMPONENTS OF EXCELLENCE: LASTING VALUE

Before you buy a new audio component, consider why some people would rather own a used McIntosh than a new anything else.



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*"The best source I know 'for all things McIntosh' is Audio Classics in Vestal, New York. They do a lot of restoration work on McIntosh products and are an authorized McIntosh dealer and service center."*

Jim Hannon, VP/Group Publisher & Senior Writer, *The Absolute Sound*

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Mediterraneo is the pinnacle of Gold Note: a creation that redefines the traditional design of the turntable through innovative shapes, technical solutions and quality materials in order to merge tradition and technology and achieve the best musical experience.

Mediterraneo combines the greatest attention to technical perfection with pure beauty.

Manufactured by our local craftsmen, the Mediterraneo is fully hand-made: designed with a 60mm curved plinth made of aged Italian Walnut chosen for its exceptional elasticity, strength and high-density, then coupled with a 20mm board made of polished acrylic and finally reinforced with a 3mm stainless steel board for extra rigidity.

Every detail of Mediterraneo enhances its musicality: a refined technical innovation achieved through elegant and smooth lines.



[www.goldnote.it](http://www.goldnote.it)

# MINE: it should be yours

## GOBE Peak 3 filters

\$35 (58mm size)  
[mygobe.com](http://mygobe.com)

The filters at GOBE all come with a lifetime replacement warranty, and use their own 16-layer multicoating over German Schott B270 optical glass.

These reasonably priced filters provide exceptional performance, and their purchase includes the planting of five trees.

We like that. A lot.





MINE: it should be yours

## No Bull Yellow Pixel Trainers

\$129/pair  
nobullproject.com

### Super Sneakers

The crew at No Bull featured on their website is full of vapid slogans from buff spokesmodels like Brooke, who says "I sacrifice a lot," and Jared, who shares that "his body is soft, but his body is hard." Eeesh.

However, all PR aside, these are some comfy shoes in available in a bevy of cool colors. Being that NO BULL is not really a household word (yet!!) you might want a pair with the logo a bit more subtly applied.

We'll get back to you after a year's worth of lifting heavy amps and speakers, to report on how these shoes have held up. Because the NO BULL mission statement says, that these shoes are for people that train hard and don't believe in excuses. Word.



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## No. 25

No. 25 commemorates a quarter century of our pursuit of perfect sound, while pointing to our next 25 years of building the finest sub bass systems available. No. 25 employs our most advanced design, engineering and craftsmanship, featuring our ultra-reliable 1,000watt amplifier, lightweight carbon fibre 15" driver and legendary filter sets, crossovers, and zero compression wireless connectivity.

Featured here is the No. 25 Line Array, three No. 25s arranged vertically, permitting bass to emerge more naturally as it propagates throughout the room, striking our sinuses, kicking at our chest cavities and rumbling along the floor with power and majesty. Welcome to the pinnacle of sound, 25 years in the making.

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Honda Vintage T

\$25  
[vintageculturestyle.com](http://vintageculturestyle.com)

Ok vintage Honda and F1 fans...

This group has produced a collection of vintage T-shirts and jackets celebrating Honda Motor Co's involvement in F1 and motorcycle racing.

In addition to the cool t-shirt you see here, there are two jackets, and a limited set of editioned prints on the way, documenting Honda's early history in motor racing.

Surprise your favorite Honda fan with one of these for the holidays. Or just get one for you.

**MINE: it should be yours**



# MINE: it should be yours

Luna Display  
\$79.99  
lunadisplay.com



Power Mac users on the go, how many times have you stared at that iPad in your briefcase and thought, "if only?"

Thanks to Luna Display, the time has come. What proved to be an insanely great Kickstarter campaign, raising almost \$650k in pre-orders, the Luna Display delivers on the promise.

This makes photo editing, layout, web design and large spreadsheets a breeze in the mobile environment, where these tasks used to be a chore at best.



**PrimaLuna HP**  
The World's Finest Tube Integrated \$4399



**NAIM Preamp/Poweramp Bundle**  
We bought them all to get you this price! ~~\$5990~~, \$2249



**VPI Classic 4 Package**  
\$1000 Periphery Ring & 12" 3D Tonearm - ~~\$11700~~, \$5999



**LUMIN**  
The finest streaming DACs made today.  
All models in stock now.



**KISEKI**  
Purple Heart N.S.  
~~\$3499~~ \$3199



Upgrade to Focal Headphones.  
We pay top dollar on all trades.  
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Launched at \$12,450.  
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MINE: it should be yours

Great Gaming With Audio-Technica:  
The ATH-AG1x

\$299  
audio-technica.com

There's nothing like a great pair of gaming phones for when everyone else is asleep, or when you just want better control of the action.

The ATH-AG1x from AT is a fantastic choice and they are great for hifi too, but the integral mike makes gaming or customer service a breeze.



AUDOLICI From Portugal



A25M Integrated Amplifier



I50 "Swing"  
Integrated Amplifier



AVP-01 PreAmplifier



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# MINE: it should be yours

Oreo Music Box  
Play it or eat it?

\$26.99 and up...  
amazon.com

Much as we love to argue about formats, who can argue about cookies?

Well, there's probably someone who can. But this looks like too much fun. No gag gift, the Oreo player actually plays music when you put the tonearm down on said cookie.

And it comes with a number of different cookies to play in the box, so you can vary your experience.

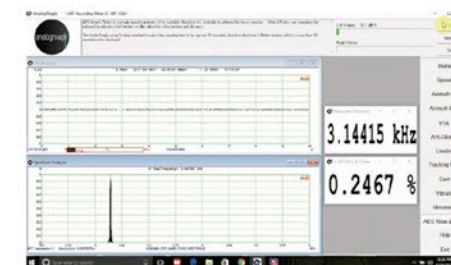
We'd suggest keeping the milk away from the mechanism though.



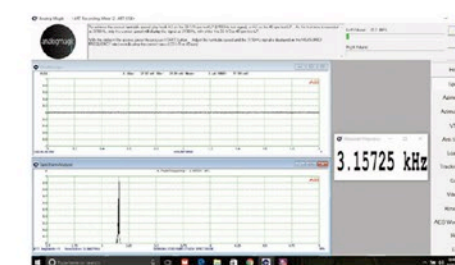
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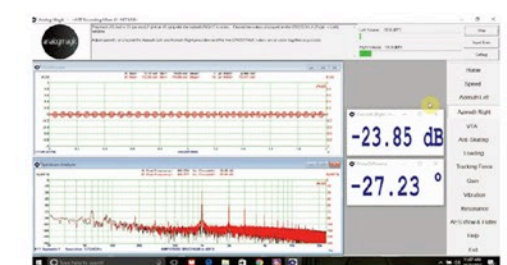
Anyone Can Be A Setup Guru



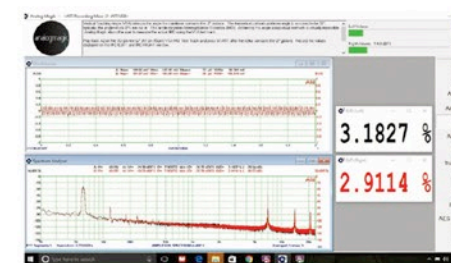
WOW & FLUTTER



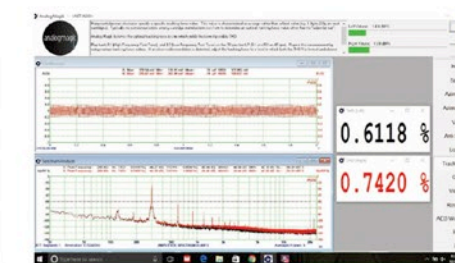
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AZIMUTH



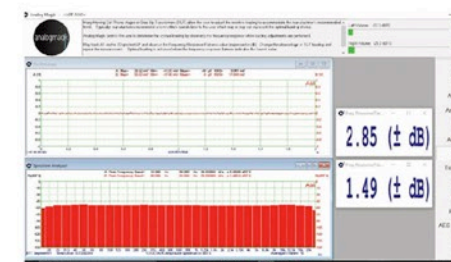
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VTF



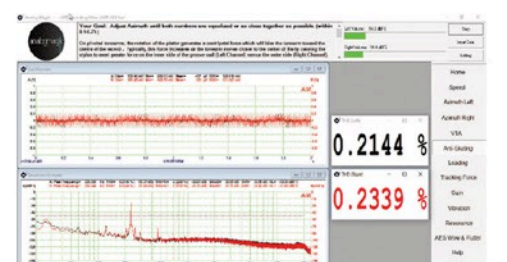
RESONANCE



LOADING & GAIN



VIBRATION



ANTI-SKATING



www.AnalogMagik.com  
info@AnalogMagik.com

North America Distributor :  
info@rutherfordaudio.com



EU Distributor :  
info@acoustical-systems.com





# Playlist:

## What Our Readers Are Into



If you thought all hifi reviewers used obscure vocal and classical tracks to evaluate gear, guess again. That's not how we do things here.

Staffer Eric Neff shares our publisher's love for metal, and here's a few of his favorite tracks. Back to back Priest!

Judas Priest -  
You've Got Another Thing Coming

Megadeth - Supercollider

Metallica -  
For Whom The Bell Tolls

Pantera - Cowboys From Hell

Disturbed - Inside The Fire

Five Finger Death Punch-  
Burn MF

Lacuna Coil - Trip The Darkness

Puddle of Mudd - Control

Seether - Needles

Judas Priest - Flamethrower

no. 3 Wisconsin

TONE Playlists sponsored by...

qobuz

**audio physic**  
No loss of fine detail

These speakers sounded almost magical...It was quite uncanny. They are high-end speakers... that out perform many speakers in their size class."

Mel Martin  
Secrets of Home Theater and High Fidelity

## The NEW Audio Physic Step plus

"If you want a highly immersive, three-dimensional music experience in a small to modest room, these are the speakers that should be at the top of your list... There is amazing amount of technology incorporated into the speakers, something pretty much unheard of at this price point. ... a highly resolving look into the music presented without ever being harsh, strident or fatiguing and that is a tough balance to achieve."



Jeff Dorgay Tone Audio



VANA LTD  
vanaltd.com



MINE: it should be yours



**The Individualist - A TR Manifesto**

\$19 (preorder for Dec 21 delivery)  
[amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

Those of you who remember Todd Rundgren's early 1990s multimedia exercise, TR-i, he's back with a book of the same title and artwork.

Due out soon, this promises to be an entire book of Todd-isms, reflecting back on decades of being at the forefront of multimedia and digital art.



You already own the music.  
You might as well hear all of it.

Contact The Sound Organisation  
today for your closest retailer.

**rega**

**ProAc**  
*perfectly natural*

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THE  
**CHORD**  
COMPANY

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[support@soundorg.com](mailto:support@soundorg.com)  
(972) 234-0182  
[soundorg.com](http://soundorg.com)

The  
**sund**  
Organisation



# MINE: it should be yours

## The Shinola Runwell Clock

\$495  
[shinola.com](http://shinola.com)

Considering how much we love analog, on, in music and on our wrists, The fun at Shinola is now available as a wall clock too.

Whether you use it in its bespoke wooden stand, as shown here, or merely hang it on the wall, this is a lovely throwback to a simpler time.

Get on the waiting list now. Fans of Mickey Mouse rejoice, they have a rodent version too.

Built in their Detroit factory with design input from GE, this is bound to become a modern classic.



# Bellissimo!



# AUDIA FLIGHT

Audiolux proudly represents Audia Flight in the U.S.A | [audioluxllc.com](http://audioluxllc.com)



# MINE: it should be yours

The Hunter Raincoat:  
Stay dry in style...

\$159  
hunterboots.com

It might seem that we have this fixation with yellow (this issue), and you *can* get the classic Hunter raincoat in other, more drab colors, but why not stand out with something a little brighter? If for no other reason than the safety aspect. These jackets are toughly built to withstand nearly anything nature can throw at them.

Should you be adding one of these to your wardrobe, go up one size from what you normally wear, if you're the type to wear a thick sweater or sweatshirt underneath.

And head out into the wind and the rain fearlessly.



# Looking for the Swiss Army knife of Hifi?



## I1 Universal Integrated Amplifier



Visit us @

Montreal Audio Fest  
March 23-25, 2018  
Bonaventure Hotel, Montréal, QC, Canada  
Room St-Lambert

Visit us @

Axpona Audio show  
April 13-15, 2018  
Renaissance Schaumburg Hotel, Chicago, IL  
Room 462



Come experience the CH collection today  
[www.ch-precision.us](http://www.ch-precision.us)  
[inquiry@ch-precision.us](mailto:inquiry@ch-precision.us)



# Boulder

The Foundation of Your System



— EXPERIENCE THE NEW —  
1110 PREAMPLIFIER & 1160 STEREO AMPLIFIER

Boulder Amplifiers Inc | 255 S Taylor Ave | Louisville CO 80027 | USA  
303-449-8220 | sales@boulderamp.com | www.boulderamp.com

2 Wheel Mobility Anywhere  
BMW's Folding Bike

\$698  
bmw.com



**MINE: it should be yours**

If you've wanted to take a bicycle with you wherever you go without an unsightly bike rack on your car, the BMW folding bike is a pretty nice solution. You probably aren't going to win the Tour de France with it, but for a quick cruise along the beach, it's a great choice.



"Isn't it time you award yourself?"

Vitus Audio Signature Series SIA 25 mk II



## Grinch Slippers

\$12/pair  
target.com

You've probably guessed by now that we like shoes as much as we like watches, cameras, cars and hifi.

So, if you're not down with the hype surrounding the NO BULL trainers, how about some old fashioned fun?

What better way to turn your nose up at the holiday season than a pair of Grinch slippers?

They will keep your feet warm and have grippy soles, so you won't slip when you've got a handful of presents in your hands.

**MINE: it should be yours**





**W**e seek high value in everything we review, yet some things go above and beyond what is expected at any given price.

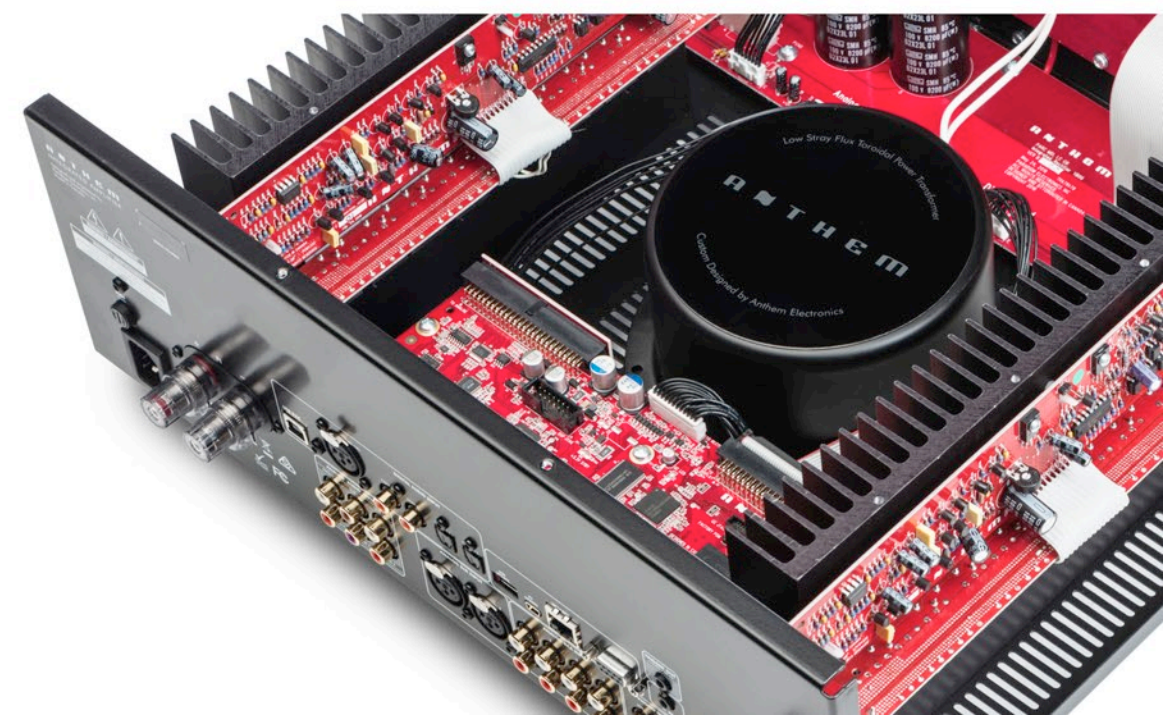
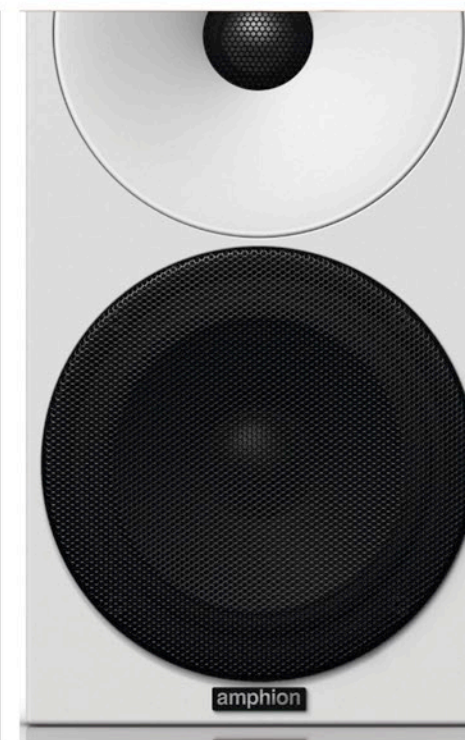
This year, we've given out more EV awards than ever before, because there were so many great surprises from such a wide range of manufacturers.

The best news about this, is that we're going through an excellent period for audio.

There are more great products than ever before, both from newcomers like Bandwidth Audio, and seasoned vets, like Boulder and REL, drawing upon decades of manufacturing expertise to design and build products that would not have been possible a decade ago.

We hope that at least one or two of these manage to make it on your radar, and we thank all of the manufacturers that have sent things our way for review.

And, there will be more next year!





# Boulder 508

\$5,000

boulderamp.com



Boulder  
508 PHONO PREAMPLIFIER

Boulder has been building world class phono stages for some time now, but they've always had a world class price attached. In all fairness, they have always included multiple inputs and a myriad of features.

But the 508 only has one input and minimal adjustability.

The good news? It sounds like a \$20k phono stage. So if you've always wanted a Boulder phono, and you don't swap cartridges a lot, your ship has arrived.



[www.gryphon-audio.com](http://www.gryphon-audio.com)



# Pure Audio Project Trio 15 Horn 1

\$7,990/pair

[pureaudioproject.com](http://pureaudioproject.com)



First, the Pure Audio Project Trios sound fantastic, with a lifelike quality that is sure to grab the attention of any music lover.

Second, thanks to their high 96db/1watt sensitivity, they are incredibly easy to drive with anything from your favorite 3 wpc single ended triode amp on up.

Finally, they can be configured with different HF drivers, as your mood and taste change, and should you move to a larger living room, they can be converted to the quintet version with five woofers.

It's the perfect blend of a commercial design with DIY overtones.

One of our favorites in a long time...

## LE PHONO SE

Working strictly as a class A single ended device with no feedback, our phonostage uses only solid state components (no op-amps) with the shortest signal path circuit possible.



Tailor built for your cartridge with carefully selected and matched high end components, it works with any MC cartridge from 0.1mV (74dB of gain) up to 2.5mV.

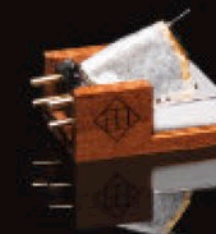
Le Phono SE, a solid-state design without the usual issues of tube electronics.

[info@anamightysound.com](mailto:info@anamightysound.com)

## SCULPTURE A



A.4 Silver



A.3



A.4 Copper



*made by Ana Mighty Sound*

### A.3 & A.4 SCULPTURE A PHONO CARTRIDGES

Already awarded by French press with a « Remarquable » award, the A.3 and A.4 phono cartridges display a minimum tracking of 90 micron @300Hz lateral that will allow you to get the full definition of your records. For this we have developed a specific damper and use only boron cantilevers with dedicated geometry diamond tips.

With outputs from 0.1mV to 0.3mV with either silver or copper coils and impedances between 3 to 40 ohms.

It is the perfect companion of our Le Phono Single Ended phonostage and others.

With a compliance of 12 @100hz and three bodies, mixing impregnated wood with pure brass, copper, silver or gold, we are able to fine tune the weight and fine tune the sound of your cartridge to match perfectly the mechanics of your tonearm.

The A.3 is a fixed characteristic design, the A.4 is a tailor made cartridge up to your requests.



### retip

#### Our insights on cartridge "repairs"

What if each cartridge was restored as unique artefact ? We do not believe that glueing a cantilever and diamond tip is enough. Aging has an effect on your cartridge as well as usage wear, dust, hygrometry and UV.

**Cartridge service :** your cartridge does not sound as good as you remember ? The damper might have been tampered with, the azimuth of your diamond tip is starting to be off or maybe the piano wire is getting loose ?

We can check it out and get back the original parameters without altering the parts of your cartridge.

**Fine-repair :** we are able to completely rebuild Neumann DST (or Lumière), Clément cartridges and most MC cartridges available. Open coils ? Stiff damper ? Broken cantilever ? We know how to deal with these issues and will do our best to get your cartridge as close to its original status, even though we can certainly alter your cartridge up to your requests.

*Ana*  
MIGHTY SOUND





# Tellurium Q Ultra Blue

\$40/meter(approx.)

telluriumq.com



We use Tellurium Q's top cables in our big reference systems, yet their entry level Ultra Blue shares a lot of the engineering prowess that makes their top cable so incredible.

This is truly a high performance set of speaker cables for "reasonably priced" systems and a great addition to a vintage system as well.

This is our go-to cable for vintage audio.

(photo courtesy of Tellurium Q)

R  
Raidho  
Acoustics



*The remarkable performance of our Diamond drivers delivered in the remarkable elegant shape of the D-1.1*



# In House

The soundtrack of assembling the issue...

## *Who's Next* - The Who

While this colored vinyl thing is novel, and it makes for great turntable photos, save this copy of one of the Who's most famous records for the party bin.

This blue version is devoid of the dynamics you need to enjoy one of the world's loudest bands.



# EAT European Audio Team's C-Major

## Exceptionally engaging, endearing sound.\*

"It looks stunning...  
Best of all it sounds fantastic."

Highly recommended.

Exceptional Value Award Winner

Jeff Dorgay  
Tone Audio

"...screams sophistication,  
obviously a luxury product...  
a winner and a wonderful  
component. Combine such  
elegance with high-tech  
materials and exemplary  
finishing -- as EAT has in  
the C-Major -- and you've  
got a winner."

Highly recommended.

\*Jason Thorpe  
SoundStage Hi-Fi!

VANA LTD

VANA is proud to represent EAT in the USA [vanaltd.com](http://vanaltd.com)



# Audio by Van Alstine DAC Mk. 5

\$1,899    avahifi.com

We were all enamored with the sound, functionality, and simplicity of the AVA DAC Mk. 5.

Decoding everything but MQA, the DAC Mk. 5 features five digital inputs: 2-coax, 2-optical and a USB input, so nearly all users are covered.

The best part is the sound that you get for just under \$2k. Fabulous.



Pure legacy.  
Next-gen attitude.



We've taken care of the tech.  
You take care of the music.



The new Dynaudio Xeo wireless stereo speakers: all the performance of high-end hi-fi with none of the hassle. Just plug them into the mains and plug in your sources – or stream with high-quality aptX Bluetooth. It's as simple as that.



**DYNAUDIO**  
Xeo 20 / 30





## Totem Sky Tower

\$2,295/pair [totemacoustic.com](http://totemacoustic.com)

Totem has always been a perennial favorite and performance leader. The Sky Tower is just plain amazing.

For less than you might spend on a pair of mini monitors and stands, you can have a pair of Sky Towers, with bigger bass, and well, bigger everything.

We invite you to audition a pair.

# audio research HIGH DEFINITION®

## REFERENCE 160 M VACUUM TUBE POWER AMPLIFIER



## SOUND HAS NEVER BEEN SO TRANSPARENT

After two years in development, the all new REF160M is now shipping. It features switchable Ultralinear/Triode operation, proprietary auto-bias, output tube monitoring and protection, an innovative transparent power meter, and legendary Audio Research sound.

Contact your local Audio Research Dealer for an audition.

[audioresearch.com](http://audioresearch.com)





## REL T7i

\$999

rel.net

The tiny (by REL standards) T7i's pack a huge punch.

Though they have a claimed -6db point at 30hz, in a small to medium room with proper placement, they can still rattle the windows with aplomb.

Utilizing an 8-inch front-firing woofer, 10-inch downward-firing passive radiator, and a massive class AB power amplifier, the T7is make an excellent match with medium sized monitors and panel speakers. Or whatever you might have.

*Enjoy the Experience*



## PASS

Pass Laboratories  
13395 New Airport Rd. Ste G., Auburn, CA 95602  
(530) 878-5350 - [www.passlabs.com](http://www.passlabs.com)



# Nordost White Lightning Speaker Cable

\$375/pair (2M length)

[nordost.com](http://nordost.com)



Nordost may be better known for their premium cables, that carry a premium price, but their quality extends all the way down the range.

Their modestly priced White Lightning speaker cables are within reach of any audio enthusiast, and go a long way to deliver all the performance you expect.

What makes the N-01 a POY winner though, is the full package: top build quality, its ease of use, and incredible sound. And should you need to spin discs, Esoteric has a full range of transports as well.

There's even an input for one of their incredible external clocks - a great upgrade at a later date.



The SKY Tower sets the standard for versatile, lower-cost towers that can be used with a wide variety of electronics. Delivering unobtrusive magic for the everyday music lover, the SKY Tower represents the evolution of 30 years of innovative design and manufacturing.  
[totemacoustic.com](http://totemacoustic.com)

**TOTEM**  30<sup>th</sup>  
Discover yours



# Diana®



## Pass Labs XP-17

\$4,300

[passlabs.com](http://passlabs.com)

XP-17



The PASS XP-17 is another phono stage that offers incredible performance for the turntablist that is content with one table and one cartridge.

Sharing a lot of DNA from the bigger XP-22 and XS phono, the XP-17 is dynamic, quiet, and articulate, while maintainin a high level of tonal neutrality.

Where the PASS amplifiers and preamplifiers tend to be a few molecules on the warmer/ more tonally saturated side of the spectrum, their phono stages have always been incredibly neutral, as we feel a source should be.





## Rega P1 plus

\$595 [soundorg.com](http://soundorg.com)

Rega's P1 has always set the standard for extreme value, combining everything they know about turntable design in a very affordable package.

Adding an integral phono stage, just makes it so much easier for the entry level customer.

And eliminating the cable between phono pre and tonearm makes it an even better value.



[www.francoserblin.it](http://www.francoserblin.it)



# Bandwidth Audio Kaskode One

\$6,500 bandwidthaudio.com



The Kaskode One fills a practically non-existent niche, which is what makes it such a viable contender for one of our Exceptional Value Awards. Where the Boulder 508 is a stripped down, lean performance machine, the Kaskode One offers a different look at high performance, leaning towards a somewhat old school vibe.

This vacuum tube unit offers a massive power supply and high quality parts count along with very modest casework to achieve its performance at a very reasonable price point.

The sonics are lovely, and the noise floor is incredibly low for a vacuum tube phono.

# Uniti

## ATOM — COMPACT HIGH-END ALL-IN-ONE

40-watt integrated amplifier and high-resolution music streaming capabilities with stunning high-fidelity sound.



“[...] a level of sonic sophistication that so many of the Atom’s competitors lack [...] the Atom is a killer choice!”

Home theater Review





# Amphion Helium 510

\$1,130/pair

amphion.fi

# EX VAL

2018

TONE Exceptional Value Award



The Amphion Helium 510s were a real treat to listen to as part of our "small speaker" issue. We discovered a number of new speakers from around the globe.

These are easy to place, easy to drive, easy to enjoy and easy on the wallet. (and they come in a very pleasing color palette as well.

How much more exceptional can that be?



# Essential Elements.

The Element range is the starting point in our product line-up. But we view it as essential to getting a great performance from your kit.

It seems the world's hifi press agree. We've won a lot of awards for Element, including What HiFi's 'Best Analogue Interconnect' for the last 3 years.

We apply as much innovation and effort to the Element Series as our top of the range Asimi.

The 'Integra' low mass RCA connector was originally developed for the Element cable and the principles applied throughout our range .

Our latest Element sc USB cable is based on research showing solid core cable delivers superior results to conventional multi-strand.

Element cables are available for hi-fi, personal audio, digital & video use.



Distributed in North America by:  
www.integrityhf.com  
**Integrity High Fidelity Solutions**  
404.334.3242

**ATLAS**  
the performance connection  
atlas cables.com



# Paradigm Monitor SE Atom

\$298/pair [paradigm.com](http://paradigm.com)

There's no better pair of  
speakers for \$298.

Period.



A NEW DAWN FOR **HANA** BRILLIANCE



ML Low Output\*  
MH High Output  
Nude Microline Stylus  
POM (Delrin®) Body  
Metal Threaded Fittings  
Integral Brass Cap

## HANA M SERIES MC CARTRIDGES

ASPIRING TOWARDS AFFORDABLE PERFECTION

High Purity Copper  
Low Impedance Coil\*  
Alnico Magnet  
Cryogenic Treatment



HANA **ML&MH**

 **HANA**  
BY EXCEL SOUND  
HANDMADE IN JAPAN

**MUSICAL  
SURROUNDINGS**   
[www.musicalsurrroundings.com](http://www.musicalsurrroundings.com) | 510.547.5006



# Vanatoo Transparent Zero

\$319 - \$359/pair [vanatoo.com](http://vanatoo.com)



Tone correspondent Todd Sageser, spends most of his life behind a mixing console, and has always had a great set of ears.

He was so impressed with the Vanatoos, he not only bought the review pair, but with the help of a small sub, abandoned his big rig for these. He felt that the Zeros did such a great job with the fundamentals, he could live with them happily ever after.



**If this isn't what your system sees,  
You're doing it wrong...**

**EXOGAL, LLC** 4657 Aspen Ridge Circle, Eagan, MN 55122  
651-964-0698 [exogal.com](http://exogal.com) [info@exogal.com](mailto:info@exogal.com)





# MoFi UltraDeck + M

\$2,499

musicdirect.com

The team at MoFi Electronics has brought together decades of experience to produce their first turntable - and an extremely successful one at that.

The Ultra Deck has a level of elegance and product maturity that you would expect from a number of generations of revisions.

An excellent plug and play solution.



## T H E F I N E A R T S

In celebration of 40 years in the pursuit of high-performance in audio, conrad-johnson is pleased to present our new limited production ART150 (stereo 150 Watts/channel) and ART300 (mono 300 Watts) amplifiers, each a virtual window on the emotional experience of live music right in your home.



conrad-johnson It just sounds right.

2800K Dorr Ave • Fairfax, VA 22031 • phone: 703-698-8581, fax: 703-560-5360 • www.conradjohnson.com



# Dynaudio Special 40

\$2,999/pair

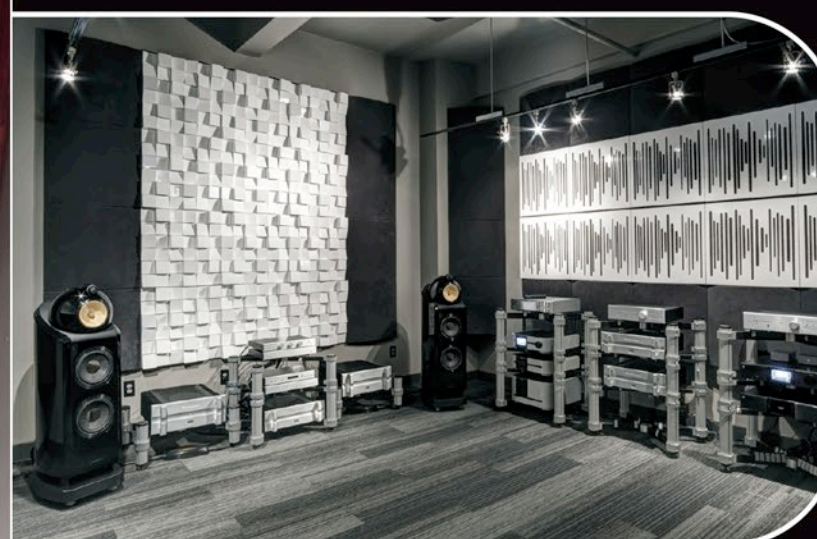
[dynaudio.com](http://dynaudio.com)



50 BRANDS

8 DEMO ROOMS

1 LOCATION



Dynaudio has always made incredible speakers but for their 40th anniversary, their design team voted against making a massive, statement speaker, in favor of making a small speaker that would be accessible to a larger audience.

Considering the tremendous performance offered by the Special 40s, that is perhaps the bigger statement after all.

433 Carrall Street | Vancouver | Canada | 604 688 5502

[hificentre.com](http://hificentre.com)



***"I can't think of a better digital disc player than the PS Audio DirectStream Memory Player and DAC. If I had more than two thumbs to raise I would offer them, it's that good. The only remaining choice is whether you want silver or black."***

***---Jeff Dorgay, TONE Audio***



 **PS AUDIO**

www.psaudio.com 720.406.8946 Boulder, Colorado

**TONEAudio**  
2017 product of the year

## **VPI Voyager**

\$2,500 vpiindustries.com



This one is pure performance. VPI wisely put all the good stuff on the inside, packaging the Voyager in basic casework to minimize the price.

If you're a mega analog enthusiast who wants it all, but at a prudent price, look no further. With two MM/MC inputs and sound quality that would cost a ton more elsewhere, this is the one you've been waiting for.

Utilizing the same common sense and manufacturing expertise that has made VPI titans of the analog industry for 40 years, the Voyager will take you on an analog journey that you will love. Every note of the way.



**T**he Publisher's Choice Awards are few, and self-indulgent on my part.

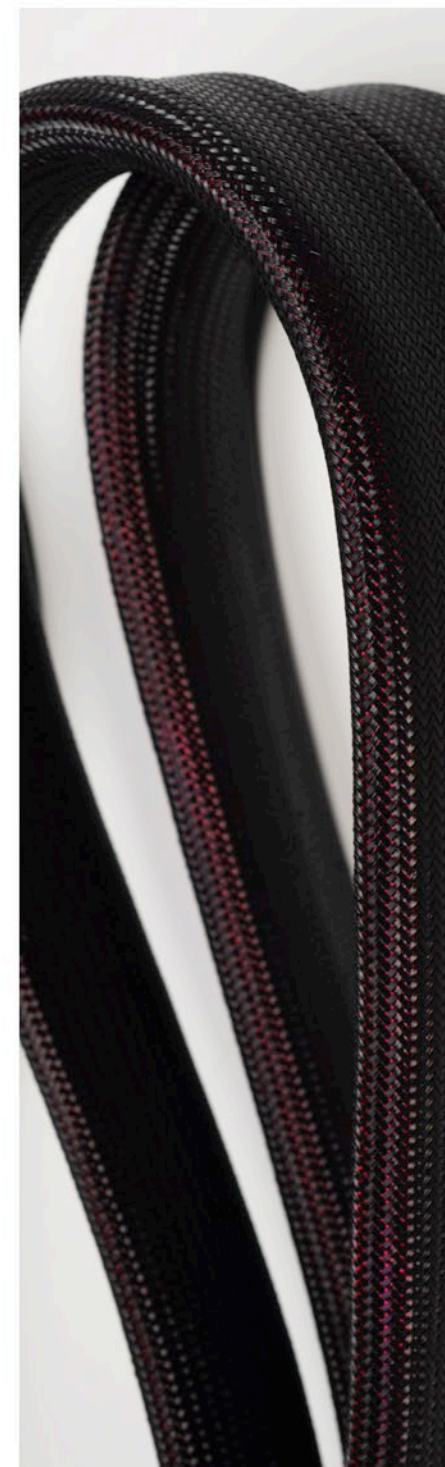
Product of the Year, and Exceptional Value awards, I hope are fairly self-explanatory, but the handful of products presented on the next few pages are special, in a way that I feel doesn't need to conform to a specific price or performance target.

As an equally passionate photography enthusiast, I find the same parallels. You might be able to find a camera that captures an image as well as the Leica Rangefinder camera, but if you really love the way Leica does things, price or functionality be damned. You just love it. And that's fine.

After reviewing hifi gear for some time now, and having been a dedicated consumer for nearly twice as long before that, I've been through a lot of gear.

I'm guessing a number of you have been as well. And after a while, you like what you like.

The nine products that follow are just that.







# Vitus Audio RI-101

\$15,600 - \$19,800

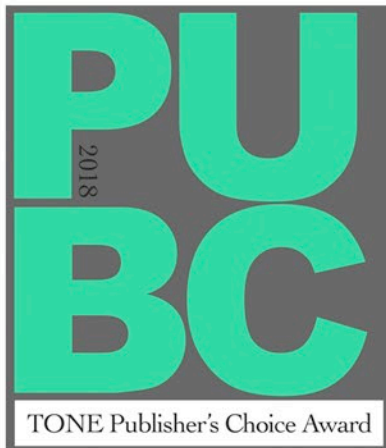
[vitusaudio.com](http://vitusaudio.com)



Vitus Audio's massive reference series components have been wowing audiophiles around the world for years now. With the introduction of the RI-101, those with slightly less demanding applications can enjoy the sound and quality of Vitus for a much more approachable price.

While the RI-101 has more basic casework, the heavy front panel remains, and the sound is pure Vitus. We suggest ordering your RI-101 with their excellent DAC and streamer installed.





# ROON Nucleus and Nucleus+

\$1,395 and \$2,495

[roonlabs.com](http://roonlabs.com)



It's hard to believe that it's been over a decade since the creative braintrust at ROON developed the original Sooloos music server, changing the way we interact with our digital music library forever.

When ROON hit the scene a few years ago, they raised the bar again - this time so high, that nothing comes close. But performance always has a cost, and in the case of ROON, those with large music libraries, both physical and online were craving more processing power to get the job done.

Enter the ROON Nucleus and Nucleus +.

ROON went beyond a mere hardware solution here. They wrote their own OS to handle all of the specific needs, with extra power in reserve for future functionality as well.

As you would expect from ROON, this is a plug and play device. It will probably take you all of two minutes to install. If that.

Compared to the Mac Minis we were using, the performance benefit is staggering. If you use ROON and have a large music collection, you need a Nucleus.







# GamuT Zodiac

\$159k - \$169k/pair  
(finish dependent)

[gamutaudio.com](http://gamutaudio.com)

We've been using GamuT speakers as reference components for years, and they are incredibly special.

These hand-made works of art have wowed music lovers and audio reviewers the world over, with universal praise. That rarely happens in today's market, with so many contrary opinions.

GamuT has been quietly refining their drivers and every aspect of production, with the Zodiac their ultimate expression of their technology.

For those questioning the price, every aspect of Zodiac production is fine tuned to perfection. Every resistor, capacitor and driver is matched and trimmed so there is no tolerance between parts.

Production is limited to 12 per year, 1 per month, corresponding to each speaker's sign in the zodiac.

Finally, creator Benno Baun Meldgaard will visit your home within a year of purchase, to fine tune the Zodiac to your listening room.

And, if you've visited any of GamuT's listening rooms around the world, you know he's a great setup guy!







# Tellurium Q Statement Speaker and i/c

Speaker: Approx. \$5k/meter pair

Interconnect: Approx \$5,800/meter pair

[telluriumq.com](http://telluriumq.com)



These are probably some of the most expensive cables we've used, though nowhere near as pricey as some.

The cable thing is always a dilemma, and nearly always a subject of heated debate. However, if you've taken your system as far as it can go, in terms of setup, optimization, room, and power, we suggest trying the Tellurium Q Statement series of cables. The results will amaze you.

And they offer power cords too!







# Focal Kanta no.3

\$11,999/pair

[focal.com](http://focal.com)

Focal set the audio world on its ear when the Sopra range was introduced a few years ago, producing three speakers with an unbelievable level of refinement and performance for the price asked.

But this is no ordinary speaker manufacturer - they produce the Grande Utopia EM, one of the world's finest loudspeakers. And, they perform every aspect of design and construction in house, right down to the drivers.

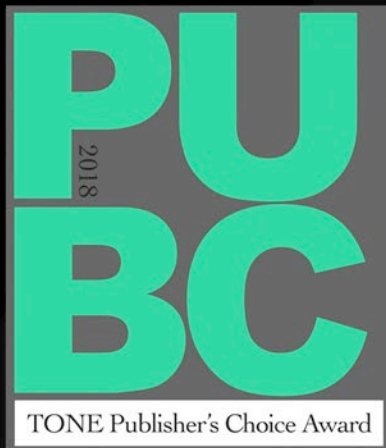
This year for an encore, they give us the Kanta range, with the no.3 being the top speaker, at just under \$12k/pair.

Utilizing a whole new range of drivers yet again, taking full advantage of their extensive engineering prowess, we get a pair of speakers that other manufacturers could not produce for five times this price.

Always fashion forward, Focal has bathed the Kantas in a palette of cool colors to go with any decor. For those more traditional in taste, they do offer multiple wood options too.







# Luxman PD-171A

\$6,495

[luxmanusa.com](http://luxmanusa.com)

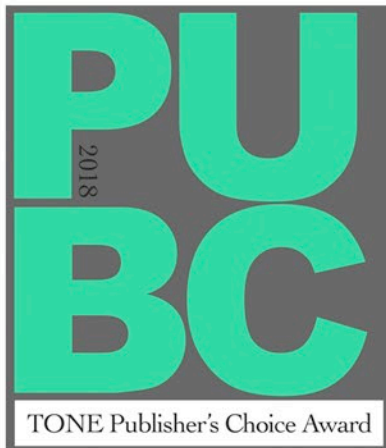


The Luxman PD-171A is the epitome of understated visual and engineering excellence.

Should you purchase one, you'll know what we mean - the mere act of unboxing it is like few things you'll ever experience. The respect paid to the packaging is a prelude to the table itself.

And if that isn't enough, it sounds even better than it looks. Those choosing to fit their own tonearm will need the PD-171AL version.





# Sonus faber Aida

\$130k/pair

[sonusfaber.com](http://sonusfaber.com)

Back in issue 52, we proclaimed the original Sonus faber Aida our product of the year. That was 2012, and though the current Aida still looks the same, nearly everything has been changed. Drivers, crossover tuning and nearly everything else.

In six years, the price has only gone up incrementally, from \$120k per pair to \$130k. Before you get snarky, the price of an S-Class Mercedes has gone up at least \$30k in the same amount of time, and your favorite Rolex has nearly doubled since.

The original was amazingly limber for a large speaker, and the current model is even better..

Aida is now much easier to drive with a wider range of amplifiers, easier to set up and has considerably more bass grip and articulation.

Overall, quite a jump in performance.

And they are still the most beautiful floor standing speakers ever made. No one ever entered our listening room when the Aidas were here and said, "not in my room."







## Pass XA200.8

\$44k/pair

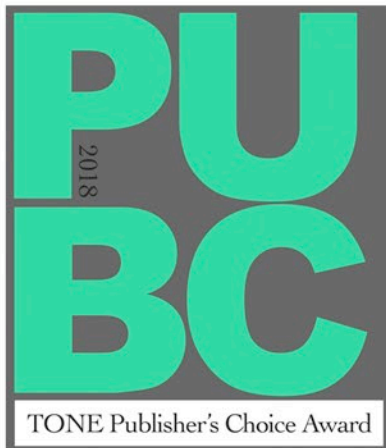
[passlabs.com](http://passlabs.com)

Nelson Pass is fond of saying his amps “sound like tubes without the hassle.” The entire XA and XS series amplifiers have an organic, musical quality that will leave you wondering if you need to bother with the bottles anymore.

We’ve come to depend on the XS200.8s to deliver the goods 24/7, no matter what the speaker load or listening condition.

Their all class-A design does use up a bit of power, but we do a lot of walking to maintain the carbon footprint.





# Graham Audio LS3/5a

\$3,200/pair

[grahamaudiousa.com](http://grahamaudiousa.com)



Regardless which version of the LS3/5a gospel you believe, there's no arguing that this is the little British monitor that started an audiophile revolution.

The Graham versions are made under strict BBC license and after comparing them to a handful of precious vintage originals, we actually prefer these.

And, should you get carried away with the volume control, you can get these serviced.

Those wanting a slightly different variation, Graham also produces the much more rare LS3/5. Google it...







# McIntosh MAC 7200

\$7,000

mcintoshlabs.com

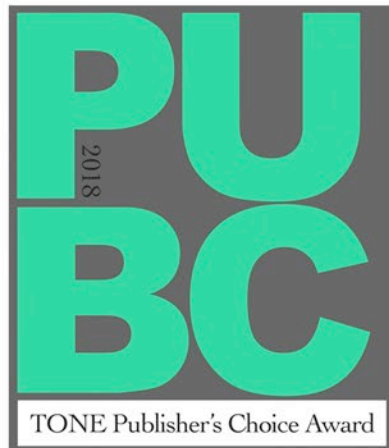
TONE Publisher's Choice Award



For every one of you that missed out on one of the glorious McIntosh receivers from the 60s and 70s, the MAC 7200 offers a classic look combined with 21st century functionality. And the cool factor that McIntosh has always had is there in spades.

And now there's even a pair of big, blue power meters to go along with!





# MartinLogan Motion 4i

\$249.95/each

[martinlogan.com](http://martinlogan.com)

MartinLogan is well known for their revolutionary ESL speakers, but for some time now, they've been making the Motion line, which feature slim form factor cabinets and their patented FoldedMotion™ tweeters.

The tiny Motion 4i's are perfect in a small room, on a desktop, or as part of a compact, high performance multichannel theater system.

Of course MartinLogan has a full range of speakers and subwoofers, should you need this functionality.

And the result sounds remarkably similar to the ESL speakers that made them famous.





# Playlist:

## What Our Readers Are Into

Marvin Gaye - Let's Get it On

Fleetwood Mac - Warm Ways

Pretenders - I go to Sleep

Aimee Mann - You Do

Joni Mitchell - Free Man in Paris

Chaka Khan - I Feel For You

Sinead O'Connor -  
Nothing Compares to You

Prince - Soft and Wet

Anja Garbarek - Big Mouth

The Beatles - Why Don't we  
do it in The Road?



One of our readers from Alaska that's chosen to remain anonymous, has sent us a list of her favorite tracks to keep warm by.

no.4 Alaska

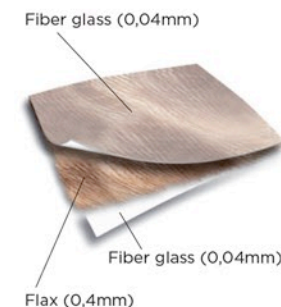
**FOCAL**  
LISTEN BEYOND

THE KANTA FAMILY IS GROWING



“ If you want more than a taste of the real high-end, this is the place to start ”

KANTA N°2 - HIFI CHOICE



“F” cones are constructed of a very high quality Flax fibre core sandwiched between two thin layers of glass fibre.

These cones satisfy all the essential criteria of a high-performance diaphragm: high internal damping for a very neutral and natural sound, light weight for exceptional speed and dynamics, and high rigidity for a tight and controlled sound.

Flax cones are designed and manufactured in France to Focal's exacting standards, and are also used in Car Audio, Pro Audio, Home Speakers and Custom Integration products.



With Kanta, the treble register is reproduced by a new pure Beryllium tweeter. This IAL3 tweeter combines the IAL (Infinite Acoustic Loading) and IHL (Infinite Horn Loading) tweeters features, both of which help with the absorption of waves, thus lowering the tweeter frequency.

To this day, only one material permits a joining of these parameters: Beryllium. For domes with identical masses, Beryllium is seven times more rigid than Titanium or Aluminum. This results in a sound wave three times faster than Titanium and two and a half times faster than Aluminum.



**O**ur Product of the Year Awards celebrate what we feel is the ultimate expression of a particular component, whether it be at a specific price point, or technological prowess.

While we have tried very hard to take more of a “concierge” approach here at TONE, trying to find what we feel are the most exciting to put on your short list, the TPOY products deliver even more.

Much as we hate to use the B-word, the gear to follow certainly represents the “best of the best” of what we’ve had the privilege to listen to this year.

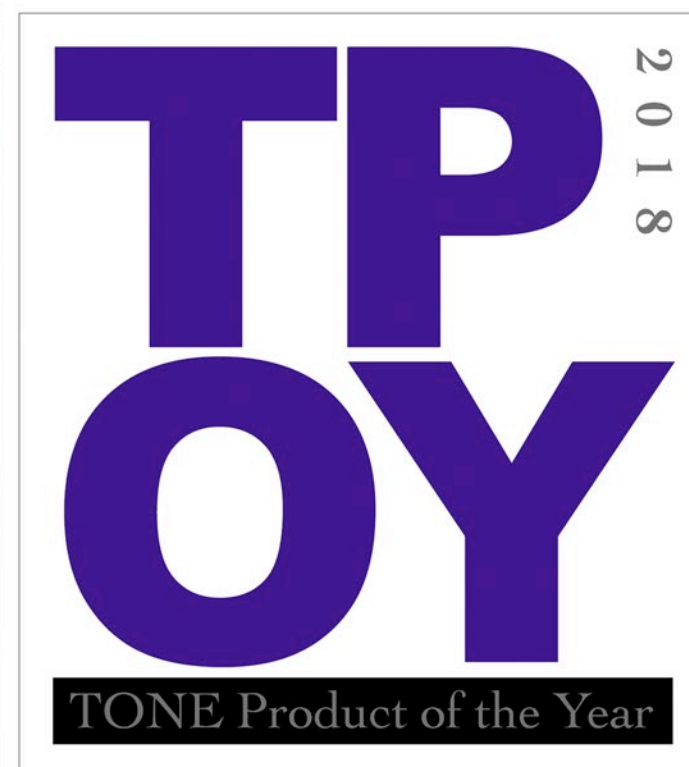
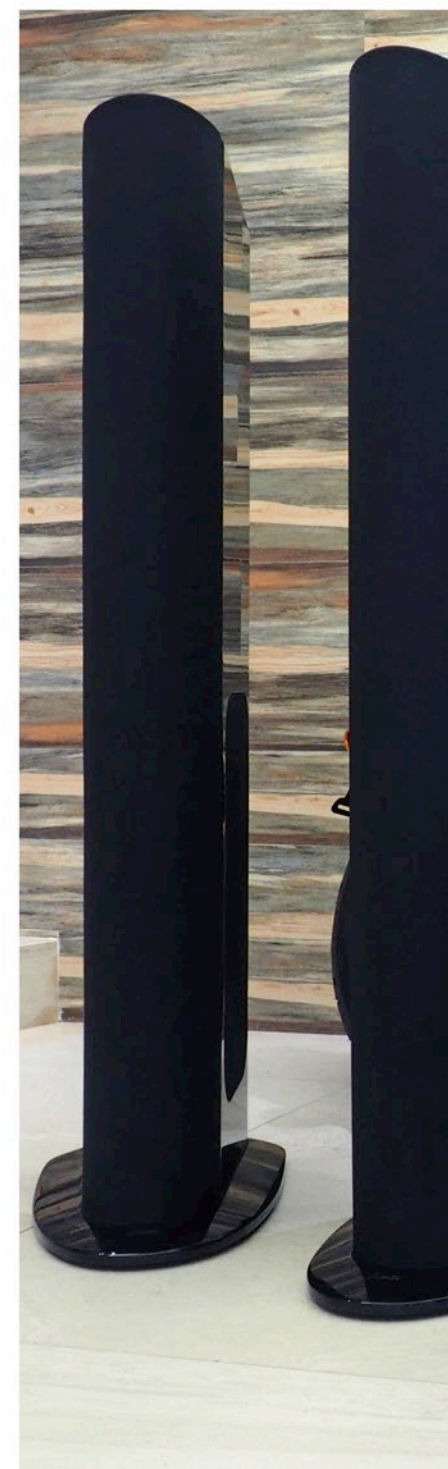
We’ve completed full reviews on most of these, but a couple are still in process, with reviews to follow early in 2019.

Again, we would never expect you to spend your hard earned income on something, simply because we think it’s outstanding, but it is our hope that should you be looking for something in one of these categories, that you’d take the time to investigate, audition, and compare these to what you were thinking of.

Our hope is that should any of the products on the following pages fit your criteria, that upon thorough investigation, you would enjoy them as much as we have.

It’s all about finding that special piece of gear that will take you somewhere you’ve never been.

All of these components pass that test.







## OVERALL: Golden Ear Triton Reference

\$4,499.99 each

[goldenear.com](http://goldenear.com)

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year

At first listen, we were taken back at just how much sheer sound the Triton Reference delivers. And tipping the scale just a few pennies under \$9k per pair, we've yet to experience a speaker at this price, offering so much of everything.

With threeer powered woofers, and four passive radiators, these compact towers deliver major LF response. Yet, with an efficiency of just over 93db with one watt, they can be easily driven with any amplifier.

When we had them in for review, everything from a 9 watt per channel SET, up to our PASS XA200.8 monoblocks was a willing parnter to the Triton REF. This makes system matching an absolute breeze.

Though the Triton REF is a fairly hefty speaker at 108 pounds each, they are easy to unpack and place.

The folded ribbon tweeter offers a smooth, extended high end, and this four way system is a marvel of integration. Combining this tweeter, with a very narrow front baffle, gives the Triton REF the imaging characteristics of a mini monitor with the sheer sonic heft of a giant line array.

Quite a feat at any price.

You might find a speaker in this price range that offers more in one aspect, but you won't find one more wide range, musical, and user friendly than these.

Hence the award!

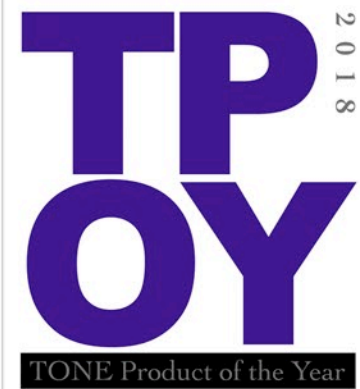






# Preamplifier: Nagra Classic

\$17,500 [nagraaudio.com](http://nagraaudio.com)



We've worked with and owned the last generations of the Nagra preamp, from the legendary PL-P, and the Jazz (still a staff reference) to the Classic you see here, inspired by the form factor of the last two, but with all inputs and outputs on the rear panel.

Nagra never rushes anything, in Swiss tradition. While the Classic may look familiar on the inside and out, it has had thousands of hours of refinement to produce the preamplifier you see here.

The trademark level meter lets you know right away that it's a Nagra through and through. It only takes a few notes of listening to confirm it. Now incorporating a headphone amplifier, the Classic remains the one to beat, when you seek high quality, high performance and a compact form factor.







# Power Amp: Audio Research REF 160M

\$30,000/pair

[audioresearch.com](http://audioresearch.com)

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year



Audio Research has been making some of the world's finest vacuum tube electronics for over 40 years now.

Every generation gets better, but the 160 monoblocks have made a quantum leap.

Not only are these the most exciting amplifiers ARC has ever produced, they are definitely one of the most musically revealing amplifiers we've ever heard.

Only audition if you are ready to write the check. You won't be able to unhear them.



**T**wo years ago, for the first time in our history, we enjoyed two products so much, but for such different reasons, we split the bill on the Product of the Year award.

And it happened to be over two great integrated amplifiers, both offering tremendous performance, style, and functionality for such a reasonable price, that it would have been just plain wrong, to include one without the other.

This year we face the same dilemma, (again over a pair of great integrations) and we can only offer the same solution.

Though both of the choices that follow are solid-state components, again, their implementation is very different.

The IS-1000 from Italy's Gold Note produces 125 watts per channel, offers an on-board DAC, streamer and phonostage.

The Canadians at Anthem take a different approach, with more power, and a lot of processing horsepower in the digital domain, from EQ in the phonostage, to offering a full version of their legendary ARC™ room correction, to make this a true 21st century product. (purists take note, you can disable this and go direct)

Both offer so much more than their competition, and are exquisitely built. Both offer sound quality of a high enough level, that you would have to spend tens of thousands of dollars on ancillaries to eclipse their performance.

Hence, the dual award.



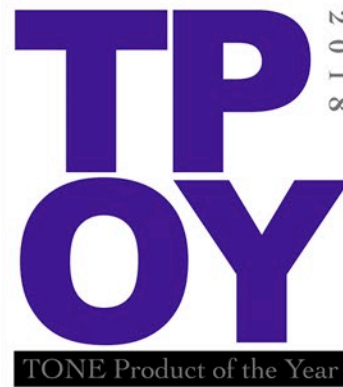
**History  
Repeats  
Itself.**

**(kind of...)**



# Intgrated Amp: Gold Note IS-1000

\$4,995 [goldnote.it](http://goldnote.it)



Gold Note's IS-1000 is a traditional integrated, with modern conveniences. Borrowing heavily from their 1000 series separates, and the award winning PH-10 phono stage.

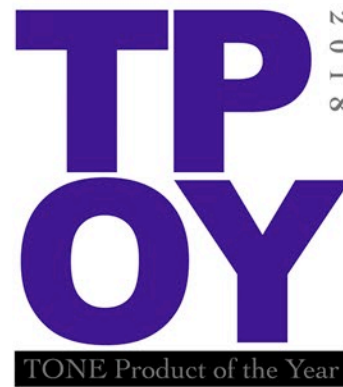
It's robust 125 watt per channel power amplifier offers incredible sonics, combined with a preamplifier that has a high level of control flexibility, controlled by the front panel or your tablet.

The only digital under the hood of the IS-1000 is the DAC/streamer. So if you're looking for a high performance integrated, without the bells and whistles, the IS-1000 offers a level of performance well beyond the price asked.



# Intgrated Amp: Anthem STR

\$4,495 [anthemav.com](http://anthemav.com)



Anthem's STR has been a hit since its introduction. Able to handle any input you might have, analog or digital, consider it a complete hub for all of your two channel needs.

200 watts per channel into 8 ohms, doubling into 4 ohms, means no speakers are off limits. And with Anthem's ARC™ Room Correction built in, no rooms are a limitation.

Clean industrial design, with well thought out menus and user interface, make the STR a great addition to any room visually.

A full function DAC, that can handle high res and DSD files, with a plethora of digital inputs has you covered regardless of how you like to receive digital files, and the STR can function as a Roon endpoint.

The phono stage is equally amazing, offering MM and MC along with an incredibly wide range of gain, loading and EQ options. A delight for the serious analog lover.

Purists in the audience can choose to disengage the digital conveniences via Analog Direct mode, making this the most versatile integrated we've come across.

Best of all, the STR is fully Crafted in Canada. Built and designed by Anthem's highly skilled crew.





# Digital: Esoteric N-01

\$20,000

esoteric-usa.com

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year



To be exact, Esoteric lists the N-01 as a “network audio player,” when in reality, it happens to be a full function DAC offering streaming capabilities, and is a ROON endpoint.

With balanced XLR and single ended RCA outputs, those not needing to spin physical media can use the N-01 for everything digital.

The N-01 features an Ethernet input for use on a network, USB, optical and even TOSLINK inputs.

Additionally, there is a separate input for a USB drive on the front and rear panels.

What makes the N-01 a POY winner though, is the full package: top build quality, its ease of use, and incredible sound. Should you need to spin discs, Esoteric has a full range of transports as well.

There’s even an input for one of their incredible external clocks - a great upgrade at a later date.





# Budget Digital: Google Chromecast Audio

\$15 [store.google.com](http://store.google.com)

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year

Fifteen bucks?

High end audio?

Great sound?

Well, ok pretty good sound. Pretty soon it's going to cost more than \$15 for a fancy cup of coffee.

Google's Chromecast Audio has really won our hearts, because it's a more than acceptable DAC with analog output that transforms anything in your world possessing a mini jack input into a ROON endpoint.

That's the magic right there, folks.

Now you can stream the music from your ROON environment anywhere, with an addition of one of these. Pretty cool.

Those of you having an HDMI input, can step up to the standard Chromecast for \$35 and stream video as well.

But this little tool is the best audio problem solver we've ever seen or heard.







# Turntable: Artisan Fidelity

\$TBD(model dependent) [artisanfidelity.com](http://artisanfidelity.com)

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year

Artisan Fidelity's Christopher Thornton makes one of the most beautiful turntables we've ever seen. It would be one thing if these were just beautiful plinths and a fresh coat of paint on a turntable chassis. A number of people are doing just that and charging horrific prices, capitalizing on both the analog and vintage audio craze now in effect.

While we are featuring the Garrard 301 table here, Artisan Fidelity features a wider range than this, with the 401 also available, Thorens models, and the Technics SP-10 to name a few.

Every single aspect of the Artisan Fidelity tables have been reworked. Everything has been rebuilt and/or re-engineered from the ground up. As we said in our first look at the Artisan Fidelity table, this is the Singer Porsche of turntable world.

The sound is modern old school. By updating the drive mechanism and platter in the Garrard, it no longer sounds slow and dark. And with the option of having two tonearms at your disposal, it is an incredibly versatile record player as well.

As you will see from a visit to their website, the choice of plinth materials and finish are only limited by your imagination, and the execution is what you would expect from Aston Martin, Bentley, or Singer.

The Artisan Fidelity turntables are so much more than mere record players. They are one of the finest examples of mechanical fine art we've ever encountered. And they just happen to play records incredibly well too.







## Budget Analog: Hana SL

\$750 [musicalsurrroundings.com](https://musicalsurrroundings.com)

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year

The Hana cartridges have raised the bar for great sound at a reasonable price point. Up to now, the \$750 SL was their top of the line. A new flagship is on the way and we are looking forward to a listen.

With MC cartridges costing more than used cars these days, it's easy to get discouraged, and think that engaging analog is only for the incredibly well heeled.

While the SL does not resolve the last few molecules of detail that the five-figure cartridges possess, you'll be shocked, or perhaps relieved at just how much this \$750 marvel can extract from your prized LPs.

A 400-ohm (suggested) loading, and .5mv output means that the SL is as user friendly as it is wallet friendly.

Using it with a wide range of turntables, the Hana SL defied all expectations. We think you will agree should you take one for a spin.

You can read our full review [here](#).





# System Enhancement: AnalogMagik

\$750 [analogmagik.com](http://analogmagik.com)

No matter what your level of analog setup skills are, I'm betting you could be better. We know we can always learn more about the analog realm. I've only come across a few people in the world that really, really know how to make a turntable sing. Richard Mak is one of those people.

However, he's taken it to the extreme. He's had a software suite and custom test record produced so you and I can do it too. Before you spend any more of your hard earned money on a better cartridge, tonearm cable, or turntable itself - you NEED Analog Magik. And I mean need it. If your table isn't perfectly set up, you're throwing a lot of sound away that you probably paid pretty good money for. We've never used anything this comprehensive.







# Personal Listening: Luxman P-750u

\$4,995

[luxman.com](http://luxman.com)

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year

We've had the privilege of auditioning some incredible headphone amplifiers lately, but Luxman's new flagship raises the standard of excellence for us.

Where many others add DAC functionality, or variable line outputs (to use as a standalone preamplifier) the P-750u is optimized for one task: to play headphones. Well.

It succeeds better than anything else we've yet used. Though it is a solid-state design, one listen and you would swear that tubes lurk underneath the cover.

Fans of the marque know that Luxman's expertise is just as strong with transistors as it is with tubes. Even a quick listen and you will not be dissatisfied.

With RCA and line inputs, anything can be used as a source, and three inputs, both balanced and single ended, allow maximum connectivity.

Thanks to three gain settings, no headphone will be left behind. Every one of our reference phones gave their best performance.

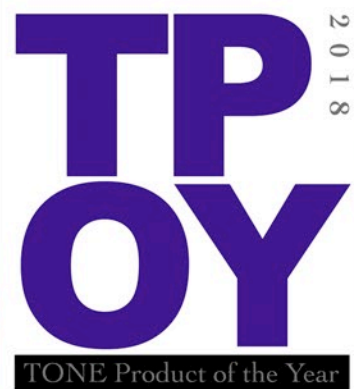




# Power/Cable: Cardas Clear Beyond Power XL

\$2,695 (2-meter length)

[cardas.com](http://cardas.com)



We don't produce  
a ton of cable reviews,  
because we haven't used a  
lot of cable we really believe in.

We've been using Cardas cable for  
decades now, with excellent (and consistent)  
results.

Their new Clear Beyond Power XL is fairly spendy.  
For those of you that don't want to drop nearly \$3k on  
a power cord, Cardas has a some great power cords that are  
reasonably priced.

But if you want to take your mega system as far as it can go, this is  
the one we suggest, and use every day.





# Power: PS Audio DirectStream Power Plant 15 and 20

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year

\$7,499 and \$9,999 [psaudio.com](http://psaudio.com)

There are a lot of power *conditioners* on the market, that use anything from fairy dust to serious filtration under the hood to try and clean up all the noise that's floating around your AC line. And don't tell us that you've got clean power - you don't. We've tried most of these products and some do a fairly good job, and a few do more harm than good.

PS Audio took a novel approach years ago with their original Power Plant 300, which actually takes the power from the AC line and recreates a fresh power, with no artifacts, and most of all, no distortion in the 60hz sinewave being delivered to your gear.

The result is breathtaking. We'll even go as far to say you haven't heard what the gear you've spent piles of money on is capable of, until you plug it in to a P15 or P20.





# In House

The soundtrack of assembling the issue...

## *Slow Turning* - John Hiatt

Definitely one of the LPs that were at the peak of Hiatt's career, *Slow Turning* is the latest we've seen to get the colored vinyl treatment, so party on!



You already own the music.  
You might as well hear all of it.

Contact The Sound Organisation  
today for your closest retailer.

**rega**

**ProAc**  
perfectly natural

Quadraspire

THE  
**CHORD**  
COMPANY

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support@soundorg.com  
(972) 234-0182  
soundorg.com

The  
**sund**  
Organisation





# Budget Speaker: Totem KINPlay

\$995 [totemacoustic.com](http://totemacoustic.com)

You can always count on Totem for top quality speakers that deliver great sound and build quality in every price category. We loved their KIN Mini's when they were here for a test drive a while back, but the new KINPlay is a new product, aimed at a new audience. With a built in DAC and an MM phono stage, you can start playing music now, and add a turntable (or tape deck!!) another day. Thanks to Bluetooth aptx HD, streaming from your phone or pad had never been better. And, there's even a subwoofer out, for those feeling the need to add a Totem subwoofer to their system.

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year







## Long Term: **AVID** **Volvere SP**

\$7,500 [avidhifi.com](http://avidhifi.com)

**TP**  
**OY**  
2018  
TONE Product of the Year

In the life of an audio reviewer, and more than one audiophile I know, equipment tends to come and go. Seeking more performance is an admirable goal, but once in a while a component sits on your rack that is so good, and offers so much for the price asked, that it never gets replaced. The AVID Volvere, now the Volvere SP is one of those products.



The AVID Volvere and the SME 10 became reference components back in issue 8, when after the review of both tables, they were both purchased for our main reference system. About two years later, when the SP upgrade was available, we stepped up. Almost twelve years later, guess which one is still here? That's right.

We'd be lying if we said the SME was a slouch, (it isn't) but there is still something so right about the Volvere SP, and AVID's higher end models as well, that makes it doubtful that this lovely table will ever go away. And if that's not award worthy, what is?

(original Volvere table here, current SP model to the left...)





# Overachiever: PS Audio Sprout100

\$599 [psaudio.com](http://psaudio.com)

Few products come along that are as awesome as the PS Audio Sprout100. Yep, you want to accuse us of being high brow and only liking the mega gear? Sure, we love that too, but this is a product that everyone should own, no matter where they are on their audio journey.

\$599 gets you a compact integrated amplifier with a built in DAC, MM phonostage, streamer, and headphone amp. You'd spend this kind of money on any one of these components *individually*, and we haven't even talked about four sets of interconnects and power cords.

There probably hasn't been an all-round, general purpose integrated that sounded this good in relation to the expensive stuff since NAD made the 3020 back in the 1970s. And it didn't have a DAC and streamer built in. (or a remote...) There's even a line level output to drive a subwoofer. Taking into account for inflation, the Sprout 100 offers more, a lot more.

Newcomers to audio, wanting to step up beyond basic headphones or ear buds can even start using this little jewel as a headphone amp. Deskside or bedside, it's a great performer even in that capacity. When you're ready to add a pair of speakers or a turntable, it's that easy.

If you've been into hifi for a long time, you'll want a Sprout100 around for a second or third system, and with variable analog outputs, it's not bad to keep one around just for troubleshooting purposes, or to use when something in your main system needs to return to the factory for repairs.

In the end, what makes the Sprout100 such a catch, is that it does everything with equally high quality - nothing is an afterthought here. If by chance you never go any further than a Sprout100 and a pair of speakers, you still score major points in our book.

2018  
**TP  
OY**  
TONE Product of the Year





# In House

The soundtrack of assembling the issue...



*Smiling and Waving* - Anja Garbarek

Any time you need something a bit off the beaten path, this is a great go to!

LUXMAN since 1925

# “The Ultimate”

Brings the Future to the Present  
Preserves the Legendary Musical Pedigree



SUPER AUDIO CD PLAYER

D-08u



CONTROL AMPLIFIER

C-900u



STEREO POWER AMPLIFIER

M-900u

[www.luxman.com](http://www.luxman.com)

LUXMAN

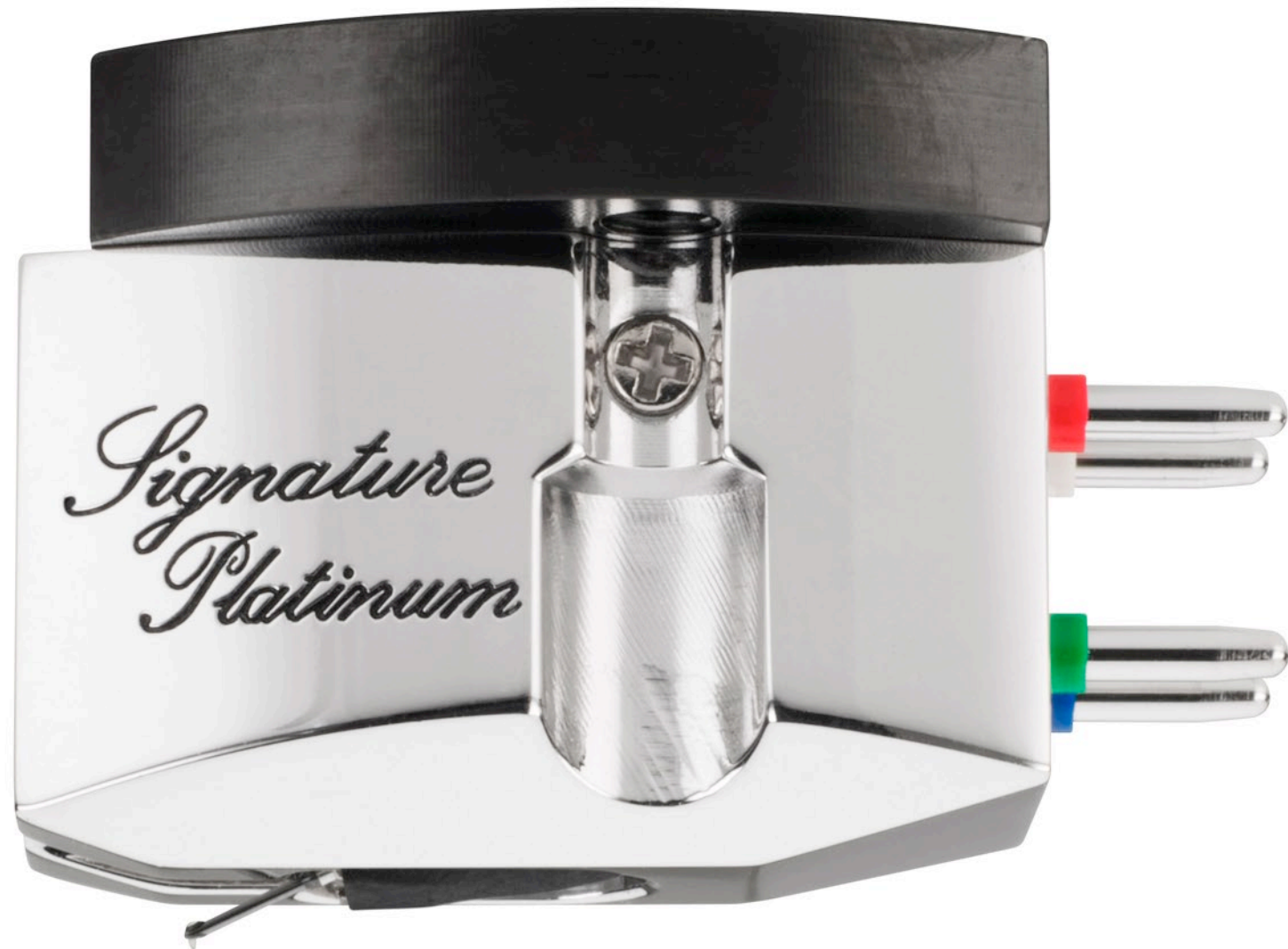
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Luxman Japan Head Office:  
1-3-1 Shin-Yokohama, Kouhoku-Ku  
Yokohama 222-0033, Japan  
Tel: 045 470 6991 Fax: 045 470 6997



# Future Tense

Reviews in our immediate future...



**My Sonic Lab  
Signature Platinum MC**

\$10,995  
mofidistribution.com

Analog Master Richard Mak will be reporting on this beauty sometime soon. Mak says that this cartridge “retains the smoky, smooth MSL sound, but is their most dynamic effort to date.”

And, as you can see it is simply beautiful to behold.

We anxiously await his full review.



# Zodiac

The sky's no  
longer the  
limit



# GamuT®



# Future Tense

Reviews in our immediate future...



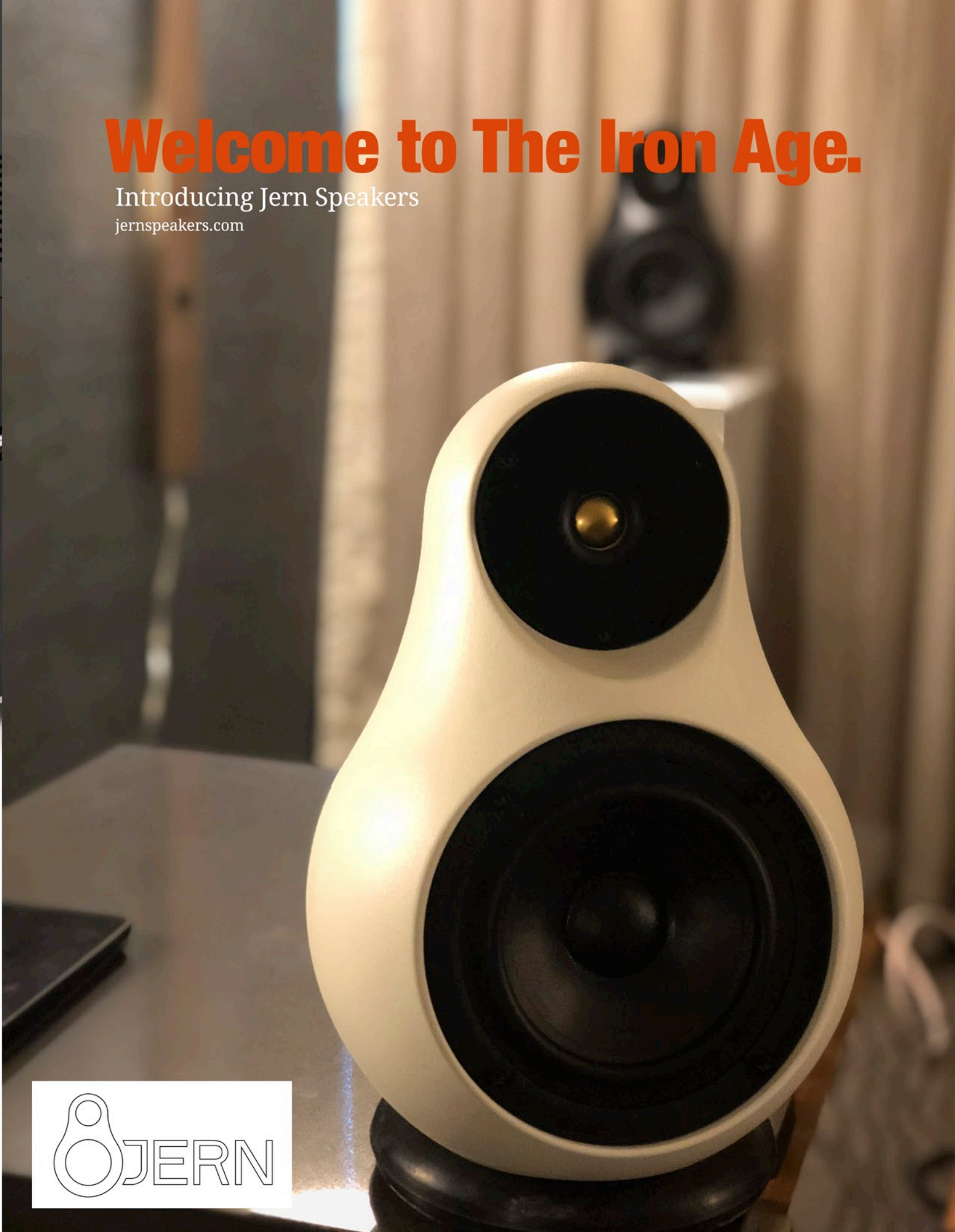
## Linn Selekt DSM

\$5,000 - \$9,100 (config dependent)  
linn.co.uk

Linn's new Selekt range has been a worldwide hit, offering a tiny form factor with powerful options. You can order it as a preamp/DAC add their premium Katalyst DAC, a power amplifier, whatever you need to put your dream system together. And there's room for a headphone jack along with slots for future expansion. Not to mention a built in MM/MC phonostage. All models feature built-in streaming and are Roon, Tidal and Qobuz ready.

# Welcome to The Iron Age.

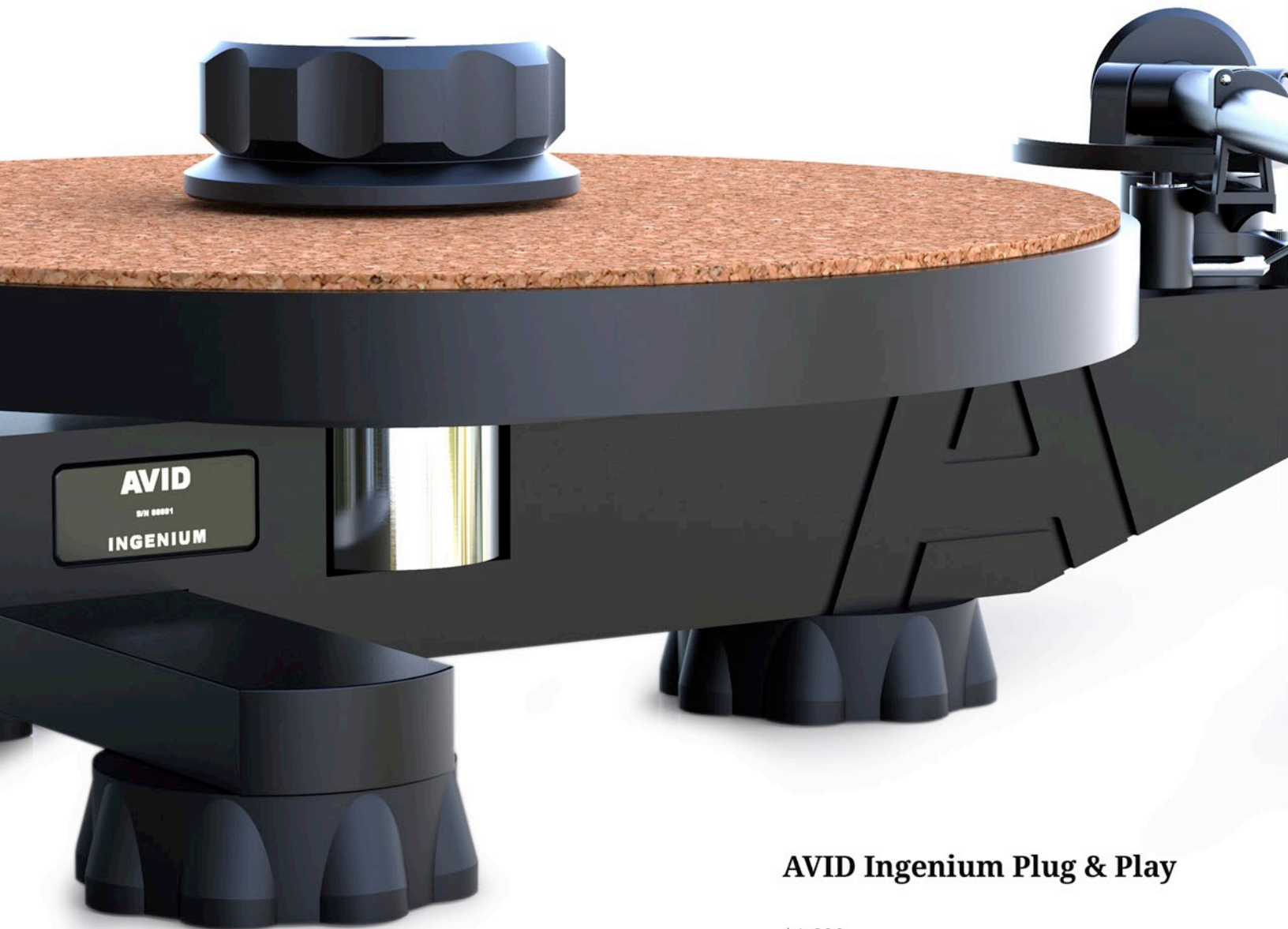
Introducing Jern Speakers  
jernspeakers.com





# Future Tense

Reviews in our immediate future...



## AVID Ingenium Plug & Play

\$1,699  
avidhifi.com

AVID has been making fantastic belt-drive turntables for decades now. The original Ingenium was a marvel of simplicity, offering dual tonearm capability along with high end performance at a budget price. We still have the first one off the assembly line!

AVID creator Conrad Mas has upped the game, creating a new Ingenium, with a built in phonostage, giving us single box solution that is of considerably higher quality than the small solid plinth models in the \$500 to \$800 range. For many, this will be the only analog solution you will ever need.

## Formula xHD

- Proprietary Optologic DAC
- Pure FPGA-based R2R Ladder
- Fully-floating (isolating) D/A converter system
- Hybrid USB xCore 200 (dual core) in Bit Perfect up to 768 kHz PCM and DSD 256
- Filterless Non-oversampling digital architecture



## Unconventional DNA



La Voce S3 dac



La Scala Optologic dac



Formula xHD dac



La Diva cd transport

aquahifi.com

aqua  
acoustic quality



# Future Tense

Reviews in our immediate future...

## GamuT Audio RS7i

\$42k/pair (black) \$44k/pair (other finishes)  
gamutaudio.com

We've been big fans of GamuT audio for well over a decade now, and have used a few of their speakers as references here at TONE as well.

These speakers have always provided an incredible mix of tonality, dynamics and tonal accuracy in a form factor that is pure beauty.

Completely hand made in Denmark, current company principle Benno Baun Meldgaard has picked up where Lars Goller left off, taking the speakers to an even higher level of excellence.

A step down from the mighty Zodiac, the RS7i is a formidable speaker for nearly 1/4 the MSRP. This one is the sweet spot in the lineup, and we can't wait for its arrival...



## Clarity by Design

Transparent Uncolored Accurate.

This is what made the sound of the original British Broadcasting Corporation monitors legendary. Graham Audio has made it their mission to continue this legacy, and to bring the Chartwell LS3/5 and LS3/5A, the Chartwell LS6, the LS5/8 and LS5/9 to a broader global audience.

Drawn from many years of BBC research, and through the engineering genius of Derek Hughes, these speakers have been recreated using state of the art materials and technology under license from the BBC. A new addition to this series is the Chartwell Sub 3, a bespoke compact, passive sub-woofer designed to be used in conjunction with the LS3/5 monitors.

Graham Audio are also proud to announce the VOTU, their flagship 1000 watts per channel, high-end monitor for large studios and listening rooms. Effortless dynamics and vast detail come as standard.

...hear the difference



Distributed in the United States by: Graham Audio USA  
www.grahamaudiousa.com | info@grahamaudiousa.com



CHARTWELL  
A DIVISION OF  
GRAHAM AUDIO



# Future Tense

Reviews in our immediate future...



## Audio by Van Alstine Vision SET400 Amplifier

\$2,199

avahifi.com

Frank Van Alstine has been building some of the world's finest gear for decades now. His designs are straightforward, being the antithesis of some of the more blingy brands that have become commonplace today.

When you want maximum performance and reasonable price in the same package, Mr. Van Alstine is the man to call. Granted, that package is going to be spartan, but the sonics of AVA gear have always been way beyond what the price tag suggests.

The new Vision SET 400 is no exception to that rule. With 225 watts per channel into 8 ohms on tap, this amplifier will drive anything, including our ESLs and power hungry Magnepons.

Watch for Rob Johnson's enthusiastic review early next year.

The sound and vision of Scandinavia

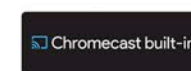


Prisma provides multi-room/multi-zone connectivity and control for playback of stored and streamed media, wired or wireless, all managed from a mobile device through a dedicated system control app.

In addition to Bluetooth®, AirPlay, and Spotify Connect, Prisma features Chromecast built-in, a unique streaming portal allowing effortless direct connection to hundreds of streaming applications, including Roon, TIDAL, Qobuz, Deezer, Google Play Music, and TuneIn radio, for the best possible performance and user experience.

Initially available in the new I15 Prisma integrated amplifier, I35 Prisma integrated amplifier, and CD35 Prisma CD player – with more to come.

► For more on all our new Primare models go to [primare.net](http://primare.net)



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# Future Tense

Reviews in our immediate future...



## Brinkmann Edison Mk. II Phonostage

\$13,900

[brinkmann-audio.com](http://brinkmann-audio.com)

Considering how much we love our reference Brinkmann Bardo turntable with RoNT power supply, and the incredibly analog like sound of the Nyquist DAC (now updated to Mk. II status) we will be shocked if this three input phono stage is anything less than incredible.

All three inputs are fully balanced, with choice of RCA (on two) or XLR inputs, and the options for gain and loading wide, there shouldn't be a cartridge that's off limits to you with the Edison.

Their website says that the Edison Mk. II "has had relentless fine tuning, with nearly every capacitor updated." Hand picked, NOS Telefunken tubes are included.

Review in the works shortly. Very excited.



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The  
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Organisation



# Setlist

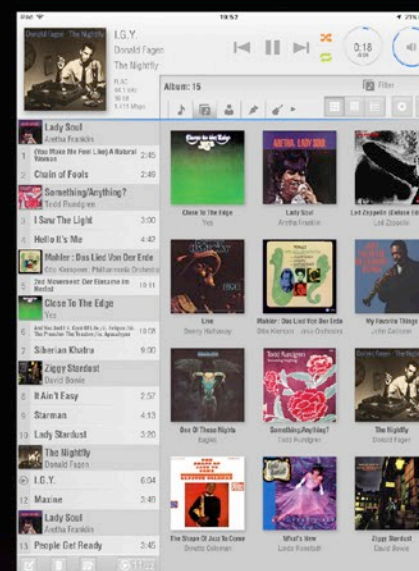
Photo by Jeff Dorgay

When St. Vincent hit the scene, we caught her with David Byrne at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall on October 18, 2012. Though they bounced around a lot, and did a lot of Talking Heads tunes, they opened with her hit "Who," and closed down with "Burning Down The House." Fun was had by all.

1. Who
2. Weekend in the Dust
3. Save Me From What I Want
4. I am an Ape
5. I Should Watch TV
6. Northern Lights
7. Open the Kingdom
8. Cheerleader
9. Marrow
10. Like Humans do
11. The Forest A
12. Lazarus
13. Lightening
14. Cruel
15. The One Who Broke Your Heart
16. Optimist
17. Outside of Space and Time
18. Burning Down the House

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2018  
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OY**  
TONE Product of the Year



Esoteric SoundStream App

The Esoteric N-01 Network Audio Player, quite possibly the world's most versatile and best sounding Network Player / DAC. Featuring 35-bit processing, the ability to decode PCM, DSD, and even MQA files, the N-01 is driven by an easy to use interface that incorporates Tidal, Qobuz, Spotify and TuneIn as well as easy access to your NAS stored music. The N-01 is also fully Roon Ready.

*No wonder TONE is recognizing the N-01 as the "TONE Product Of the Year" for Digital. We Thank the folks at TONE for this honor.*



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For more information on Esoteric products or to find your Esoteric dealer please visit:  
<http://www.esoteric-usa.com>



# Setlist

Photo by Chris Kimmelshue

Chris Kimmelshue captured one of many intense moment's of Interpol's blistering performance at the Orpheum Theater in Boston, this September...

1. Not Even Jail
2. All the Rage Back Home
3. If You Really Love Nothing
4. Public Pervert
5. Mammoth
6. NYC
7. The Rover
8. Complications
9. Roland
10. Success
11. Number 10
12. The Scale
13. Anywhere
14. NYsMAW
15. Slow Hands
16. Lights
17. Evil
18. Obstacle 1

"...these things sound just as elegant as they look.  
Or is it, they look just as elegant as they sound?  
Either way, the results are genuinely impressive."  
High Def Digest



Beneath its timeless aesthetic and familiar curves, the new Aida has been completely overhauled. Years of tireless research and refinement have yielded a pristine electroacoustic engineering project featuring all-new drivers, crossovers and internal structuring. A dramatic improvement upon the speaker once called "as close to perfection as I have ever experienced."



Sonus faber

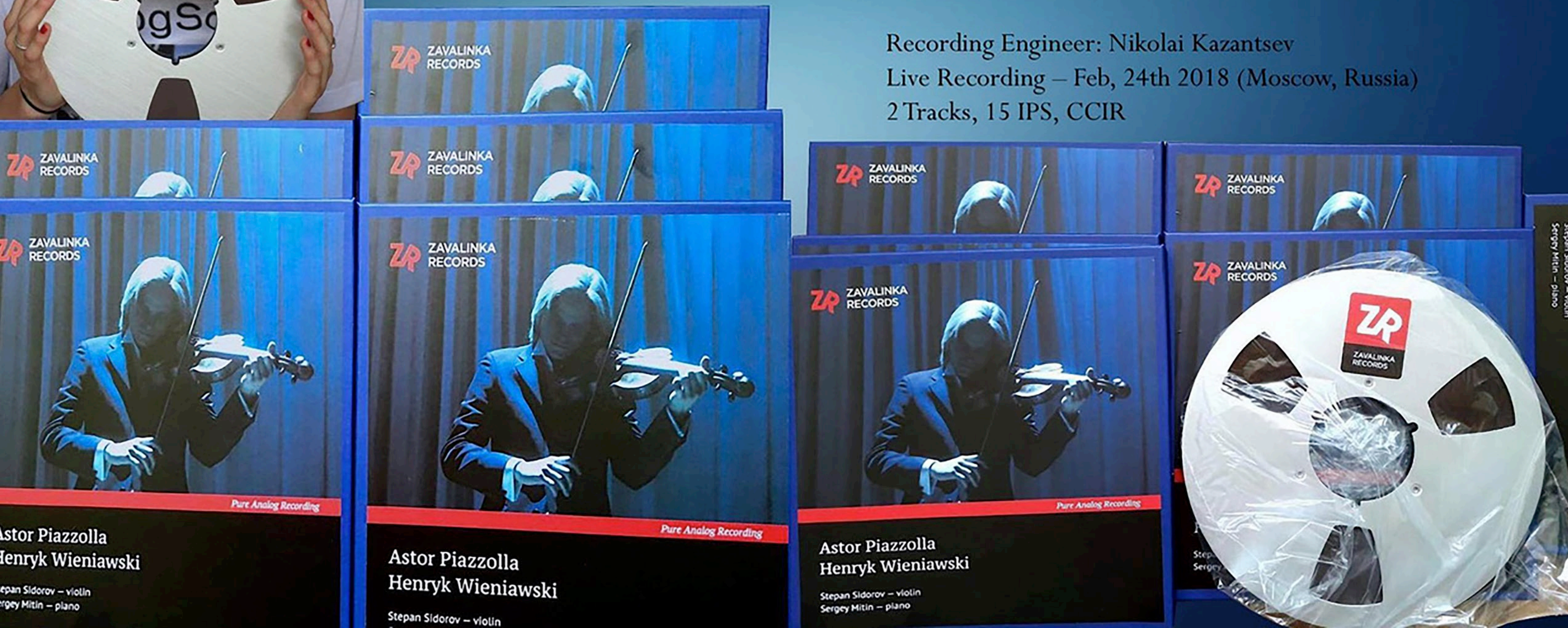
*Aida*  
LIMITLESS IMMERSION

[sonusfaber.com](http://sonusfaber.com)



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Recording Engineer: Nikolai Kazantsev  
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2 Tracks, 15 IPS, CCIR



# Dealers That Mean Business:

You've read all the reviews, you've argued with the internet pundits,

and you're ready to write a check. Now what? If you're a slightly used customer that likes to shop for the best bargain you can find on Audiogon, this article is not for you. And, controversial though it might sound, I'm not against Audiogon. If you want a gently pre-owned preamp, love music, and just don't want to buy new, I get that – as long as you know what you're getting into. Audiogon can be a great place to buy pre owned gear if you know exactly what you want - and don't expect ANY service. But someone has to buy it new, so you can buy it used – remember that!

If you are the customer that likes to buy new, loves the feel (and the smell) of taking it out of the box for the first time, knowing no one else has touched it, I get that too. Personally, I'm about 50/50 on this experience, as I am with cars. Ask anyone who's bought a preamp or a used car from me, it's usually pretty pampered.

However, if you are going to spring for new gear, you need a good dealer. Someone who understands you, your music and most of all your perspective. You need someone to help you find the right components that will work together as a system, help you set it up in some cases, and offer support when things don't work out as planned. There's no substitute for experience, and a great dealer knows their products, and knows what will work best for you.

Nearly every audio system that has failed to achieve the greatness expected of it can be traced back to poor component choice (system and/or room) synergy and poor component setup. I've been to hifi shows, homes, and dealers all over the world – hearing sound good, bad, and somewhere inbetween. It always boils down to these two factors if something isn't truly broken, and it rarely is.

The solution is easy. Find a great dealer. While there isn't a hifi shop on every corner like there was back in the 70s, there are still some truly great dealers out there that will help you put together a stunning music system, regardless of your budget. And I'm on a mission to find as many of them as I can for you.

I'm starting with the folks I know, in this new section of the magazine. Most of the establishments in this list are running full page ads in the magazine – and there is a caveat. I will not accept advertising in this magazine from a dealer unless I've been to their place, seen the shop and have talked to a cross section of their customers to know they provide superior service. In most cases, these are hifi shops that I, or someone on the staff has purchased gear from as well.

These are not just people wanting to buy space in TONEAudio. Every one of these dealers carry my personal endorsement, and I hope that will help you on your journey. As we go forward, look for the "TONEAudio Approved Dealer" sticker on your favorite establishment. Know a great dealer, that you've had superior service from? Let me know, I would like to pay them a visit and add them to the list.



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Musical Artisans, Chicago IL | Music Lovers, San Francisco CA | Ne Plus Ultra, Austin TX | Arizona Hi-Fi, Phoenix AZ  
Canada dealers: Audio Eden, Toronto ON | Element Acoustics, Vancouver BC | Filtronique, Montreal QC



## Dealers That Mean Business - Listings

### San Francisco - AudioVision San Francisco

www.audiovisionsf.com

1628 California Street

San Francisco, California

415.614.1118



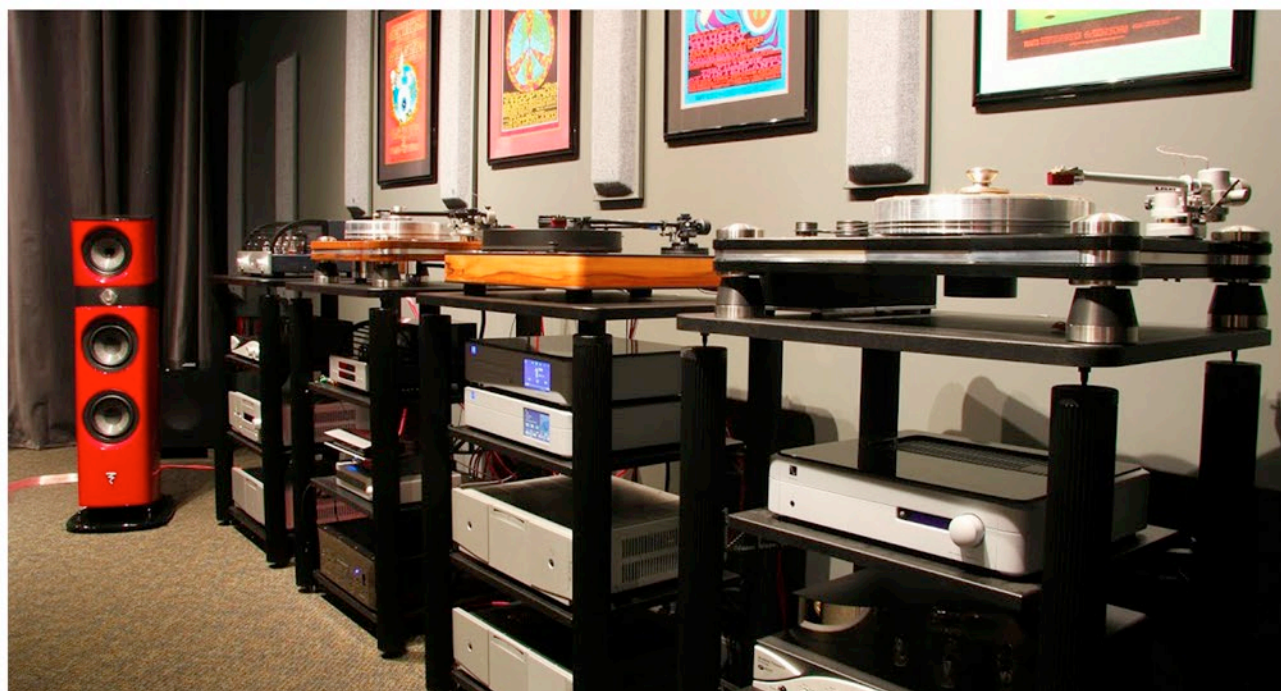
### La Verne, California - Upscale Audio

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**Marietta, Georgia - The Audio Company**  
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770.429.0434



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## Dealers That Mean Business - Listings

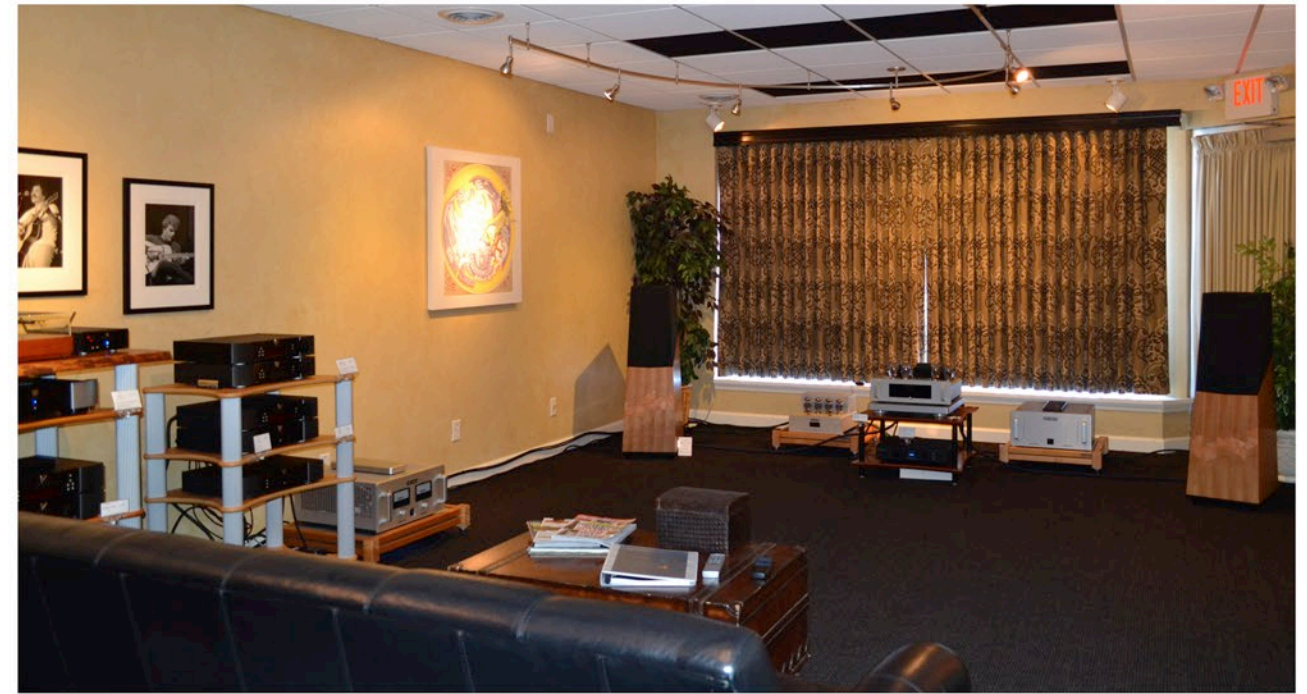
### Wauwatosa, Wisconsin - Ultra Fidelis

[www.ultrafidelis.com](http://www.ultrafidelis.com)

7125 West North Avenue

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53213

414.221.0200



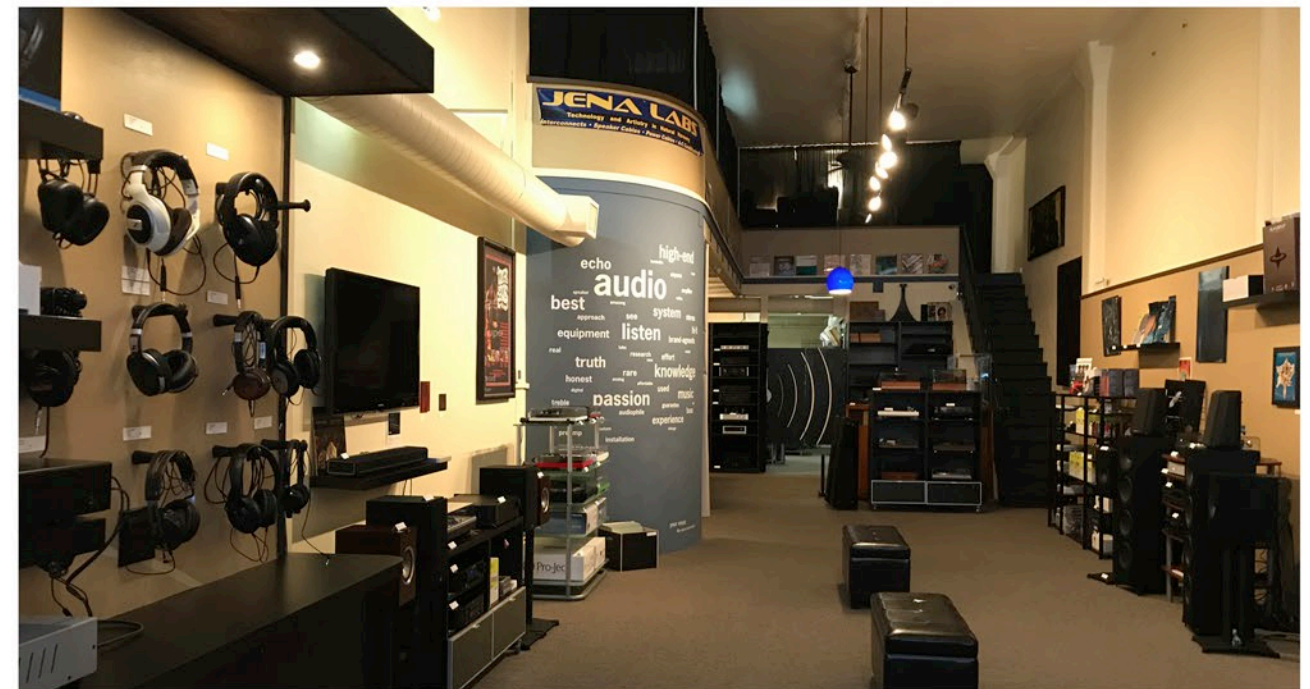
### Portland, Oregon - Echo Audio

[www.echohifi.com](http://www.echohifi.com)

1015 SW Washington Street

Portland, Oregon 97205

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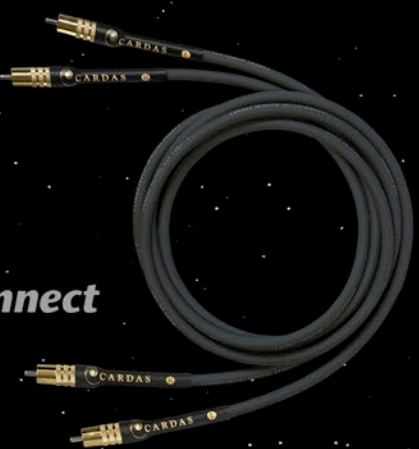
**Sarasota, Florida - Suncoast Audio**  
www.suncoastaudio.com  
7353 International Place, Unit 309  
Sarasota, Florida 34240      941.932.0282



**New York City, New York - Noho Sound & Stereo**  
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## Vancouver, Canada - HiFi Centre

[www.hificentre.com](http://www.hificentre.com)

433 Carrall Street

Vancouver, BC V6B 6E3

888.232.9995



## Gig Harbor, Washington - Gig Harbor Audio

[www.gighroboraudio.com](http://www.gighroboraudio.com)

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[bowers-wilkins.com](http://bowers-wilkins.com)



## Dealers That Mean Business - Listings

### Austin, Texas - Whetstone Audio

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Austin, Texas 78702

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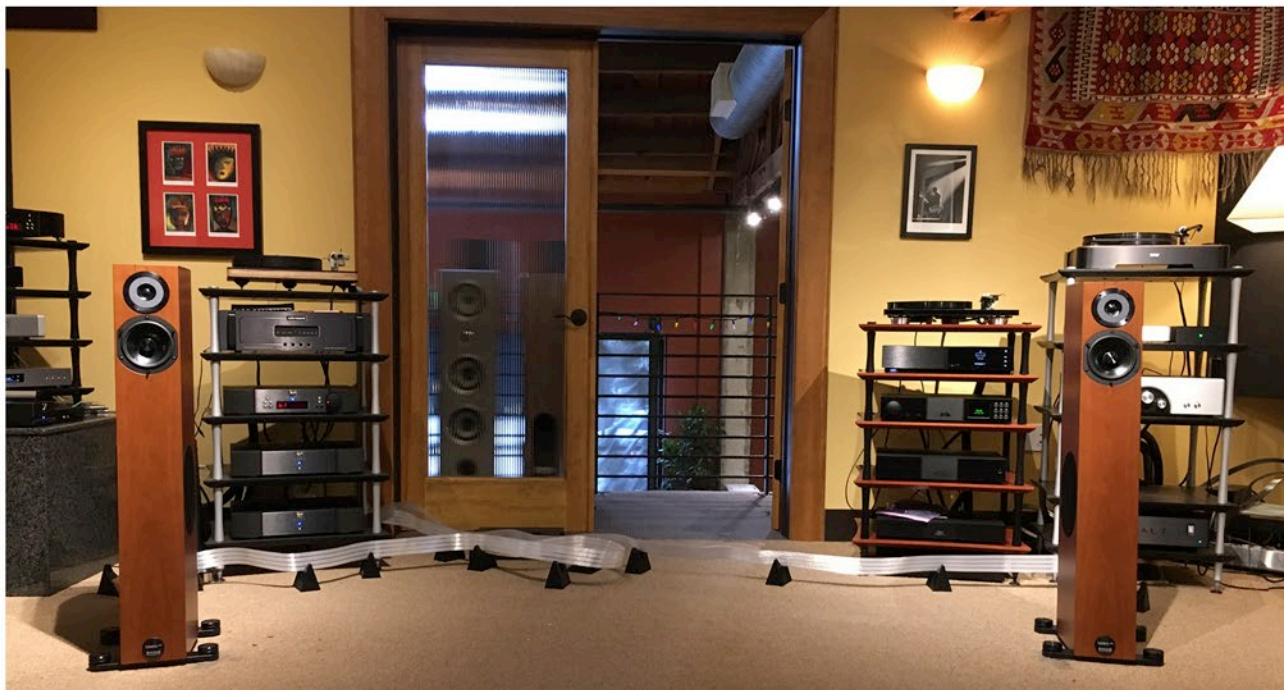
### Portland, Oregon - Stereotypes Audio

[www.stereotypesaudio.com](http://www.stereotypesaudio.com)

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# In House

The soundtrack of assembling the issue...



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# Socially Speaking

TONEAudio's Online hangouts

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A change is in the works... Stay tuned

**"no matter what I listened to, I couldn't imagine the sound being much better"**  
*Soundstage! June 2017*

## Technology

Bryston's new patented Salomie Circuit is a revolutionary new way to reduce distortion and noise unveiling never before heard details only hinted at by other equipment. The input stage operates at distortion of less than 0.001 percent!

## Power

Cubed Series technology is available in 10 different amplifiers ranging from the B135<sup>3</sup> integrated at 135 watts per channel, the venerable 4B<sup>3</sup> at 300 watts by two channels, to the incredible 28B<sup>3</sup> 1000 watt mono block.

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For the first time, Bryston brings Cubed Series to the front end. Our new BP-17<sup>3</sup> Preamplifier features the Salomie Circuit from input to output reproducing higher resolution than ever before.

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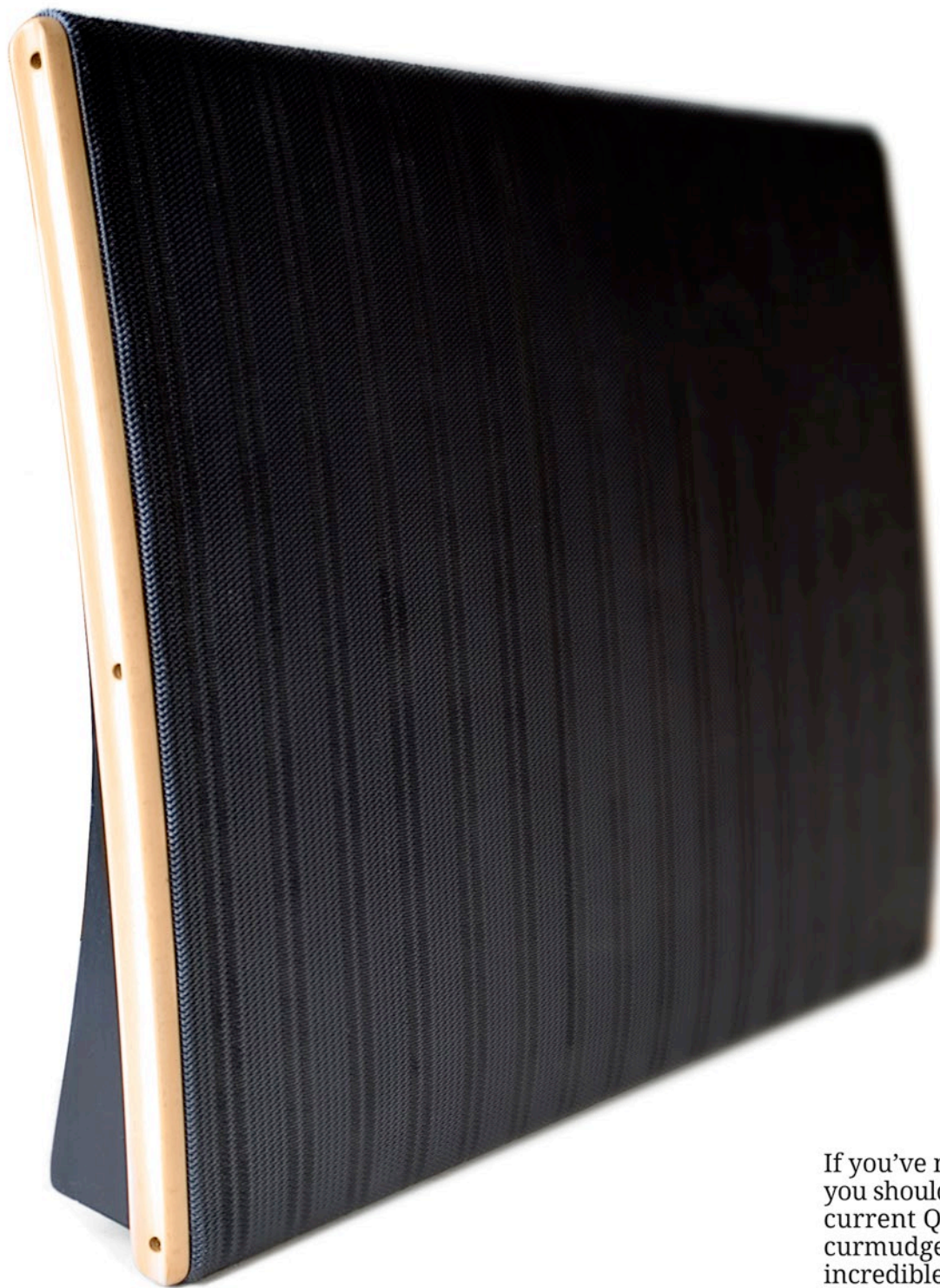
**TONE**



# Last Word

Our parting thought to ponder.

Still a favorite: the original Quad 57ESL



If you've never heard a pair of these, you should. If you can't, check out the current Quads. No matter what the curmudgeons tell you, they are also incredible, offering a window to the music that few speakers do.

# GRAND PRIX AUDIO Monaco Turntable v2.0

A new achievement in analog



*"Let the record state that this is the finest turntable I've experienced, at any price."*

*-Jeff Dorgay, Tone Publications*

Music deserves innovation

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# Playlist:

What Our Readers Are Into

Rush - Tom Sawyer

54 40 - Music Man

Ella Fitzgerald -  
Cry Me a River

Santana - Jingo

Bronski Beat -  
No More War

Nina Simone-  
Wild is The Wind

Buena Vista Social Club -  
Los Gardenias

Beach Boys -  
In My Room

Pink Floyd - Sheep

Perry Como - Gringo's Guitar



Our newest contributor, Shanon Swetlishnoff has truly eclectic taste - which makes her a natural to be part of our crew...

Here's a few tracks "she just happened to be listening to" the other day.

no.5

Canada

TONE Playlists are sponsored by...

qobuz

FOCAL  
LISTEN BEYOND

## UTOPIA III EVO

THE LEGEND  
IS GROWING...



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British Racing Green

Stella Utopia EM Evo  
Metallic Blue

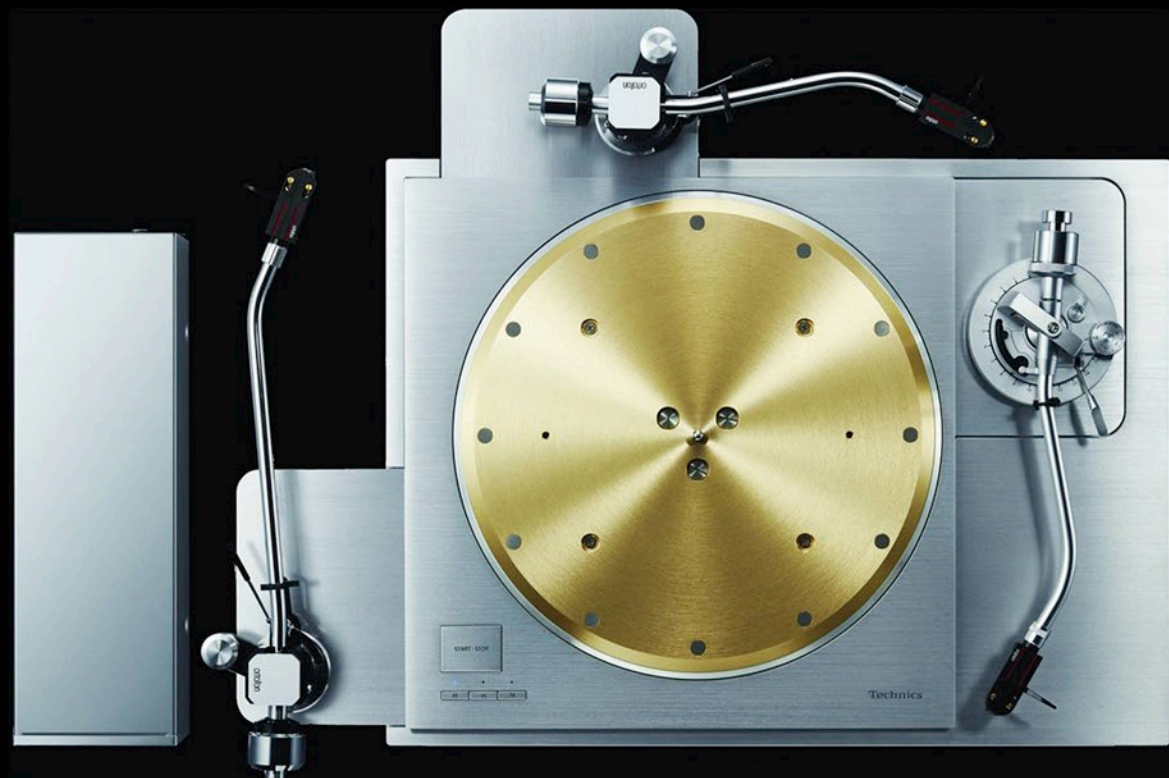
Maestro Utopia Evo  
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# Technics®

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mrspeakers  
psb  
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bel canto  
bluesound  
cambridge  
cardas  
chord electronics  
clearaudio  
crystal cable  
deqx  
devialet  
dr. feickert  
eat  
funk firm  
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ortofon  
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pro-ject  
ps audio  
quadraspire  
rega  
shinola  
sme  
sonos  
soundsmith  
stillpoints  
technics  
unison research  
woo audio

## Get The Gear: Where to find what you've seen in this issue.

<b>Abyss</b>	<a href="http://abyss-headphones.com">abyss-headphones.com</a>	<b>CH Precision</b>	<a href="http://ch-precision.com">ch-precision.com</a>
<b>Ana Mighty Sound</b>	<a href="http://anamightysound.com">anamightysound.com</a>	<b>Chord Cable</b>	<a href="http://soundorg.com">soundorg.com</a>
<b>Analog Magik</b>	<a href="http://analogmagik.com">analogmagik.com</a>	<b>Clearaudio</b>	<a href="http://musicalsurrroundings.com">musicalsurrroundings.com</a>
<b>Anthem</b>	<a href="http://anthemav.com">anthemav.com</a>	<b>conrad-johnson</b>	<a href="http://conradjohnson.com">conradjohnson.com</a>
<b>Aqua Audio</b>	<a href="http://aquahifi.com">aquahifi.com</a>	<b>dCS</b>	<a href="http://dcsLtd.co.uk">dcsLtd.co.uk</a>
<b>Atlas Cable</b>	<a href="http://integrityhf.com">integrityhf.com</a>	<b>Dynaudio</b>	<a href="http://dynaudio.com">dynaudio.com</a>
<b>Audia Flight</b>	<a href="http://audioluxllc.com">audioluxllc.com</a>	<b>E.A.T.</b>	<a href="http://vanaltd.com">vanaltd.com</a>
<b>Audio Classics</b>	<a href="http://audioclassics.com">audioclassics.com</a>	<b>Echo Audio</b>	<a href="http://echohifi.com">echohifi.com</a>
<b>Audio Physic</b>	<a href="http://vanaltd.com">vanaltd.com</a>	<b>Esoteric</b>	<a href="http://esoteric-usa.com">esoteric-usa.com</a>
<b>Audio Research</b>	<a href="http://audioresearch.com">audioresearch.com</a>	<b>Exogal</b>	<a href="http://exogal.com">exogal.com</a>
<b>Audio Solutions</b>	<a href="http://highendbyoz.com">highendbyoz.com</a>	<b>Focal</b>	<a href="http://audioplusservices.com">audioplusservices.com</a>
<b>AudioVision SF</b>	<a href="http://audiovisionsf.com">audiovisionsf.com</a>	<b>Franco Serblin</b>	<a href="http://francoserblin.it">francoserblin.it</a>
<b>Audolici</b>	<a href="http://audolici.com">audolici.com</a>	<b>Gamut</b>	<a href="http://gamutaudio.com">gamutaudio.com</a>
<b>AVID HiFi</b>	<a href="http://avidhifi.com">avidhifi.com</a>	<b>Gig Harbor Audio</b>	<a href="http://gigharboraudio.com">gigharboraudio.com</a>
<b>Boulder</b>	<a href="http://boulderamp.com">boulderamp.com</a>	<b>Gold Note</b>	<a href="http://goldnote.it">goldnote.it</a>
<b>Bowers &amp; Wilkins</b>	<a href="http://bowers-wilkins.com">bowers-wilkins.com</a>	<b>Golden Ear</b>	<a href="http://goldeneear.com">goldeneear.com</a>
<b>Brinkmann</b>	<a href="http://brinkmann-audio.com">brinkmann-audio.com</a>	<b>Graham Audio</b>	<a href="http://grahamaudiousa.com">grahamaudiousa.com</a>
<b>Bryston</b>	<a href="http://bryston.com">bryston.com</a>	<b>Grand Prix Audio</b>	<a href="http://grandprixaudio.com">grandprixaudio.com</a>
<b>Cardas Audio</b>	<a href="http://cardas.com">cardas.com</a>		



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HiFi Centre	hificentre.com
Jern Speakers	jernspeakers.com
Kanto Audio	kantoaudio.com
Kiseki	kiseki-usa.com
Koeppel Design	koeppeldesign.com
Linn Audio	linn.co.uk
Luxman	luxman.com
McIntosh	mcintoshlabs.com
MartinLogan	martinlogan.com
MoFi Electronics	mofielectronics.com
Musical Fidelity	audioplusservices.com
Nagra	nagraaudio.com
Naim	audioplusservices.com
Octave	octave.de
PS Audio	psaudio.com
Paradigm	paradigm.com
Pass Labs	passlabs.com

PrimaLuna	primaluna-usa.com
Primare	mofielectronics.com
ProAc	soundorg.com
Pro-Ject	pro-jectusa.com
REL	rel.net
Raidho	raidho.dk
Rega	soundorg.com
Rubber B	rubberb.com
Simaudio	simaudio.com
Sonus faber	sonusfaber.com
Sumiko	sumiko.net
Tellurium Q	telluriumq.com
Totem	totemacoustic.com
Upscale Audio	upscaleaudio.com
VAC	vac-amplifiers.com
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VPI	vpiindustries.com
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