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Triplanar Tonearm Lives On

In great news for analog fans, the Triplanar tonearm will continue to be developed and produced, despite designer Herbert Papier's retirement from the industry. In Herb's words, "Having reached the somewhat mature age of 83, I am no longer able to do justice to the complexities involved in manufacturing the Triplanar tonearm. I have decided to retire from the business, and have turned it over to Dung Tri Mai." Herb has worked extensively with Mai, educating him in the methods involved in producing and servicing the Triplanar arm. Mai will be using the same



tools and machinery used by Papier. Again quoting Herb, "Dung is experienced in high-end audio, and I am confident that he will maintain the high standards I have always demanded." The current tonearm model is designated the Triplanar Mk.VI Ultimate. ▶ For further information: Triplanar Precision Tonearm, 1121 N.E. Jackson St., Suite 400, Minneapolis, MN 55413. Tel.: (612) 623-0922. Fax: (612) 623-0923. Web site: www.triplanar.com. Price: \$2,950 (in single-ended or balanced output form).

Alón Exotica Loudspeaker

The Alón Exotica is the latest addition to Acarian Systems' Wood Monitor speaker series. The Exotica is a three-way, floor-standing design with a modest footprint that utilizes cutting edge driver technology. Prominent in the Exotica's design is its use of the Raven R1 true ribbon tweeter. This ribbon, unlike others, does not use a separate diaphragm and conductor, but instead the conductor is the diaphragm. According to Acarian, the direct drive of the ribbon element eliminates the "plastic" parasitic resonances of more conventional designs. The rest of the driver compliment consists of a 4.5-inch midrange and an 8-inch woofer. Both are manufactured by Seas Excel and feature a cast, surface-treated magnesium cone, with a natural rubber surround and solid machined copper phase plug. Making these metal drivers attractive to designer Carl Marchisotto is that each has a single, well-defined break-up mode that can be well compensated for in the crossover. Frequency response for the Exotica is 35 Hz to 30 kHz, with a benign 8 ohm nominal (7 ohm minimum) impedance. The system employs an enclosure with a sand-filled base for maximum dynamic stability and is finished in select matched Santos Rosewood veneer. ▶ For further information: Acarian Systems Ltd., Hunters Run, Suite 104, 181 Smithtown Blvd., Nesconset, NY 11767. Tel.: (631) 265-9577. Fax: (631) 265-9560. Web site: www.alonbyacarian.com. Price: \$9,500 pair (in standard Rosewood finish).



VAC Renaissance Signature Products

Introduced in 1994, the original VAC Renaissance components represented the company's statement products and designer Kevin Hayes' idea of the state-of-the-art in amplifier design. They featured a pure Class A1 triode design, based on the legendary 300B output tube, but with push-pull, rather than single-ended, operation of the 300Bs. With the just introduced Renaissance Signature line of products, VAC is out to better the already impressive performance of the earlier line, while



maintaining the design elements so strongly identified with it. The newest addition to the Renaissance line is the Signature Preamplifier, representing the result of six years' of research and development, and is the company's first preamplifier to wear the Renaissance moniker. The design centers on six hand-wired, direct-coupled, Class A1 triode tubes.

Through its principal outputs the preamplifier contains no coupling capacitors from input to output. No negative feedback is used. An optional zero-feedback phonostage is also available. ▶ For further information: Valve Amplification Company, 807 Bacon Street, Durham, NC 27703. Tel.: (919) 596-1107. Fax: (919) 596-2037. Web site: www.vac-amps.com. Prices, Renaissance Signature Series: Preamplifier: \$9,990 (add \$2,990 for phono).

Analysis Plus Oval Audio Cables

Just when you think there cannot possibly be anything new in the way of audio cable design and construction, along comes something to shake you from your complacency. Stirring things up this time is Analysis Plus, a newcomer to the high-end audio industry, but one that brings an impressive pedigree in electronic and electromagnetic simulation and analysis for companies such as Motorola, Ford and TRW. Their distinctive Oval cable line employs a unique hollow-oval geometry, claimed to produce a cable whose electrical characteristics are remarkably consistent across the audio frequency band. Computer simulation by Analysis Plus of signal transfer in round, solid-rectangular, and hollow-oval cable geometries shows that current distribution in these conventional designs becomes increasingly non-uniform as the frequency rises across the audio band, while the hollow-oval configuration retains a fully uniform distribution. This is said to maintain a consistent resistance and inductance that provides a far more accurate signal transfer than is otherwise possible. They claim the result to be an extremely neutral, transparent cable that allows all of the music to come through. ▶ For further information: Analysis Plus Inc., 6321 North McKinley Rd., Flushing, MI 48433. Tel.: (810) 659-6448. Fax: (810) 659-8101. Web site: www.analysis-plus.com.

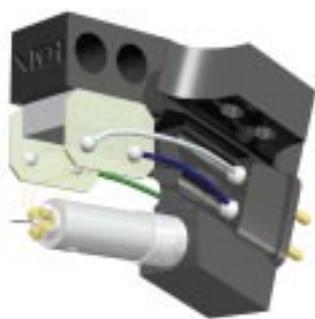


LAMM LL2 Line Level Preamplifier

The LL2 line stage is the second preamplifier product from LAMM founder/designer Vladimir Shushurin. Contrasting with the earlier LL1 model, the new LL2 is an all-tube design and occupies a markedly lower price-point. The LL2 employs pure Class-A operation from input to output, with all stages being single-ended. The power supply features full-wave vacuum rectification. This rectifier, together with a choke-containing filter, greatly reduces noise and helps ensure an extensive dynamic range without coloration. Other features include three inputs, one tape loop, two sets of outputs, front-panel muting switch, and protection circuitry coupled with automatic mute at turn on/off. Each unit is hand-crafted with high quality, matched components, including military grade, low noise Dale metal film resistors, Alps potentiometers, Electrocube and Roederstein film capacitors, high frequency switching-grade Cornell Dubilier electrolytic capacitors, and specially selected long life vacuum tubes. The pre-

amplifier also uses a custom-designed

power transformer. The LL2 is available in two versions, standard and deluxe, both of which utilize identical chassis, circuit board and parts. In the deluxe version, the power supply energy storage is approximately twice that of the standard version and film capacitors in critical paths are paralleled by polystyrene capacitors of the highest available quality. ► **For further information: LAMM Industries Inc., 2621 East 24th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11235. Tel.: (718) 368-0181. Fax: (718) 368-0140. Web site: www.lamindustries.com. Price: \$3,999 (standard), \$4,290 (deluxe).**



van den Hul Kolibri Phono Cartridge

In a move sure to please his longtime fans, analog maven A.J. van den Hul has recently designed a new, top-level cartridge for his Netherlands-based company, A.J. van den Hul B.V. The Kolibri is the successor to vdH's Grasshopper Beauty series, with many cartridge components removed in a quest to return to the plain essence of phono transduction. By minimizing/adapting the cartridge's total magnetic circuit, the related distortion and noise have decreased considerably, making subtle details, such as the decay of instrument sounds, stand out more clearly. This change also lowered cartridge mass, from 8.5 to 3.25 grams, allowing for the use of very light ton-

earms while still maintaining good tracking ability. Removing the front-pole allowed an even shorter cantilever to be used, for a claimed improvement in groove transduction accuracy. The Kolibri is available in two varieties: The "X" version is more spatial sounding, with a 0.20 mV output, intended for those who play mostly classical music; the "S" version is the more dynamic, better suited to jazz and pop, with a 0.23 mV output. ► **For further information: Stanalog Audio Imports, PO Box 671, Hagaman, NY 12086. Tel.: (518) 843-3070. Fax: (518) 843-8882. Web: www.vandenhul.com. Price: \$6,000.**

Herron Audio M150 Monaural Power Amplifier

With his company's reputation for stellar sound resting on but a pair of products, the VTSP-1A line stage and the VTPH-1 phono stage, designer Keith Herron apparently keeps to a "limit what you do—but do it very, very well" business philosophy. Those who know Keith, however, know his aspirations (and expertise) are not limited strictly to preamplifier products. Joining the Herron Audio product line is the new M150 monaural power amplifier. In contrast to the Herron line and phono stages, the new amplifier is a pure solid-state design. The M150 is a full complementary symmetry bipolar implementation and contains no coupling capacitors in the forward direction. Proper stage-to-stage impedance matching insures low distortion and a unique successive stage to output confluence provides the necessary combination of micro/nano-resolution from the forward stages and robust, controlled power and authority from the following stages. The unified current summation drive stage network eliminates the crossover notch problems

common in many solid state amplifier designs. High idle current or Class-A bias output stage operation is unnecessary—the M150 runs cool under most listening conditions and provides a live presentation without the hardness commonly associated with solid-state amplifiers. ► **For further information: Herron Audio, 12685 Dorsett Road, #138, St. Louis, MS 63043. Tel.: (314) 434-5416. Fax: (314) 434-6629. Web site: www.herronaudio.com. Price: \$5,895 per pair.**



Coincident Speaker Technology Total Eclipse Loudspeaker

The Total Eclipse is a new reference-level loudspeaker design from Coincident Speaker Technology. Based on the earlier Super Eclipse model, the Total Eclipse represents that speaker's beefed-up sibling. While adhering to a similar design philosophy (i.e., D'Apollito driver configuration, a narrow front baffle, and mirror-imaged side-firing dual woofers) the Total Eclipse was designed to be a BIG-sounding speaker, capable of filling large rooms with sub-woofer-type bass, and tremendous impact and dynamics. While large, the Total Eclipse maintains the elegant, slim profile of the other Eclipse models. The midranges and tweeter are housed in their own sealed subenclosure to eliminate intermodulation distortion caused by the large air movement of the speaker's woofers. The dual side-firing woofers are 10-inch versions of the 8-inch units used in the Super Eclipse, with magnet assemblies nearly doubled in size. Claimed low frequency extension is 24 Hz., with less than 0.5% IM distortion at levels as high as 110 dB. The speaker's most notable characteristic, according to designer Israel Blume, is that it achieves its goals while maintaining a four-figure selling price. ► **For further information: Coincident Speaker Technology, 51 Miriam Cr., Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada L4B 2P8. Tel.: (905) 886-6728. Fax: (905) 886-2627. Web site: www.coincidentspeaker.com. Price: \$7,999.**

