

APRIL 2012



CRYSTAL CABLE ARABESQUE Mini

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



HOLLAND

Reviewer: Marja & Henk

Sources: PS Audio PWT; PS Audio PWD; Dr. Feickert Blackbird/DFA 1o5/Zu DL-103;

Streaming sources: XXHighEnd; iTunes; Devialet AIR

Preamp/integrated/power: Tri TRV EQ3SE phonostage; Audio Note Meishu with WE 300B (or AVVT, JJ, KR Audio 300B output tubes); Yarland FV 34 CIISA; Qables iQube V1; Devialet D-Premier; Hypex Ncore 1200 based monoblocks; *KR Kronzilla SX Eco* [in for review]

Speakers: Avantgarde Acoustic Duo Omega; Arcadian Audio Pnoe; Vaessen Aquarius; *Crystal Cable Arabesque Mini* [in for review]

Cables: complete loom of ASI LiveLine cables; full loom of Crystal Cable cables; Nanotec Golden Strada #79 nano 3; Nanotec Golden Strada #79; Nanotec Golden Strada #201

Power line conditioning: Omtec Power Controllers; PS Audio Powerplant Premier; PS Audio Humbuster III; *Isotek Syncro*; *Blue Horizon distortion meter* [in for review]

Equipment racks: ASI amplifier and TT shelf

Sundry accessories: Furutech DeMag; ClearAudio Double Matrix; Nanotec Nespa #1; Exact Audio Copy software; iPod; wood, brass, ceramic and aluminum cones and pyramids; Shakti Stones; Manley Skipjack; *Blue Horizon footers* [in for review]

Room treatment: Acoustic System International resonators, sugar cubes, diffusers

Room size: ca 7 x 5m with a ceiling height of 3.50m, brick walls and concrete floor downstairs, ca. 14.50 x 7.50m with a ceiling height of 3.50m, brick walls, wooden flooring upstairs.

Price of review item: € 13.000





Not many realize that in the audio arena Crystal Cable is a remarkable company. Sure, the happy users of their products know. For others however the company often remains associated with premium-priced bling. That's because their cables do not fit into the lowest price segment and their finish is shiny with a clear sheath protecting a visible silver or silver/gold mesh shield. Their small diameters are far from the muscle cables most audiophile associate with quality. Never exceeding 5mm in thickness, these cables even arrive in the smallest possible stylish black jewel boxes.

If you look beneath the surface however, something else emerges. Packed in that tiny shiny format is a lot of high tech. The delivery format is the personal signature of one of the few ladies in audio manufacturing. Gabi van der Kley desired something different and refused the bulky products which literally sell more air than actual conductor. For raw technology she could rely on the many years of R&D from Siltech run by her husband Edwin.

Though both companies share technologies and manufacturing facilities, they retain their signature looks and, importantly, different sonics.

Imagine this. Two strong individuals with similar companies based out of the same office building, sharing a production facility and on top of that hearth and home. That is living the audio life 24/7 whilst running a family. Not a recipe to happiness many will copy.

We already did say 'remarkable'?

That this cooperation is fruitful and far from stale is proven by a steady stream of innovative new products from either company. Here product once developed isn't marketed under two labels and packaged two different ways as in the automotive industry where a Toyota is a Citroen is a Peugeot built in the Czech Republic with only a few differences like various logos. We learned that this kind of manufacturing is called *badge engineering* and becoming quite popular.



Back to Crystal. At a certain point whilst in their home close to Arnhem/Holland our power couple came up with the idea of building their own loudspeaker. With his inquisitive mind Edwin had recently discovered the Comsol software tool, an inter-disciplinarian technical simulation package. It was this tool which he wanted to use to design and measure the loudspeaker in the virtual realm before the very first piece of MDF was ever cut. This was back in 2007. The resultant loudspeaker was the Pantheon XXV which became the physical commemoration of Siltech's 25th anniversary.



Around a year later the technical staff at the Elst production facility of Siltech and Crystal Cable had been working with the deceptively simple looking Comsol program long enough to have gained in-depth knowledge and experience with both the software and breadth of possible data input. The physical and mental skills of this R&D team would now be tested to the breaking point when tasked to design and build a fully transparent loudspeaker completely out of glass that would not only look gorgeous but sound it too.