

hi-fi news

& Record Review

172 pages!

135+
REVIEWS
SEPARATES,
VINTAGE
& MUSIC

ULTIMATE HI-FI 2015

The year's finest products
and essential music

PLUS

THE
HI-FI SHOW

Preview of
the UK's premier
high-end event,
page 16

Equipment

Over 60
standout
separates tested

Vintage

Audio icons
of yesteryear

Music

The best LPs,
CDs and hi-res
downloads

Opinion

Our columnists!

• VINYL DS Audio to VPI • CD/SACD PLAYER/DACS Quad to T+A • NETWORK/USB AUDIO A&K to Naim
• TRANSISTOR & TUBE AMPS Audio Research to Rotel • HEADPHONE AMPS Auralic to Simaudio
• LOUDSPEAKERS & HEADPHONES AKG to Wilson Audio • VINTAGE B&O, Meridian, Technics & more

HI FI NEWS YEARBOOK



0 74820 90111 3

US\$14.99

PRINTED IN UK

hi-finews
HIGHLY
COMMENDED

Belt-driven turntable with electronic speed control and arm
Made by: European Audio Team, Prague
Supplied by: Absolute Sounds Ltd, UK
Telephone: 0208 971 3909
Web: www.euroaudioteam.com; www.absolutesounds.com
Price (including arm): £2498

AUDIO
FILE



EAT C-Sharp/C-Note

With the £2498 C-Sharp, EAT has created another high-mass design that looks very stylish indeed: a turntable of classic proportions and elegant design – in fact it's a scaled-down successor to the Forte S [HFN Dec '10] and E-Flat [HFN Jan '12] but fitted this time with a single motor.

Immaculately black-lacquered, the plinth is made of high-density MDF and is supported on three adjustable aluminium cones. Nestling within the rim of the plinth, the carbon-fibre-patterned top plate forms a suspended subchassis on which the main bearing and arm are mounted. It's actually a sandwich of carbon-fibre and MDF, supported on ten compliant elastomer cones.

The inverted main bearing has a 10mm-diameter shaft topped by a ceramic ball. Over this fits the substantial sub-platter, a machined

to be lifted off with ease. A separate speed controller takes low-voltage DC power from a plug-top PSU and synthesises the appropriate AC feeds for the two motor speeds.

Imposing if rather 'blingy', the new 10in C-Note arm fitted is said to 'combine all advantages of a unipivot arm with a Cardan design'. It doesn't wobble all over the place like a unipivot, but is easy and comfortable to handle; and there is almost no bearing play in the lateral plane. Some play in the vertical direction will not be critical, as the bearing will always be loaded by the mass of the arm.

The sleek-looking tapered carbon-fibre arm tube is completed by a polished aluminium headshell. Its geometry makes installing cartridges simple and EAT says that inside the arm tube a silicon-based grease damps tonearm/cartridge resonances 'by more than 50%'.

The counterweight shell is filled with a sorbothane-type material and an accessory disc can be added to balance out the heaviest MCs. Setting up the thread-and-weight bias adjustment is slightly fiddly but the C-Sharp is still a joy to install.

WITH A LIVELY BOUNCE

Fitted with an Ortofon Cadenza Black the EAT gave a strong and commanding sound, with a fine, extended and very well-controlled bottom end, and detailed upper registers. However, we felt that a Benz Micro Glider SL was subjectively a better match, always

sounding warm and open, so we ended up just wanting to listen to more and more music.

On music with a beat, the turntable had a lively bounce about it. Listening to funky guitarist Mel Brown and the neat little instrumental 'W-2 Withholding' from *Eighteen Pounds Of Unclean Chitlins And Other Greasy Blues Specialties* [Bluesway], Brown's trademark tricky blues picking seemed hugely energetic. Brass and organ sounds were light, bright and clean, while the unidentified bass player's great sound came over with immediacy and clarity.

The EAT seemed to be quite good at humanising a relatively processed recording too. On Stevie Winwood's *Arc Of A Diver* [Island], he overlaid all the instruments himself, to a point where his vocals often seem almost buried in the mix. Yet with the EAT they were always intelligible and impactful, so the songs made sense.

With *Last Dance* by Keith Jarrett and Charlie Haden [ECM], we were immediately captivated by Jarrett's spiky, instantly communicative piano on 'My Old Flame', while Haden's string bass had terrific energy and presence, with a seemingly extra deep response from the EAT giving weight and gravitas; his later bass solo burst out of the speakers with real passion.

VERDICT

EAT's unique advantage is its close association with Pro-Ject's manufacturing resources, and many of the design decisions and material choices seem to reflect the latter company's expertise. Yet this is still an eminently luxurious product and, if the looks grab you, the sound certainly won't disappoint. ☺

'A seemingly extra deep response from the EAT gave weight and gravitas'

aluminium disc 80mm in diameter and 15mm thick, complete with its matching bronze journal. The belt, a round section type, is said to be made from a special anti-static rubber, which is then glue-joined and polished.

The chunky two-part record clamp irons-out mild record warps while the platter's bonded-on polymer playing surface, measuring just under 300mm, allows records

HI-FI NEWS SPECIFICATIONS

Turntable speed error at 33.33rpm	33.23rpm (-0.32%)
Time to audible stabilisation	9sec
Peak Wow/Flutter	0.03% / 0.04%
Rumble (silent groove, DIN B wtd)	-69.8dB
Rumble (through bearing, DIN B wtd)	-68.9dB
Hum & Noise (unwtd, rel. to 5cm/sec)	-56.8dB
Power Consumption	11W
Dimensions (WHD)	500x135x400mm