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DISPLAY UNTIL JANUARY 15TH 2014

Music From **Elvis Costello, Ry Cooder, Fleetwood Mac,**
Dave Holland, Carla Bley, Elgar, & Strauss



Musical Surroundings Nova II

\$1200

This is the third upgrade over some dozen years of Mike Yee's Musical Surroundings phono preamplifiers, which have been PS's references for that long. All of them exhibit the same sonic personality, an Apollonian grace, poise, and restraint that virtually define sonic neutrality. But the latest modifications have brought subtle improvements in both dynamics and that elusive sense of lifelikeness without compromising the original's neutrality, so much so that there's no basis left for reservations some have expressed about its predecessors' putative politeness. Whether it's the *Rite of Spring* or *Graveland*, the Nova II kicks, slams, and drives yet retains its underlying grace and composure. The options for loading and level make it a snap optimally to match any pickup out there, and its quietness (it operates in both AC and battery mode) is extraordinary. Though reliability was never an issue—PS's past units have performed flawlessly week after month after year—the earlier built-in-a-garage looks have given way to a svelte new profile, and a super value has now become a super-duper one. (PS, 236)



Phonostages of the Year



Simaudio 810LP

\$12,000

This statement-level phono stage from Canada's Simaudio is designed and built with meticulous attention to detail and features lavish chassis work, Simaudio's best circuit and power-supply topologies, and extensive adjustments for gain and loading. It also offers world-class phono performance, with an astonishingly quiet background, even when used with lower-output moving-coil cartridges. The silent background contributes to this phono stage's phenomenal resolution of low-level information and sense of music existing in space. This phono stage reaches way down to reveal nuances of timbre, microdynamics, and spatial cues, infusing the presentation with a wonderful richness and density of color. Decays—instrumental and reverberative—seem to hang in space, giving the presentation a highly nuanced, filigreed quality. The bottom end is tight and agile, with tremendous "speed" that conveys the music's rhythmic expression. Robert Harley's reference, and our choice for *The Absolute Sound's* Phonostage of the Year Award. (RH, 231)

