



BLACK RHODIUM PHANTOM £300/1M

This is one of Black Rhodium's best value new interconnects for a long time. It's a solid core, silver plated copper design; Black Rhodium say silver plating the copper gives a "much faster and more detailed" sound than copper on its own, and solid core is claimed to be able to deliver a "clearer sound at a lower

cost" than multicore. The cable, bespoke manufactured for Black Rhodium in the UK, is specified with a tight twist to reduce the possibility of distortion to the sound by RFI being picked up along the length of the cable, the company says. It sports Eichmann bullet plugs, which route the return conductor so it's connected to the socket via a single point rather than around its circumference, in effect giving a similar sound to when star earthing is used. The whole cable is Deep Cryogenically Treated for superior sound, after being covered with a high quality braid and used labelled heatshrinks for identification.

As with all Black Rhodium cables, it's very impressively voiced considering its price point. There's a sense of ease and of naturalness here that simply isn't present in several

rivals which attempt to deliver massive amounts of forensic detail but fall over their feet musically, so to speak. By contrast the Phantom provides a hauntingly real ('scuse the pun) rendition of whatever it's asked to play, giving a satisfyingly snappy and rhythmic presentation plus a nice wide and open soundstage sparkling with low level information. Yet it doesn't overlook the bigger musical picture, capturing powerful dynamics with ease without a hint of compression. I found it had a fine tonality, nicely lit across the midband but with an inherently dark, velvety patina to take the edge off strident recordings. In this respect it reminded me of some interconnects costing £1,000 or more; it's couth and sophisticated beyond its price point. An excellent value product then, doing all that you could possibly ask of a £300 interconnect and more; highly recommended. **DP**

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soundbites

HI-FI RACKS RECORD STORAGE £SEE TEXT

It is so important for music fans to own a decent storage system; it's the one area of hi-fi that's too often ignored. Choose the floor and a nearby wall to prop your LPs against and you risk dirt contamination plus damp or spillage accidents. Picking a storage system with thin shelving results in bowing of the shelves themselves and possible sleeve damage. Keeping the LPs in a box means that you really don't know what LPs you own and you risk overfilling, warping and sleeve damage and so on...

This new company utilises a hand-made product using top quality hardwoods without a sheet of veneer or MDF in sight (oh, the relief!). Using a modular approach that allows you to build an LP-only, CD-only, DVD-only or a mixed LP/CD/DVD rack of varying heights and configurations, you can expand as funds allow. The company offers three capacities to suit: CDs (45 discs per shelf - £79); vinyl (248 discs per shelf

- £99) and DVDs (45 DVDs per shelf - £79) in either oak or satin black.

Because the company manufactures on site, you can also order bespoke shelving or physically tweak the products they already offer. Flexibility is the key. In purely aesthetic terms, the shelving is beautiful. It's a piece of furniture, fitting easily into the living room. For practical purposes, it is very easy to put together; is solid in its construction (there is no frame movement or structural 'creep') and feels like a tank when assembled. Bolts and location slots are well designed too. It's also fetishistic, as I constructed mine and then found myself... stroking it [steady on old chap - Ed.]. Those of a similarly unstable disposition might want to avoid the racks or seek immediate medical assistance! But seriously, a lovely product. **PR**

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