

Mr. Andrew Clark
Peachtree Audio
Matthews, NC 28105

April 23, 2024

Re: Peachtree Carina GaN: When less is more

Dear Mr. Clark,

I have been in possession of a Peachtree Carina GaN for some time now. It is an upgrade to my previous integrated amp, a Peachtree Nova 300. I am using the Carina to drive stand-mounted, bi-wired KEF Reference 1 loudspeakers and a KEF-92 subwoofer using digital source material stored on my USB-C connected laptop and via the TIDAL streaming service usually via Amarra Luxe.

The Carina is a lovely, musical integrated amplifier. I now enjoy listening to all kinds of music including pieces I thought I knew. I am hearing things I never heard before on albums and tracks that are longstanding favorites. Better yet, harshness from poor recordings are less noticeable.

What's the magic? First, there is the lack of noise—extraneous sounds that prevent full clarity on playback. Imagine, if you will, a sound cloud that envelopes the musical performers to create a listening haze. With the Carina, this haze is lifted and the performers emerge from the sound cloud into the dazzling light of sonic sunshine. This sunshine or sonic presence moves the listener into the rarified sense that the music is being performed only for you. In short, the clarity is amazing. Try listening to Norah Jones "Come Away with me" and Tony Bennett with KD Lang "It's a Wonderful World".

But clarity is not the only strength of the Carina. Second, the soundstage is wide and extends well beyond the outside edges of the speakers to the room boundaries and occasionally beyond that. Third, vocalists and instruments exist in clearly defined space such that you can close your eyes and carefully locate each one. This presence dramatically enhances the realism of recorded music. Give a listen to Peter, Paul and Mary's "Blowin' in the Wind" and Crosby, Stills and Nash (1969 album) especially "Helplessly Hoping". Tell me you can't locate David, Stephen and Graham, each in their own musical space.

Fourth, dynamic range is another strong suit of the Carina and its ability to play loud without any sense of listening fatigue. None, no matter how loud you turn up the volume. Try listening to the Telarc recording of Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man" and turn it up.

Fifth, the remote control along with the Carina display allows you to make small volume adjustment so one gets the sonic realism “just so”. Yes, small volume changes make noticeable differences in listening.

Finally, the Carina makes almost anything sound good. I’ve had fun listening to favorites from my youth such as the first Jefferson Airplane album “Takes Off”, without Grace Slick. The soundstage is way too wide but it’s fun nevertheless.

The folks at Peachtree have been great to deal with. Payment and shipping to Canada were all included and the price for trading in my Nova 300 was more than fair market value. They responded quickly when I asked about break in, which is 150-200 hours. And they helped me figure out how to set Tidal for high resolution audio (i.e., Exclusive mode).

In ending, I also want to comment on value for money. Before I purchased a Carina, I auditioned a NAD M33 hooked up to high-end Totem speakers. I was underwhelmed. At a much lower price point, the Carina might be the steal of the decade.

Thanks, Andrew, and the team at Peachtree for giving the audio world the Carina GaN.

Regards,

Phil Abrami, Ph.D.
Victoria, BC Canada