Subject: Tidal MQA Streaming
Posted by AudioFred on Mon, 30 Jul 2018 13:42:50 GMT
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Sunday I subscribed to Tidal's higher res streaming service. At last I'm able to compare an original CD to the same MQA-mastered CD. The first example I found was Norah Jones' Come Away With Me. The MQA version sounds better to my ears.

Of course there are at least a dozen reasons why this comparison isn't valid. My humble system, using a $200 Dragonfly Red DAC, might not be the best for evalating the differences, there are many technical reasons why MQA is potentially inferior, MQA creates economic disadvantages (licensing fees, etc) for the high end audio industry, the MQA remaster might just be better (less compresson, etc) than the original.

I think the real question about MQA isn't whether the MQA file sounds better. The real question is whether the MQA file is more true to the sound the microphones actually heard in the recording studio. If I can believe everything I've read, both pro and con, the answer to that question is probably "yes". MQA corrects for the errors (especially time domain errors and pre-ringing) introduced by the recording and playback chains, including the errors introduced by the original DAC that was used to convert the analog signal to digital. So theoretically it should be even better than the master digital file.

So now I need a better MQA compatible DAC. I've been waiting for somebody to introduce a good frugalphile DAC (under $1K), and Mytek has come to the rescue with their Liberty DAC. It's on my Christmas list.