
Subject: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Adveser](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 02:20:22 GMT

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Alright, first of all. We all know vinyl has it's problems.

I picked up a new receiver/amplifier today and am impressed by the sound quality of vinyl. Having been born in 1985, needless to say I caught the last run of vinyl and subsequently had only heard very poor sounding systems full of worn out needles/bad carts/ancient phonographs.

Anyway. I conclude that while vinyl is not as good my own system I have of DSP and digital recordings, it is still quite good. Definitely worth a shot if you can get a cheap setup (I have 10 bucks in my system!)

The high high highs seem to be pretty much absent giving it a bit of a sibilant edge, but that is a function of the mastering/limitations of the media

The only thing I have noticed is that the needle isn't playing nice with the vintage amp and the output volume has to be kept kind of low or it will clip. That could be something that needs replacing inside it, but I'm about worried about it right now in any event.

Here is all the equipment:

Kenwood KD-4100 with Shure M44-7, both new

Realstic STA-84 ("loudness" turned on, everything else off and tone controls set to no effect)

The heqadphone jack goes into the Techwood 94A (no preamp)for it's final amplification and output to the speakers (Technics SBA28)

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [brian21](#) on Sun, 30 Jan 2011 09:04:37 GMT

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That's cool that you were able to get a decent setup at that price. I was born in 1983, so like you I had little exposure to decent vinyl. I had a friend in college who was a DJ though, so I've been interested in records since then.

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Adveser](#) on Sun, 30 Jan 2011 10:20:06 GMT

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Yeah, it's kind of rare that people are still having fun with all this and have a genuine interest in the

tech. It's a dying breed except for people that are doing it to be ironic and "unique." Those guys will never care enough to be audiophiles, so I don't really count them. It's a good medium and am glad I rediscovered it.

I remember about 10 years ago playing an old record on a 30 years old player with the built in speakers. The thing looked like a coffee table of sorts. It's pretty amazing the difference between stuff that actually works and stuff that is just too worn out to work properly.

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sun, 30 Jan 2011 16:44:59 GMT

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Check these out:
High End Turntables

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Adveser](#) on Sun, 30 Jan 2011 18:59:51 GMT

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Has anyone heard of the system with lasers? Supposedly it's far better than needles but the records have to be spotless because it produces weird artifacts if it doesn't get a record groove. I think I read that they can read a disc no matter how warped. I guess it wouldn't work if there were no grooves left, but that goes without saying.

I wonder how much of a jump in quality a 500-1000 dollar turntable from the 80's vs. today's 5-10K dollar ones. Record players are like having a microphone feeding back info and vibrations at all times, so it's hard to get a good signal. I guess you could build a I/O closet that is heavily soundproofed, but people like to look at and show off their gear, so I don't see that taking off.

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Jorel](#) on Wed, 02 Feb 2011 17:36:30 GMT

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Thanks for the link Wayne. Those are state of the art players. I suppose those prices are really high.

I'm a fan of this kind of system based on the posts I made on the previous posts. The laser seems a good one but it won't be a classic player, which what I'm really after.

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Wed, 02 Feb 2011 19:55:45 GMT

For a budget player (not cheapo but under a grand), look at the Rega and Technics tables. Next level up would be VPI.

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Shane](#) on Thu, 03 Feb 2011 03:40:50 GMT

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I don't think people are trying to be ironic or unique. I have heard many systems with TT as the source and most of them, if set up correctly with a good amp and properly cleaned records, have blown away all the digital sources I've heard on the same systems.

I don't know where you are located, but you might try and go to one of the audio shows that go on around the US (Rocky Mountain, Lone Star, etc...) and give a listen to some of these antiquated systems. They aren't even at their potential in a hotel room. Not even close. Yes many of them are expensive, but there are many rooms that have their whole model line there and they will often swap out that expensive deck for a lower model if asked.

Most people I've found that think others listen to vinyl for the nostalgia have never heard a decent vinyl rig. Most people don't want a decent vinyl rig either because it involves more than just throwing a record on the TT (unlike a CD or PC based sources), or they think they can't get the newest music and have to settle for old stuff.

As for the sound you're getting. Have you went through and updated the innards of the STA-84? Probably needs a recap at least at 30 years old or so.

That Shure cart is made for DJ scratching, not really hi-fi reproduction. Get a good cart if you're serious, otherwise you're probably just damaging the vinyl you have.

I don't think the lack of frequency response has anything to do with your vinyl as much as it does with your TT rig. Yes some carts can have sibilance, especially if not set up properly.

Have you checked the speed on your Kenwood? You need correct set-up which is tracking force, anti-skate, azimuth, cartridge alignment, good quality interconnects, and good grounding to realize it's potential. Those Kenwoods can be decent decks if set up properly.

Don't expect your \$10 rig to convince you to listen to more vinyl. It most likely won't. Just like a \$25 CDP will most likely sound like the junk it is.

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Adveser](#) on Thu, 03 Feb 2011 09:39:59 GMT

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Yes, the player is setup correctly. I found the manual and went through all the steps. I don't look at it as to what the stuff is worth but what condition it is in and how capable it is for it's time. The new amp sounds great. This thing sat in garage forever apparently. I sent the signal from my PC through it directly to the headphones and got it way past where I am comfortable with volume and it sounded different, but no worse than the modern amp.

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 04 Feb 2011 01:59:32 GMT

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I think there's a fundamental discussion, underlying the turntable verses CD debate, and that's analog verses digital. So I've started a new thread:

Analog vs Digital have to agree with Shane on this one. Turntables have their share of problems, but they are very satisfying when you have a good one. Audiophiles cherish their vinyl collections and treat them with great care. When you have a good record on vinyl, and you play it on a good turntable, it really sounds great. Remember that vinyl was our media of choice for decades.

I have a very nice turntable and I also have a very nice CD player. Both cost several thousand dollars, and my collection of media is in the thousands for each. So I'm pretty heavily invested in both technologies, and don't plan on "switching" either direction. I'll keep them both.

To me, the vinyl records were the "reference standard" in the years before the 1990s. I recorded my records on reel-to-reel tape and sometimes cassette mostly for convenience, and also so I wouldn't wear out the records. There are some high-quality reel tapes available that would trump vinyl, but I never owned any of that type of media. So vinyl was the highest quality source I had for years.

Now days, I have some very high quality digital media too. It sounds really good, and is as convenient as any tape. Even more so, because they are even moer durable than tape. I take care of my (CD) disks just like I did my vinyl records and my tapes, and so they will probably outlast me. It's hard to say which sounds better, the CD or the half-speed masters I have on vinyl.

But I must admit, I think the vinyl sounds just a little bit better. Maybe it's just the ritual I have to go through to play it, but whatever it is, it's nice.

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Adveser](#) on Fri, 04 Feb 2011 02:46:17 GMT

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I gotta record some of my modifications to CD technology that makes it sound far more analogue without destroying or losing the hi-f info, I think that would be the only way to explain why I think Digital is better. I have ruthlessly followed guidelines as to how to make a flat, uncolored sound which sounds pretty much the same as a good 20-Bit+ master of a recording. Personally I think it is foolish if you have the equipment to handle 24-bit not to upconvert it. I think a lot of audiophiles are scarred to go that way because they are not that confident in their ability to maintain a balanced sound and believe the engineers responsible for the recording

I don't think it is fair to compare 16-bits to Vinyl. I think comparing 16-bits to cassette is more accurate.

When I say Hi frequency, I'm talking above 17Khz, I don't hear anything but tracking noise masking anything that high when I listen to vinyl. That is no huge loss and frankly isn't even an issue on the majority of recordings. But it ain't the cat or the amp doing this, it's the way they were mastered.

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [AudioFred](#) on Tue, 08 Feb 2011 20:02:04 GMT

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I did an A/B vinyl/digital comparisons recently, using a musician friend as the judge. I like to use musicians instead of audiophiles because they know what it's supposed to sound like and they don't have all the audiosnob biases.

We started Van Morrison's Moondance CD on the player and paused it at two seconds. Then I cued the Moondance record on the turntable, and I unpaused the CD a moment after the music started on the turntable. This enabled me to A/B switch between the two using the amplifier's remote, with both playing at almost the exact spot in the music.

For those who are unfamiliar with this CD and record, the CD is well recorded, with little compression and no freaky equalization applied (as is the case with most recently released CD's). The record is an 180g reissue cut from the original analog master tapes. So both represent the state of the art as it existed before mastering engineers began to f*^k it all up in the 1990's with compression and equalization.

The differences between the two were immediately apparent and were not subtle. While the CD is very well recorded, there's a sibilant edge to Morrison's voice that you don't recognize until you compare it with the vinyl. And while both have very good bass, the midbass on the vinyl is more pronounced, creating a very nice sounding effect on my system.

In both cases a Krell integrated amp was used with Selah Audio line arrays. The CD player is a Cambridge Audio Azur 840C. The turntable is a VPI Classic with a Dynavector X20 cartridge and a Sutherland battery powered phono preamp. The gain on the Sutherland was adjusted to match the gain from the CD player.

In this contest the vinyl won!

Subject: Re: Vinyl Review

Posted by [Nevermind](#) on Thu, 17 Feb 2011 11:29:56 GMT

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For sound quality I have to go with CDs of course but there's the nostalgia factor that can't be overlooked and it's very a very powerful trigger in the brain. I have an old turn table that I keep hooked up because there are some recordings I just can't bring myself to listen to on CD. Simon and Garfunkel's Bookends is one of them. The recording just does not sound right to me without that very faint hiss.
