Contents

4 **STAN'S SAFARI**

Rummaging in his archives, Stan worries about the gulf developing between the old and new

7 **EDITOR DOUBLE PLUS**

> An extended interview with long established Stereophile Editor John Atkinson

THE UPGRADEABLE SPEAKERS 11

Audiovector might be unique in offering loudspeaker upgrades. We check out the results

LETTER FROM SHENZHEN 14

Shenzhen resident Peter Comeau discusses the inscrutability of the Chinese

MAGNETS & FIELD COILS 16

The technology behind magnets and experiences of the field coil approach

19 **PLUS CA CHANGE**

Bowers & Wilkins' new 802 and 800 Diamonds might look like their predecessors, but the sound is all new

THE CD COLLECTOR 22

Early CDs have become very collectable, and for different reasons

ULTIMATE PHONO PRE-AMP? 24

How can £79,000 possibly be justified for a phono stage?

THE ULTIMATE STEP-UP? 28

The Ultimate phono stage naturally needs the ultimate step-up. Assessing Audio Note UK's ANS 9

ROCKING OUT 29

From behind the live performance mixing desk, Wayne Hyde explains how PA systems have evolved

SOPHIA THE THIRD 33

Martin Colloms assesses this third generation example of Wilson Audio's floorstander

SUB-£1000 CARTRIDGES 38

Chris Bryant tries five examples, from Audio Note, Audio Technica, Linn, Ortofon and Rega

43 **FLEXIBLE VALVE CDP**

Abbingdon Music Research's fascinating CD-777 is packed with features and valves



45 **INTEGRATED CRESCENDO**

The inexpensive amplification partner to Audio Analogue's fine CD player

47 THE ASYNCHRONOUS rDAC

Arcam's inexpensive rDAC shares asynchronicity with some very exotic components

HIGH CLASS BABY? 48

Spendor's baby SA1 has been getting plenty of attention, but how did Martin get on?

DC BLOCKING 50

So what's a DC blocker anyway? Martin Colloms tries out ISOL-8's Powerline Axis

51 **OSIRIS ARISES**

A second and more technical look at Rega's flagship amplifier

TINY BOX, BIG SOUND 52

Paul Messenger is suitably amazed by Bowers & Wilkins' sub-miniature MM-1 computer speaker

53 THE BEST OF CLASSICAL

Colin Anderson finds some interesting new classical discs

ROCK, POP & OTHER NICE MUSIC 56

Nigel Finn's regular collection of interesting recent releases

ROCK GENRES: WEST COAST MUSIC

Paul Darwin kicks off a new series on crucial albums from Rock's different genres

60 **SUBJECTIVE SOUNDS**

58

A sceptic is converted to Vertex AQ's serious and costly high-end speaker cables

Integrated Crescendo on page 45



