Contents

4 STAN'S SAFARI No17

Are analogue and digital distortion mechanisms qualitatively different?

6 LETTER FROM SHENZHEN

Peter Comeau examines the thorny issue of outsourcing

8 WALLS OF SOUND

"Look, no speakers!" An intriguingly different approach to getting quality sound in your lounge



12 AUDIO RESEARCH REF5 SE

MC tries the souped up SE version of the Reference 5 pre-amp

15 AUDIOPHILE RECORDING

DIY recording for audiophiles, by a serious musician

16 KEF BEFORE KEF

A chance meeting leads to some interesting deep background

17 BUDGET STREAMING

Getting Cambridge Audio's NP30 streamer working well took some effort but was ultimately worthwhile

19 TWEAKING THE SONDEK

The Audioflat RubiKon is only half the price of Linn's Keel, and it can be used with Rega

20 AUDIO NETWORKING

More on the Naim *UnitiServe* and other computer network audio matters

24 CLOCKING ON

Assessing MSB's new femtosecond clock

25 STANDING OUT

The new luxury stand-mounts put extra emphasis on the speaker stands

27 GENELEC 8050A

Studio monitors seem excellent value, but do they deliver interesting music?

29 SONIC STUDIO AMARRA

A high end music player for Mac computers

32 AUDIO RESEARCH REF150 POWER AMP

How good is Audio Research's latest valve power amp?

36 THREE DISPARATE TURNTABLES

Turntables from Rega, Pro-Ject and Hanss come under scrutiny

42 SEARCHING FOR SLEEPERS

The secondhand sector is full of interesting items

45 THE HDMI FARRAGO

HDMI seemed a fine concept, but the practicalities aren't so straightforward

48 HIFICRITIC 'AWARDS'

A rundown of the hardware that we've come to respect

50 BITS & PIECES 2

Short items on the latest Proteus amplifier, B&W's P5 headphones and Alto Extremo supports

52 RIPPING YARNS

Jason Kennedy makes a case for computers and USB sockets

53 THE BEST OF CLASSICAL

Colin Anderson selects some recent classical music releases

56 ROCK, POP AND OTHER NICE MUSIC

Nigel Finn picks half a dozen new rock & pop releases

58 2011 INDEX

An Index to the four issues of Vol5

60 SUBJECTIVE SOUNDS

It seems like you really can't have it all....



Genelec 8050A, page 27



Turntables from Rega, Pro-Ject and Hanss come under scrutiny on page 36