

# Contents

- 4 STAN'S SAFARI No20**  
Start-up companies represent the lifeblood of the hi-fi industry, but they face many difficulties today
- 6 CLASSIC REVIVALIST**  
The SP Acoustics SP1 takes a classic-nostalgic design concept and applies the very latest component technologies
- 8 LETTER FROM SHENZHEN**  
Peter Comeau reports on the changing working conditions and the increasing wealth of Chinese consumers
- 10 DAB MYTHS – THE STEAMROLLER LURCHES ON**  
Roger Sinden examines the disaster that is DAB digital radio, and the authorities' attempts to deny the fact
- 14 GATHERING MOMENTUM**  
Dan D'Agostino's new power amps prove that there's life beyond Krell
- 18 DISCRETE REGULATION**  
Upgrading a Naim SuperCap to DR spec can transform the SuperLine phono stage
- 20 BEAUTIFUL BODNAR?**  
This single-driver speaker might not look pretty, but it's remarkable value for money
- 22 AND ONE FOR ALL**  
The latest electronics developments have enabled Naim to create the 'one box does all' NaimUniti 2
- 25 RIPPING YARNS**  
Jason Kennedy discovers networks can sound better than computers
- 26 ULTIMATE VINYL**  
Thrax creates the remarkable Orpheus phono stage with triodes and exotic inductors
- 28 ANNA**  
Ortofon's latest high end cartridge is named after operatic soprano Anna Netrebko
- 30 THE TONY FAULKNER INTERVIEW**  
Tony Faulkner talks about making his huge back-catalogue available as hi-res downloads
- 33 USB CABLES COMPARED**  
Martin Colloms tries some fifteen USB cables, and discovers some quite obvious differences
- 36 DAC WITH TUBES**  
Audio Research comes up with an artful chip'n'valve combination for its REF DAC Digital Media Bridge
- 38 TRUMPING THE OCTAVE**  
Metrum acoustics' Hex represents a one-box upgrade over the successful Octave
- 40 ULTIMATE COMPUTER AUDIO?**  
CAD's USB-only DAC is designed to get the very best audio quality from a computer
- 42 DOUBLE MAGIC**  
Cambridge's DacMagic adds a Plus, so Martin Colloms and Paul Messenger see if the upgrade is worthwhile
- 44 BULLY FOR YOU!**  
Bret D'Agostino's new US operation plans to make affordable high end products
- 46 A FINE IDEA**  
Avalon's smallest floorstander provides a new entry point to this high end specialist's range
- 49 EXTRA-NEAT NEAT**  
A tiny loudspeaker for a tiny room, for music-while-you-work on a desktop
- 50 HIFICRITIC AWARDS**  
A selection of superior hi-fi equipment culled from our history and experience
- 52 JAZZ PICKS**  
A selection of recent (and not so recent) jazz releases
- 55 THE BEST OF CLASSICAL**  
Colin Anderson's classical selection
- 58 ROCK, POP AND OTHER NICE MUSIC**  
Recent highlights from the pop and rock canon
- 60 SUBJECTIVE SOUNDS**  
A toe in the room treatment water



*USB cables compared on page 33*



*Beautiful Bodnar? Page 20*