



'A pleasurable listening experience is the ultimate design objective'

ANDY WHITTLE HAS WORKED FOR SOME OF THE BIGGEST NAMES ON THE UK HI-FI SCENE. NOW, AS HEAD OF DESIGN AT ROGERS, HE HAS MASTERMINDED THE RISE OF THE BRAND IN THE UK AND A RAFT OF NEW PRODUCTS. CHRIS FRANKLAND CATCHES UP WITH HIM

Rogers International UK's head of design, Andy Whittle, is in the company's new, enlarged speaker manufacturing facility in north Kent, where he is planning new product launches.

I'll shortly quiz him on his impressively extensive background in the hi-fi industry, but, surrounded as we are by various Rogers LS series BBC monitors and a couple of the latest E20a/ii integrated valve amps, it is easy to see that retro design is back with a vengeance, and it seems to be as true for hi-fi as it is for fridges, fashion or furniture.

As Whittle acknowledges: "People still seem to be putting value on these old speakers in terms of sound quality. There is obviously an appetite for it."

Although Whittle traces his hi-fi roots back to 1985, when he joined British loudspeaker company Goodmans, which coincidentally was also one of the companies licensed by the BBC to produce LS3/5As, I want first to focus on his latest achievements with the revitalised Rogers brand. As we'll find out, thanks to his extensive experience and expertise, Rogers is now manufacturing again in the UK.

Of course it was started by Jim Rogers back in 1947, initially making valve amplifiers, but in 1970