



Ecosse Cables

Master Reference SE interconnect

DESIGNED TO CONVEY an even greater degree of transparency, detail and three-dimensionality than regular cables, this DCT (deep cryogenically treated) interconnect is made from a pair of monocrystal copper conductors – one for the signal and one for the earth. These are insulated with a low-loss FPE dielectric and surrounded by a cotton filler material to minimise mechanical vibrations. The cable is terminated with MACH2XS RCA plugs featuring deep silver-plated monocrystal copper pin and bracket shells, though it is also available with silver-plated pins. The wires are connected with Ecosse's new ultra-high purity silver and tin alloy solid wire solder with the company's passive organic flux to ensure a joint with low chemical contaminants and high strength. Finally, the Master Reference SE is cryogenically treated down to -185°C over a number of days in order to offer an improved performance.

Keep on running

I run the cable in with a burn-in track on my streamer for 100 hours. Then, with the Master Reference SE connected between my preamp and monoblocks, I turn to Thelma Houston's *Don't Misunderstand*. Her vocal presence is totally convincing and the excellent detail and clarity of the recording coupled with the smoothness and refinement of the performance, is palpable throughout.

Moving on to a full orchestra and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* played by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the commanding opening flows into a gentle section played on a solo violin and then builds to a climax with the whole orchestra. The violin is clear and crisp with real presence, while the orchestra sounds dynamic and spacious.

Deadmau5's dance/trance track *Whispers* sees the pace of the music propelled along with perfect timing as the rhythmic bass line is well synced with all of the electronic elements and pseudo-vocals of the music. Moving on to Pink Floyd's



Louder Than Words, meanwhile, shows off a smooth and flowing sound, which does not conflict with the edgy vocals in the singing. The guitar is tuneful while the well-extended bass line is punchy and powerful. In fact, everything in this track is clear and all the instruments occupy well-defined positions within my listening room.

The instruments have a clearly defined position in the soundstage

There is nothing quite like Laurent Garnier's *Desireless* to test the bass response. The deep, well extended and pounding lower frequencies don't over power or smother the rest of the music or vocals.

I need calming down after all that, so I turn to Branford Marsalis playing Satie's *Gymnopedie No.3*. The reproduction is very enjoyable and the balance between saxophone and orchestra is spot on while the imaging and width of the soundstage is clearly

focussed and leaves the orchestra beautifully spread out.

Moving on with baroque music, I choose a solo harpsichord piece from a fantastic LP of JS Bach's *Partita No.1* played by Trevor Pinnock. The harpsichord has lashings of detail and clarity and I am totally involved with the performance. I am aware of every intonation of each note played and, as far as realism is concerned, it is as though I have an actual harpsichord performing in front of me live in my listening room.

I finish things off with one of my favourite composers and a glorious performance of Vivaldi's *Concerto No.7* from his Opus 7 collection performed by I Musici. The solo oboe by Heinz Holliger in the first movement is lively and exciting with excellent realism and clarity. Here again, I am struck by the instruments having a clearly defined position within the soundstage.

Altogether, there is very little to criticise the Master Reference SE interconnect except for the high-ish price, but it delivers a very refined performance across a broad selection of material and is recommended. **NR**

DETAILS

PRICE
£425 for 0.8m pair
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OUR VERDICT

