

considerable effect that choir termination and the skill with which it's executed have a profound effect on the final result – both generally dependent on the quality of the recording which is where the problem lies. But what I have collected are signal paths created by the I've suggested (for the realms of reason) yet by their creative Vacuum State publish those

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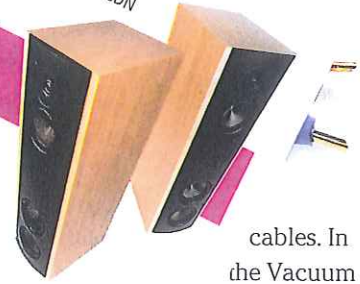
REPRODUCING THE RECORDED ARTS
Magico's magical V3 Loudspeaker

Sweet sixteen... Zanden's Single-box stunner

The dynamic range and harmonic complexity are welcome too. For the first time you really get a sense of the low-frequency power available from Jackson Browne's guitar on *Solo Vol. 2*, for the first time you are two instruments on the opening track at this level.



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cables. In the Vacuum State on colour, dimensionality and texture, but they are in any category – it makes them a real role are certainly they lack the finish, dynamics, range and robustness of more mainstream speakers. Instead, they major on clarity, pure and simple – which sums their sound up pretty well!

Vacuum State GmbH
Tel. www.vacuumstate.com

High End Special

vacam, Goldmund, Belles, Vacuum State, Classé, Berning, Kuzma, Atlas, Eben, Emillé, Spendor, Magnan, Anti-cables

www.hifiplus.com



with Eichmann... don't get much simpler... simplicity that's echoed in the... cable. This uses two copper ribbons, placed back to back with a thin layer of urethane insulation between them, producing a 25mm wide, flat cable, much in the style of a Goertz or one of the various other, similar designs. The cable itself is sleeved just like the interconnect, although the finishing where it interfaces

are... this group, as... would be backing... low, hummed harmony, something that escaped the notice completely with all the other cables here.

The AntiCables

The AntiCables have already graced these pages in the perhaps surprising company of the Gryphon electronics in Issue 58. Well, now they return in their own right. Once again, simplicity is the watchword, this time applied to enameled copper solid-cores. The speaker cable is a simple twisted pair of what looks like a 2.5mm conductor, terminated in this case with the simplest of copper spades. ▶

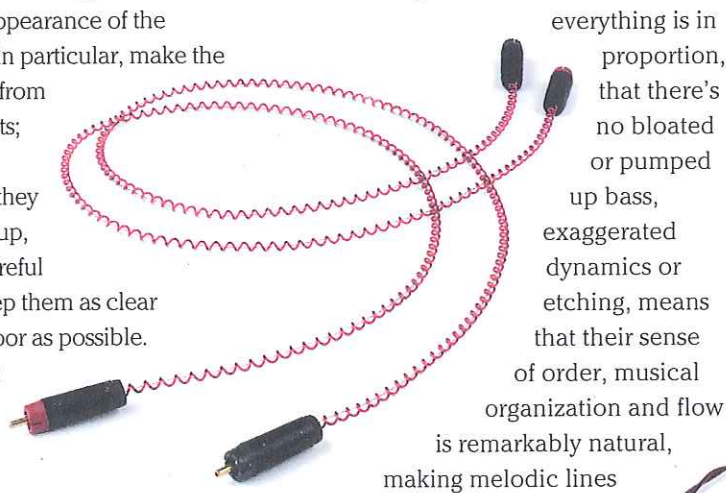
► The interconnect is visually far more striking, a hair fine (0.25mm?) central signal conductor running through an extended spiral of the 1mm wire that provides the return. Plugs are once again Eichmann Bullets, but this time the copper version. And that's all she wrote...

Although they are the most affordable cables here, the near-rigid conductors and startling appearance of the interconnects in particular, make the AntiCables far from shrinking violets; their springy nature means they stand out and up, and reward careful dressing to keep them as clear of walls and floor as possible. They do run in over time, although not as obviously as other wires, especially those using Teflon insulation. The effects of which are documented in detail on the company's web-site – a site you'll be visiting should you want to purchase the AntiCables as it is the only source.

Once wired in and settled down, the one word that sums up these cables is "unobtrusive". To say that these wires succeed by dint of doing nothing wrong might sound like a backhanded compliment, but it isn't. The problem that confronts too many cables is that their performance is uneven, delivering significant strengths that are offset by equally significant weaknesses. The Magnan and Mavros cables are cases in point, examples of the rule rather than the exception to it. All well and good if you subscribe to the corrective school of system cabling, but an approach that definitely limits their application. However, if you follow the foundation building logic advocated in this series of articles then it's balanced performance that you require – and the AntiCables are the most affordable

way of getting it that I've come across.

Although not startling in any particular performance category, these simplest of wires scale their presentation near perfectly. So, they aren't the most transparent, dynamic, richly coloured or quickest cables here. Their levels of detail are good rather than great, their presence and immediacy likewise. But the fact that



everything is in proportion, that there's no bloated or pumped up bass, exaggerated dynamics or etching, means that their sense of order, musical organization and flow is remarkably natural, making melodic lines lucid and rhythmic patterns clearly understandable.

In absolute terms, you can criticism their lack of colour and a compression of dynamic contrasts – but that's to ignore their cost, and the fact that they actually outperform their price peers in these respects anyway. And that's really the point. These cables are so comfortable and confident in use, so listenable that you find yourself judging them by far more exalted standards than their cost dictates. Yes, you can do better – but at some considerable damage to your wallet!

Anti Cables
1m phono - phone \$150
9' stereo pair 4mm - 4mm \$130

Net. www.anticables.com

Does the DIY approach make sense?

In terms of the performance/price

equation, both the AntiCables and Vacuum State cables offer astonishing results for the money – but there is a limit to how far you can take them, a limit dictated by their lack of matching mains cables and power distribution elements. Their minimalist construction and limited insulation makes that a very, very sensible option on the part of their producers – especially if they want to avoid the sort of law suits that would put them out of business (and their customers in hospital, or worse...). That means selecting an alternative source for power cords and distribution and a limit to the ultimate coherence possible. On the face of it, the savings to be had make that a worthwhile compromise, but bear in mind

that a cable system like the Crystals accommodates every eventuality and matches the conceptual simplicity and performance benefits of the DIY solutions – while also applying

more sophisticated metallurgy and insulation materials. If you are using cables that haven't kept pace with current thinking, or a mix and match loom constructed from various expensive options, a switch to something like the AntiCables could come as quite a shock – and a salutary financial lesson into the bargain. But the real lesson to learn here is theoretical. It's not about one cable as opposed to another; it's about understanding what allows cable systems to work and then selecting accordingly from those products that take those things seriously. The key words here are "simplicity" and "coherence". What you have to decide is how far to take things within those concepts. ➤