



Entreq Audio Apollo Cables

A Flat Out Reference



the Stereo Times Most Wanted Components 2012 Award

December, 2012



Associated Equipment:

Analog Front End

George Warren
Precision Sound
Turntable
Moth Arm2 Incognito
wired tone arm
Benz Micro Ace
Cartridge

Digital Front End

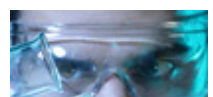
OPPO Digital DV-980H
Universal Disc Player
TEAC UD H01 DAC
Apple TV

Amplification

Vitus Audio RI-100
Integrated Amp
Vitus Audio RL-101
Linestage
Bel Canto Ref 1000
Mono Amps
Bel Canto M300 Mono
Amps
Bryston 10b Electronic
Crossover
Clearaudio Smartphono
Phono Stage

Loudspeakers

Escalante Design



If you've been a regular reader of my reviews over the last few years then you know that the Entreq Audio Konstantin 09 cables have been

a fixture in my reference system. They are wonderful handmade cables that are designed and hand-built by the great farmer/audiophile Per-Olof Friberg in the farm town of Rönnetorp, Sweden. Friberg is one of my favorite people in high-end audio and not just because he makes excellent cables and has an unwavering devotion to his dogs. No, I

Fremont
Magnepan MG20
Loudspeaker
Nola Boxer
Loudspeakers

Cabling

Entreq Audio Konstantin
Cables
MG Audio Cables
Stealth Audio Dream
Petite Speaker Cables

AC Conditioners

Acoustic Revive RTP-2
Ultimate AC Conditioner

Accessories

Adona Corporation Zero
GXT Equipment Stand
Isoclean 60A3 II Power
Conditioner
Entreq Vibbeaters
Entreq AC Wraps
Tyler Acoustics
Speaker Stands

greatly admire his dedication to the removal of any audible anomalies such as EMI and RFI by connecting the system to the Earth ground to ensure the quietest and truest possible performance.

It had been a few years since I'd learned of any new products from this company so I was extremely excited when I finally heard from Friberg, letting me know about a new cable product that would be a step up from my beloved Konstantin cables called the Apollo.

About the cables

The Entreq Apollo cables represent the company's top-of-the-line product. As with the other Entreq product lines it comprises a full suite of speaker cables, balanced (XLR) and unbalanced (RCA) interconnect, and A/C power cords.



The Apollo speaker cables and unbalanced (RCA) interconnects use two independent runs for each channel, one hot, one return. Each cable works like an antenna, transmitting and receiving the audio signal. Separating the two runs allows Entreq to use different lengths of cable which makes them operate at different frequencies, reducing potential interference. Another advantage to this design is the ability to use different types of cables in each leg. In this case they use silver for the positive (+) signal and copper for the negative (-) signal.

The Apollo cables are sheathed in a soft black unbleached cotton fabric that gives the cables an elegant and understated look. They won't call attention to themselves or distract the listener as some cables do. Also, Entreq has designed their own spade-like speaker terminations which they feel benefits from using less metal than the WBT connectors they used in my old Konstantin cables, resulting in a better sound. Their RCA cable connectors are now made on CNC machines so that less metal and plastic materials are used. Entreq believes this makes for a cable with a stronger connection and purer signal transmission, which again, will lead to better sound.

One thing that hasn't changed is the use of aged beech wood housings on all of the speaker and interconnect cables. They also use wood lifters on the speaker cables so that the user can elevate the cables away from potential signal noise.

But one of the most important aspects of the Entreq cable design is the External Earth Drain System (EEDS). This design element is used to lead interference away from the audio signal and audio components. Entreq cables use a drainwire to follow the signal from where it leaves the transmitting equipment to the receiving end where it takes any interference out of the signal path and to an earth point away from the components. As you can see, achieving ultra-quiet operation is a

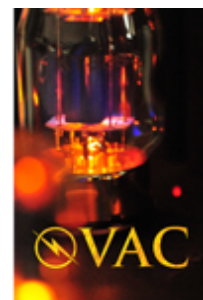


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key element of Entreq's designs. A significant level of that was already achieved in the Konstantin cables, so I was more than a little intrigued to see where the Apollo cables would lead me. Incidentally, Entreq's slogan for the Apollo cables is: "To go quietly where no man has gone before, but boldly claim they have." Okay, let's just see where that is, exactly.

The System Setup

My reference system has undergone some big changes in the last six months. The most significant change was the addition of a pair of the legendary Magnepan MG20 loudspeakers. These Maggies came without the stock Maggie crossover, and instead utilized the excellent Bryston 10b electronic crossover. This meant that I had to use four channels of amplification instead of the two channels I'd be using via the Vitus Audio RI-100 integrated amp. I wound up buying a pair of Bel Canto Ref 1000 mono amps for the low frequencies and M300s for the upper frequencies. The Vitus integrated's linestage section wound up being used for preamp purposes. I use a TEAC UD H01 DAC to provide the digital signal from an OPPO Digital DV-980H Universal Disc Player and an Apple TV device which streams music from my iTunes account. My analog setup consists of a George Warren Audio turntable, Moth 2 Incognito-wired tonearm and a Benz Micro Ace cartridge. The Clearaudio Smartphono is my phonostage.

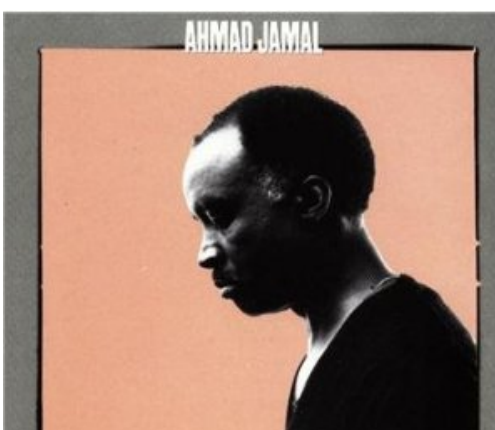


Listening

After a few days of break-in time I jumped right into some serious listening. I was immediately struck by the life-sized scale of the music that supported Annie Lennox singing "Hush, Hush, Hush" on Herbie Hancock's *Possibilities* [Warner Bros.]. The sound was big yet musically satisfying. The music oozed out of the Maggies with ease and elegance. Lennox's distinctive voice sounded accurately husky and imaged wonderfully in my listening room. The Apollos showed themselves to be very highly resolved and musical sounding cables. Herbie's piano sounded nearly holographic with well-defined stage presence. Another great tune from this disc is guitarist Jonny Lang and the lovely Joss Stone's duet of "When Love Comes to Town." This tune features a great blues guitar performance by Lang and of course Herbie is Herbie. The Apollo cables a very much like the Konstantins only with a bit more spaciousness within the soundstage, especially where vocals are concerned.



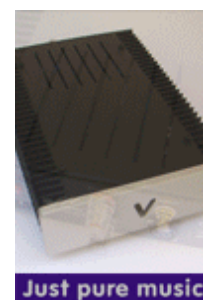
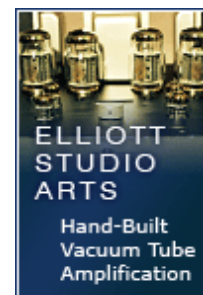
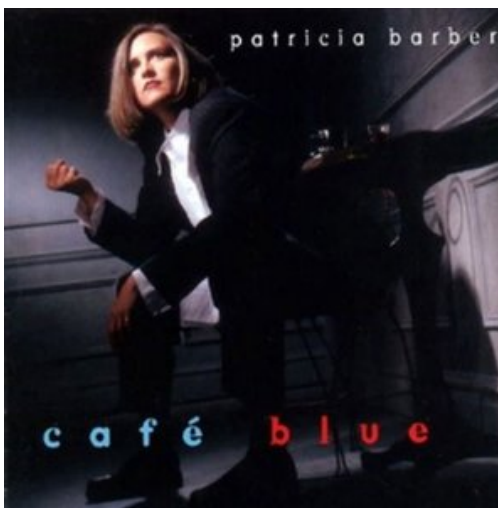
The next disc of note was Ahmad Jamaal's *Live at the Montreal Jazz Festival 1985* [Atlantic]. This is a longtime favorite disc of mine because of its excellent dynamic range. This is a great disc for seeing what your system is capable of. The opening track, "Yellow Fellow" starts with a French speaking female voice introducing Jamaal. Here voice hungs in the air in the center of my listening space. It was really



my listening space. It was really eerie. The Apollo cables do such a great job of lowering the noise floor that you can get so much deeper into the music. This is especially good on live recordings such as this because it also allows you to experience the performances and the feeling of being at the venue. This was particularly true of track six "Round Midnight." Jamaal's performance on this song is awesome but so is the performance of bassist James Cammack. This track best demonstrated how well the Apollo cables could resolve low-end detail. Again, the sound was very similar to that of the Konstantin cables but just seemed to go a bit deeper.



Finally, I decided to get into some vinyl, which meant I was getting into some Patricia Barber. I pulled out my 45-RPM pressing of her *Café Blue* album [Mobile Fidelity MFSL 3-45002]. This is one of those albums that no self-respecting audiophile should be unfamiliar with, and this 45-RPM version is simply amazing. From the start of the opening track, "What A Shame," it is obvious that the Apollo cables perform as well as the quality of the recordings that run through them. Playing through the Maggies, the Apollos rendered this song with loads of soundstage depth and detail. Barber's piano was prominent, and her smoldering voice was full-bodied and warm. The wonderful bass line throughout this song had natural depth and never sounded over-engineered.



"Nardis," the most dynamic song from this album, featured piano and percussion solos that are riveting when played well and the Apollo cables played this tune about as well as I've heard. Rhythm, pace and speed all shine through my system, wired with these cables. These cables definitely elevated the performance of my system.

Conclusion

I really enjoyed my time with the Entreq Apollo cables. They are a definite step up from the already excellent Konstantin cables that have anchored my system for the past few years. They are designed for super quiet operation and if you take care to install them properly they will reward you with a deeply satisfying musical experience. Highly recommended.

Dave Thomas



Specifications

Price: (In Swedish Krona – SEK)

Entreq Apollo speaker wire: 99,000 SEK 2.5m (approx. **\$16,000.00 USD**)

Entreq Apollo interconnect: 50,000 SEK 1.0m (approx. **\$8,300.00 USD**)

Entreq Apollo Power cord: 50,000 SEK (approx. **\$8,300.00 USD**)



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