

dCS Debussy

££££

Issue 78

It's perhaps a mark of just how much the audio world has changed recently. Although not a hardcore CD supporter, dCS has a commanding reputation of providing some of the best disc spinners around, but its latest product is a DAC, designed to bring out the best in computer audio, as well as a range of digital audio sources. Designing its own Asynchronous USB input from first principles (and then licensing it to Arcam), the 192kHz/24bit Ring-DAC equipped Debussy features a host of dCS-derived technology, but most importantly delivers a sound that is extremely open and detailed. Potentially upgradable too, thanks to a U-Clock.

www.dcsld.co.uk

**Needio NR22 CD player**

£££££

Issue 76

The French Needio NR22 CD player proves there's life in the old CD dog yet. While it does have a USB input, the NR22's great strength is as an all-rounder CD player, managing as it does to combine much of the performance of the true greats of CD replay in one. It's a lithe sounding player that manages to dig into the detail of any disc it plays, and yet manages to extract a lot of musicality and insight in the process. A truly world-class player from a brand that deserves to be much better known outside of *La Belle France*.

www.needio.fr www.selectaudio.co.uk

**HRT Streamer II+**

£££

Issue 82

HRT has undergone a continuous improvement programme since the products first hit the streets in 2009, and has recently added an iPhone chummy version, but the concept remains the same. These are simple, low cost, high performance, USB-only digital converters, made for specific computer to audiophile conversion. Even the first generation were astoundingly good, but the hot spot is the 2011 version of the Streamer II+. Supporting up to 24bit, 94kHz sampling and featuring an HRT-designed Asynchronous USB input, this USB-powered DAC can easily stand toe-to-toe with any digital converter on the market. It really is that good, and must represent a hard act to follow.

www.highresolutiontechnologies.com

www.audiofreaks.co.uk

Wadia 781i CD player

£££££

Issue 69

Wadia's top one-box CD/SACD player is closer to a one-box audio decoding computer than a mere disc spinner. Using the latest iteration of Wadia's Digimaster software effectively makes it a 24-bit, 1.4GHz device, with a host of configuration and control options. Regardless, the sound quality – whether from the disc or through one of its many digital inputs – is little short of astounding, and its three filter options perfectly ally it to any system. If you like your music, well, musical the 781i must be the best single box around.

www.wadia.com www.mdc-hifi.co.uk

