



# The Koetsu Jade Platinum Moving-Coil Cartridge

by Roy Gregory

There is no single product that sums up the identity and ethos, the very essence of high-end audio, as succinctly as the Koetsu cartridges. They were there when it all began and they're still here now. But back in the day, when the Asak was king and valves had been long since consigned to the dustbin of history, these tiny, exquisitely crafted and ruinously priced gems offered a hint of promise, the glimmer of another, better world.

But if Koetsu represented the first foot in the door, a role that guaranteed them legendary status in the annals of the English speaking audio press, they're also living proof that you can't survive on reputation alone. The world of high-end cartridges moved on, and whilst Koetsu still represented the doyenne to all the young upstarts, there came a point when the crown started to slip and the respect was more out of affection for past glories than current authority. Of course, fashion also had something to do with it, as well as the fickle promise of better performance at lower prices. But through it all, the Koetsus maintained their integrity and their own special sound, their distinctive packaging and total lack of technical specifications. There was no high-tech marketing hype and no full page adverts showing blown up micro-ridge stylus profiles.

Well, not much has changed; still no specs, ads or high-tech hype. But, the latest Koetsus are re-establishing the brand's reputation for stellar musical performance. They may look

almost exactly the same as models from 20 years ago, but their performance represents a huge step forward whilst still managing to retain the power and presence that built that reputation in the first place. The Jade Platinum is a triumph, with a sound so natural that it seems unimpressive at first. But comparisons with the competition leave them sounding forced,

exaggerated and hyped. The Jade just

breathes music, its sure-footed tracking and natural energy allowing performances to swell and bloom without edge or grain to intrude and destroy the illusion. Dynamics are beautifully scaled and realistic in range, but it's the instrumental colours, micro

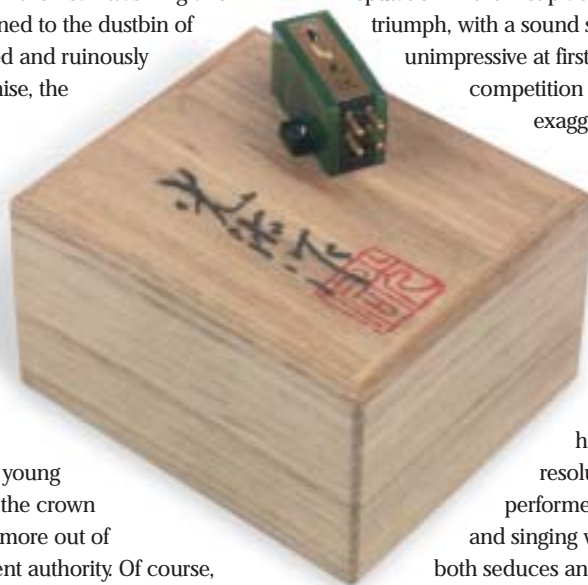
harmonics and low-level

resolution that really bring

performers to life, instilling their playing and singing with a passion and vitality that

both seduces and convinces all at once. Six-

thousand pounds is a huge amount of money for a cartridge. Hear the Jade Platinum and it starts to seem like a bargain. Suddenly, justifying the purchase isn't the problem; it's affording that focuses the mind!



**Price:** £5995

UK Distributor

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