

hi-fi news

THE HOME OF REAL HI-FI

& Record Review

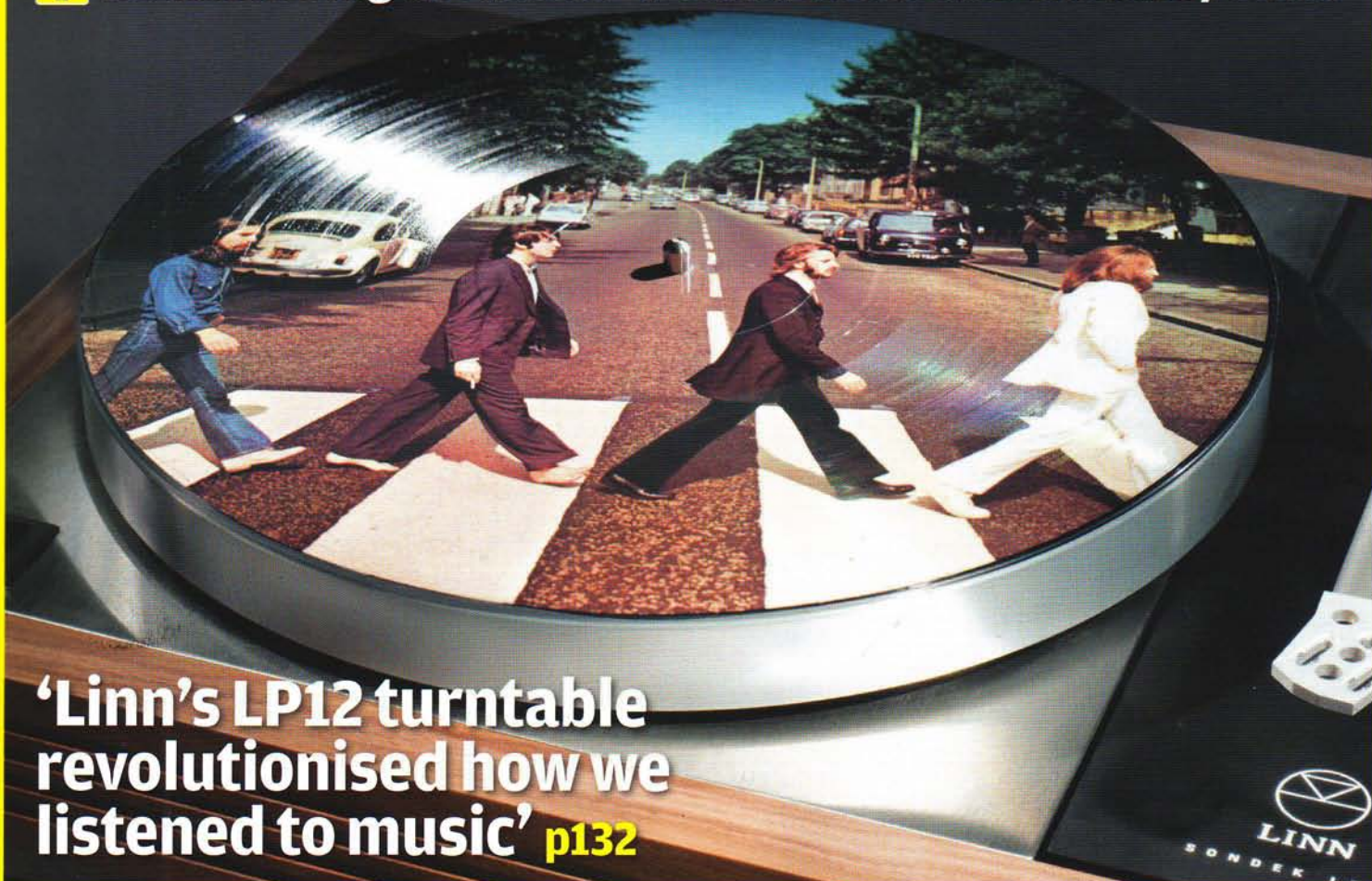
ULTIMATE HI-FI 2009

We choose the year's best products



THE BEATLES RE-MASTERED
Mono and Stereo releases reviewed

The Beatles Box Set – Worth the wait? Read our Verdict
+ Re-mastering the music – behind the scenes at Abbey Road



'Linn's LP12 turntable revolutionised how we listened to music' p132

- **PLUS** The Best Music of 2009 • **OPINION FORMERS** The highs and lows of 2009
- **IFA SHOW REPORT** Cutting-edge audio from Europe's largest consumer event
- **HI-FI @ HOME** The ultimate rebuild • **RETRO** We revisit Connoisseur turntables

UK £4.00 US \$9.50 Aus \$9.95



**AUDIO
FILE**

Top-loading CD player with outboard PSU
Made by: Metronome Technologie
Supplied by: Absolute Sounds
Telephone: 020 8971 3909
Web: www.metronome-technologie.com

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EDITOR'S
CHOICE



Metronome Technologie Kalista

(£29,950)

Recent visitors to hi-fi shows at Heathrow may have come across Metronome products making sublime music in one of Absolute Sounds' demonstrations. The Kalista line-up represents Metronome's no-holds-barred statement series. They are, without doubt, striking works of art – and they're a two-man lift. This is its first integrated player.

With a sculpted acrylic structure similar to that of the existing Kalista transports, the new Integrated

amp, with a metal fascia machined from solid alloy.

Both sit on Delrin inverted cones. The disc clamp/puck looks like Perspex but is also fabricated from Delrin and it feels fabulous. But you can't leave the Integrated without a CD in place otherwise dust will fall onto the critical pickup lens. The 'parking cover' seems a bit of an afterthought: at this price we'd expect a motorised lid.

Still, it's a deliciously pleasing player to use. TOC reading is

rapid, track access is near-instantaneous, and the remote is a reassuringly solid hunk of metal. Yet there's

no method of 'fast-forwarding' or reversing through tracks.



HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGES

We tried *Audioslave* from 2002 [Sony/Epic] for a bit of a rock thrash. The Kalista delivered a dense, dark, brooding growl of discordant nastiness without hint of an

apology. The sound was nasty, as intended by the band's production, of course, but not in the least bit jarring or too strident.

Listening to proper high-fidelity recordings from the Opus 3 label's *Test CD 5* compilation disc, designed for assessing depth of image, timbre and dynamics, the Kalista helped create audio images well beyond the boundaries of the Revel floorstanders in use. Of course the sound's character is bound to change depending on partnering equipment: if a little 'hazy' compared with the cleanest, most pristine sounds we've experienced, the Kalista Integrated erred towards a relaxed, velvety quality that proved gloriously addictive.

The Lars Erstrand band's 'Talk of the Town' from the album *Erstrand Sessions*, also on *Test CD 5*, is a wonderful recording of a live jazz band in an intimate night club.

We use it regularly to assess a playback system's ability to create a believable three-dimensional soundstage. The Kalista Integrated delivered holographic images of the musicians performing in the closed-in space, displaying a fluidity in the playing that would make it difficult to stop listening even if this style of jazz were not to one's taste. When hi-fi sounds this good, all music can become infectious.

VERDICT

Metronome Technologie's Kalista Integrated is visually stunning. Of course, the price is stratospheric. But if the novelty of the new Bentley in the drive has worn off and you're now in the market for a circa £100,000 stereo system for the living room, well... ☺

ABOVE: The top-loading, linear-tracking disc mechanism is bathed in blue LED light and kept dust-free by a circular cover when not in use. (Beneath): Kalista's 'Ultra High Capacity PSU' is connected via an umbilical

HI-FI NEWS SPECIFICATIONS

Maximum output level (Balanced outputs)	4.80Vrms
A-wtd S/N Ratio	102.3dB
Distortion (1kHz, 0dBfs/-30dBfs)	0.0025% / 0.0036%
Distortion (20kHz, 0dBfs)	0.001%
Frequency response (20Hz-20kHz)	+0.0dB to -0.1dB
Digital jitter	10450psec
Resolution @ -100dB	±0.5dB
Power consumption	21W
Dimensions (WHD)	450x450 x160mm

'The Kalista Integrated erred towards a relaxed, velvety quality that was addictive'

would command the attention of anyone entering your listening room. The blue light which bathes a CD's surface as it spins atop the player (to improve reading accuracy, claims Metronome) adds to the distinction of the overall design. The separate power supply is the size of a substantial power