



Metronome Technologie

Le Player 2

Dedicated CD players seem to be an increasingly rare breed, yet Metronome Technologie bucks this trend. Le Player 2 is a new entry-level model with a front-loading Philips GyrFalcon 8 mechanism. The rear hosts an IEC power socket, balanced XLR and unbalanced RCA outputs as well as a S/PDIF digital output should you wish to process the zeros and ones elsewhere. There is also a USB input enabling you to access the onboard DAC, once selected by a source switch on the front. The DAC utilises a well-regarded Asahi Microdevices converter chipset that handles USB sources up to 24-bit/192kHz.

Sound quality

Playing *Die Young* by Sylvan Esso, Amelia Meath's opening vocals have real presence, sounding intimate and highly detailed, yet warm and very human. Many players can do either, but not both. Le Player 2 gives lots of effortless detail helping the music flow in a way that underpins excellent rhythm and timing.

The chorus comes in and the weight and texture of the synthesised bass shows Metronome Technologie knows how to extract and replay the lowest frequencies. Top to bottom this is a big, luscious sound that feels very open, coherent and highly analogue

in nature. High frequencies are crisp yet sweet, while the bottom end is potent and supple, but never opaque. Technically, Metronome Technologie claims to employ refined transformers and numerous, dedicated power supplies for each section of the player, but I simply hear total composure and an absolute absence of any hint of digital glassiness.

Spinning *Almost Like The Blues* by Leonard Cohen, the opening piano has real body and solidity. Drum skins and shakers positively bristle with detail that creates a particularly wide soundscape. The bassline is deep and infectious while a warm, mellifluous keyboard creates compelling depth behind the speakers. It has the ability to paint very relaxed and natural images, yet also conveys masses of fast transient details that enable you to hear through and around the music. The backdrop is notably quiet and the tiny inflections in Cohen's husky voice have maximum impact, while backing vocals have a rich, ethereal glow. Again, I'm getting the wonderful combination of flow, slam, scale and sweet detail that adds up to a very dynamic and addictive whole.

I finish with The Tallis Scholars performing Arvo Pärt's *Magnificat*. This piece starts with a series of simple chants that gently ebb and flow over each other, Le Player 2 perfectly reproducing the subtly

shifting harmonics and textures. The acoustic of Merton College Chapel is portrayed beautifully with the cadence of each reverberant note. A single soprano voice shines through, gently rhyming with a single bass voice to create a particularly mesmerising performance. The whole presentation is very meditative. Notes feel especially pure, insightful and revealing. This piece shows off the player's ability to present light and shade superbly. Quiet, intimate voices have real quality and tiny differences in tone and timbre gently pulse between performers, while points of huge drama have massive scale and richness. Again, the analogue flow to the music feels completely un-digital.

Conclusion

This is a quite outstanding CD player that is highly addictive. It might take a few minutes to come on song, but once it's fully warmed up, your whole CD collection will sound like never before. Even discs that you've written off as weaker recordings seem to be rewarded with a new lease of life. Any slight reservations over a lightweight drawer or simplistic display are completely blown away by its supreme sonic qualities. **CW**

DETAILS

PRODUCT
Metronome Technologie Le Player 2

PRICE
£4,500

ORIGIN
France

TYPE
CD player/USB DAC

WEIGHT
12kg

DIMENSIONS
(WxHxD)
450 x 115 x 435mm

FEATURES
● 24-bit/192kHz-capable DAC
● Digital input: USB Type-B 3.0
● Outputs: unbalanced RCAs; balanced XLRs; 1x S/PDIF

DISTRIBUTOR
Absolute Sounds

TELEPHONE
0208 9713909

WEBSITE
absolutesounds.com

REVIEWED
HFC 425

Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY



LIKE: Supremely musical, analogue flow; engineering quality and finish

VALUE FOR MONEY



DISLIKE: Rather lightweight drawer

BUILD QUALITY



WE SAY: Effortlessly musical and completely engaging. Prepare to fall in love with CD again

FEATURES



OVERALL

