

Metronome Technologie

Le Player 3+

A audio activity
audio and music magazine



Once again we enter a minefield, proposing a Compact Disc reader (but not only, as we will see). It seems to relive the 90s, when the arrows of the audiophiles-Nostradamus hurled themselves against the old black records, the ugly, crackling, unbalanced ones without dynamics, due to the obsolete technology that they found behind them. Old, dirty, landfill stuff.

The future was lucid, bright, small and portable, the "perfect sound forever", as its "host creator" put it. And of course, some more, some less, we all believed in it. Someone looked sadly at his vast vinyl collection, fearing that one day it would become unlistenable and preparing to replace the replaceable with the new technology.

Sure, some said that vinyl sounded even better, despite its flaws, but it was mocked by the modernists, and treated like a dying dinosaur.

Today, a curious fact is taking place: the new generation (not in personal terms, which makes people laugh just thinking about it) of audiophiles, are snubbing the CD (which is being sold less and less but not for reasons of audio quality) to switch to "liquid" or even because he plunged headlong back into vinyl.

Zero half measures, as usual. Now the new mantra is "computer" music - but how much do I hate that definition? -, the very comfortable one crammed on a hard disc, and we no longer think in terms of discs owned, but of Terabyte. Obviously, you don't even know what you have anymore; first of all because it is much more than a lifetime would allow to listen with a minimum of attention, and then because very often the wallet has not been opened to buy it.

Once, I often visited the homes of audio enthusiasts and it happened, among the most fanatical ones, that they got up to change discs after the first 30 "demonstration" seconds, which were used to listen to

the system, and not the music. Ridiculous behavior, but at least they kept fit by moving. Now they have the tablet in their hands, the 30 seconds are reduced to 15, you no longer understand anything (and neither do they), but in return Dr. Nowzaradan has plenty of material for his broadcasts. To bulimic streaming fans we will recommend diets of 1200 calories for a heavy body, and 1200 "physical" records, to listen to until at least they understand what it is.

I don't go into the endless stories of the most avid streaming users, those who put more than one computer in series to listen better and better, who try an operating system a day, change power supplies, USB cables (which in fact give their contribution, just to complicate still the matter), and then this software sounds better, or that other one ... An endless story, good for those who play with the system, perhaps because they can't find other ways to pass the time.

I'm not ashamed to say it: I've always been for simple things. When they get too complicated, I shun them, wondering who makes me go mad. In the office, do I pay for software houses that simplify the use of information technology, and then do I have to go home to nibble behind the PC drivers? No, thanks, my patience doesn't go that far. I go to a shop, listen to one or more CD players and buy the one that sounds best, compatibly with my budget. It's closed, off to the musical dances.

The digital high resolution? They almost killed the SACD, unfortunately, and now it is up to files and folders to live. Or vinyls.

It is only from this point of view, therefore, that in my eyes a "hybrid" source like the one being tested today is justified, so as to please everyone, that high resolution files definitely have their reasons.

We already know the machines of the French Metronome directly, having reviewed in the past the [AQWO](#) , a model of the series superior to this Le Player 3+

The manufacturer of digital sources, now on the market since 1987, has gained a well-deserved fame all over the world , thanks to its machines, which are welcomed by audio enthusiasts.

The range produced consists of 3 models of the AQWO series, and three of the Classic series, of which this Le Player 3+ is part, which combines the functions of CD player and DAC in a single frame.

For the sake of completeness, we also mention the Kalista brand, which is the luxury series of Metronome, and even includes a turntable, inspired by the decidedly fascinating aesthetics of digital machines, which always make a beautiful figure through the window of their listening room. at the audio exhibition in Munich, and which they invite to come in to congratulate Jean Marie Clauzel, CEO of the company.

This time, we are talking about the player / DAC called Le Player 3+, a very up-to-date machine (it was recently released on the market). It reads normal CDs through its Metronome modified Philips GF8 mechanism, which among other things made it extremely quiet by encapsulating it, so as to acoustically isolate it from the external environment.

The front, in a choice of silver or black, is made of thick aluminum and includes a large bevel in which the drawer for the CD is inserted and a large black display, happily visible from a distance, which is surrounded by small chrome buttons for the main functions. For the rest, a beautiful and excellent quality remote control is supplied.

The frame rests on three feet, which can accommodate magnetic tips, supplied. Clever idea, which allows you to change the configuration easily, according to the tastes of the owner.

The back is pretty simple: balanced and unbalanced outputs, S / PDIF and USB digital inputs, IEC power input and main power button.



The machine gives an excellent impression of solidity and manufacturing quality. The photos at the end of the page also show the Player proudly open, which shows off 3 different power supplies and a lot of capacitors, testifying to the care taken in powering the circuits.

Let's take a look at what this Le Player 3+ can do.

He reads CDs, and this is well established. Its internal DAC accepts PCM signals up to 384 kHz and DSD 512.

There should be enough for even the most technical, I'd say.

And here you have the system in which the Player 3+ has been inserted:

Basis 2001 turntable, Graham 2.2 tonearm, Lyra Kleos cartridge, phono preamp: Einstein "The Turntable's Choice" balanced, Yamaha CD-S3000 CD / SACD player, multimedia player: Oppo 105 D, preamp: MBL 4006, power amp: Bryston 7B³, speakers : JBL 4350B, Velodyne SPL-1200 subwoofer, interconnect cables: MIT Oracle MA-X Proline, MIT Shotgun S2 RCA, Transparent Super XLR, Transparent Super RCA, Cammino PH B 2.2 Ref XLR phono cable, speaker cables: MIT Magnum MA , Vovox Initio, power cables: MIT Shotgun AC 1, Black Noise Pearl and others self-built, mains distributor: Lector Edison 230/8, mains filter: Black Noise 2500.

The first listen includes the CD "The Hollywood Sound", London Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Williams (Sony SBM), and I immediately choose one of my favorite songs: "La mia Africa". The strings are sweet, but with that natural sweetness given by the soundboards of the instruments. The bass is deep, very present but under control. "The Godfather Part II" begins with a distant trumpet sound, followed by strings, more advanced and extended across the width of my room (the wall measures 5.5m), while the harp accompaniment gives an extra touch of refinement to an immortal composition, with a perfect arrangement that ranges from piano to forte as only a Maestro of the caliber of Nino Rota could conceive.

The timpani in "Pocahontas" are dynamic and very fast, and the reproduction of this Le Player is a riot of sounds that put you at peace with the world. When you need speed in transients, it's lightning. In addition, this is a record of compositions that have entered the history of contemporary music by right and that all of you should own. If we then add the detail that the registration is of a very high level, I would say that there are no longer any doubts about whether to buy it.

"Trio in Tokyo", by Michel Petrucciani Trio (CD Dreyfus Jazz), shows us that the musical tension and rhythm are not lacking in this player, able to combine sweetness and aggressiveness when requested by the musicians. The piano has that deliberately "electric" sound, characteristic of Petrucciani's engravings. Anthony Jackson's double bass is simply perfect, and the sound of the drums of the usual Steve Gadd in great shape, who extracts from drums and cymbals, sounds that are only his own. I know well, in this case, what we should hear, having listened to [Gadd](#) live several times in recent years. The reproduction of this disc, as a whole, involves and does not present traces of artificiality. The attack speed of the drum solo of track no. 4, but also of the notes of the piano, is definitely correct.

Let's stay on Jazz with Gianluigi Trovesi Nonet, "Round About a Midsummer's Dream" (Enja). I am

immediately fascinated by the deep and controlled low frequency response, a real pleasure for the ears. This player seems, in some way, to overcome one of the problems that the Red Book CD brings with it: the poor resolution, resulting in little intelligibility of the low range. The accordion in the piece n. 3, followed by the pressing of the rhythm section, in a riot of sounds recorded (and reproduced) with an uncommon skill. Even the bows are surprising for the rigor with which they are presented. Once again the sound of percussion of all kinds is very good, opening the piece n. 4. And from here, the irrepressible desire to listen to this work to the end.

I know you should mainly listen to music from acoustic instruments when testing a device, but sometimes you get sudden cravings, and this time it's Klaus Schulze's "Irrlicht" (MIG). So why write about electronic music here? Perhaps because some (or many) of you would like to know how Le Player would behave in your home, under the same conditions.

From the JBLs come out scratchy and dynamic sounds, the ping-pong between the two channels is fast and concrete, the frequency response very extended. If someone thought of a cool reader he was wrong, when it comes to throwing blows, the Frenchman is happy to go wild.

But speaking of cool music (forgive me, but the contrast led me to write this nonsense), here comes the CD BIS with compositions by Mauro Giuliani: "Works for Flute and Guitar" - Vol. 3. There is little to do: it is very difficult to go wrong with BIS engravings.

The registration was made in a Finnish church. There is an excellent ambience, which develops all behind the two instruments, proving a placement of the microphones at a relatively short distance compared to the performers. The stamp is very believable once again. The guitar has the true sound of the classical guitar, with the higher strings in Nylon, and the lower strings in metal. The latter never take on the "cavernous" and too developed low frequency tone that sometimes happens to be heard and that does not exist in real life. I advise everyone to "archive" recordings or systems that make guitars sound like bass.

The flute is also perfectly reproduced, which in the long run almost tends to tire the hearing, and is therefore a reliable thermometer of correct sound. Because, dear friends, the real flute gets tired after a while. Unless you are a fan of my-fi, harbinger of puffy and colorful little rings, because "I like it that way", and then I give up, because I'm preaching in the desert.

And we came to conclusions. This Metronome Le Player 3+ is a very good CD / DAC player, with a clear, fast and slender sound, albeit very complete up to the lowest frequencies, which does not color by inventing honeyed and nauseating sounds.

I liked it very much and I recommend that you consider it for your future purchases.

There is also the advantage of a serious company behind it and an Italian distributor who will assist you with experience and passion.

The price, not absolutely low, is centered on the current market, because no one gives anything and there is a lot of substance here. Made in Europe substance.

Angelo Jasparro

Manufacturer: [Metronome](#)

Distributor for Italy: [MadforMusic](#)

Price to March 2021: EUR 6,500.00

(translated from Italian by Google Translate)