

➔ Since its inception in 1987, the audiophile company Métronome has built a reputation among music enthusiasts thanks to its speakers, amplifiers, transducers and CD / SACD players. The company's credo is an effort to bring an "analog experience" in a digital way. High-end products, hand-made by dozens of specialists, as well as another Kalista brand from the same company, are appreciated by the audiophile community around the world. However, developments are advancing, so Métronome reflects the growing popularity of high-definition streaming digital files

on the basis of solo and integrated D / A converters and CD players adapted to the latest hi-res audio format. This is also the new Le Player 3+, a new addition to the Classica series, which Métronome refers to as a "hybrid DAC and CD player". This device is an ideal component for music lovers who listen to computer music, so they need an excellent D / A converter, but also often return to their CDs, whose extensive collection they have gathered in recent years.

In a crime scene about fans of the albums, two friends talked: "Why is your CD player?" One asks. "Well, I have to listen to something while I change the plates," the friend replies. A similar situation, only in the opposite guard, will now be solved by Le Player 3+, which we were pleased to hear "in the time of the corona" in the BIS audio showroom.

Top-of-the-line CD player and Le Player 3+ D / A converter with front disc drive is the successor to the Le Player transport CD 3 and represents a unique product.

AUTOR JURAJ PROCHÁZKA
FOTO MÉTRONOME



The latest Classica

Do you like quality music from digital sources, but at the same time don't want to give up classic media such as silver CDs?

Thanks to the novelty of the French brand Métronome, you don't have to make compromises.



MÉTRONOME LE PLAYER 3+

Making each piece, including hand-soldered printed circuit boards and testing, takes three days. Métronome wants to be what the device itself is a metronome for musicians and composers of music, it wants to set the rhythm for quality audio listening.

The new Le Player 3+ is proof of that. The main difference compared to the previous version (Le Player 3) is the built-in powerful D / A converter and DSD 512 data stream support.

in its native form. The D / A converter is built on the AK4493 module with VELVET SOUND technology, works in double mono mode and can process a PCM signal with sampling up to 32-bit / 384 kHz on the USB-B and PCM 24-bit / input. 192 kHz on coaxial input S / P DIF.

The Philips Gyr Falcon 8 transport mechanism specially designed in Métronome is enclosed in a separate metal Pickup Box and is mechanically reliably disconnected from the rest of the structure to eliminate vibrations and suppress operating noise.

The source, together with the metal construction, was signed at 11 kg of player weight. The frame is made of 2 mm steel, the front panel is made of solid 10 mm thick aluminum plate, which contributes to great rigidity eliminating any vibrations. The iconic design of the Métronome is characterized by a large blue backlit display with integrated control buttons and a functionally simple remote control. The finalization creates a solid impression to the touch and to the eye and leaves no room to doubts about craftsmanship

devices. We had a player available in conservative silver, but a black version is also available.

Connectivity is provided by connectors located on the rear panel in the form of two digital inputs - asynchronous USB-B and 75-ohm S / P DIF RCA - and a pair of analog outputs - unbalanced with RCA connectors and balanced XLR.

The power supply is provided by a robust power supply with three toroidal transformers with Schaffner filters and four independent control lines. In any case, it is a detailed optimized construction that does not compromise on design or parameters.

The owner and designer of Métronome Technologie said in the launch of this player: "Now I am really proud of the Classica range, which complements the Le Player 3+ hybrid model in addition to the Le Player 3 and Le DAC CD transport and D / A converter. Despite the situation we have been facing since the beginning of 2020, Métronome continues to innovate and is far from over!"

Listening is a joy

In the listening tests, we used the integrated amplifier Rotel Michi X3, which was conveniently available from another test - you will find it in a separate article. We connected Le Player 3+ to the amplifier with symmetrical analog Audio-Quest Yukon cables and the power supply was provided by the distributor specially supplied power cable SOTM PCBL-SS8F.

To eliminate any interference from the mains, the amplifier and the player were also connected to the power supply via the AudioQuest Niagara 1200 filter. And when we came to the cables, the speakers played from the amplifier via the proven AudioQuest Type9 cables.

By the way, with the same Sonus faber Olympica Nova III speakers, we also tested the Michi X3 separately, only with other signal sources (Aurender ACS10 streamer and Denon DCD-A110 CD / SACD player). However, we used the Aurender ACS10 as a source for digital streaming from the Tidal service this time as well. The AudioQuest Carbon USB cable with a jitter bug filter from the same manufacturer served well for connection to the USB-B input, and the streamer itself communicated with the network via the SOTM sNH -10G Ethernet switch, which was discussed by a colleague in a separate review. We said that the Olympica Nova III three-band poles with a frequency characteristic of 35 Hz - 35 kHz are a good choice for listening with a high-quality CD player of the class corresponding to Le Player 3+. The Michi X3 integrator can also be conveniently seconded to the player and speaker. Its wide and the extremely balanced frequency response at the line inputs reaches an impressive 10 Hz to 100 kHz and the signal-to-noise ratio of 102 dB, so that the amplifier in such an assembly is not a limiting element of the chain. Although the Michi 3 amplifier also has an integrated D / A converter, in this case we used the converter in Le Player 3+ to connect the streamer.

There was no unlimited time for testing, so we are for a lighter genre mix



In the case of the CD, production reached the selective test compilations on Extended Dynamic Experience 3 / STS Digital and the Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab selections. Paul Simon's light rhythm in Pigs, Sheep and Wolves helped me tune my ear to "cvr-kot" percussion, and Tony Joe White, with an electric guitar and strong bass, showed how to relax at a slightly brighter pace. Very nice in this set! Both the string instruments and the drums played perfectly realistically, as if a third dimension had been added to the stereo space. When you listen to such a musical expression, you will wonder what Métronome probably means by "bringing an analog experience in a digital way." Suddenly it is quite clear to you. From the musical influx of Tidal, we first admired the music of a different genre. For a while I was a fan of a young Russian soprano,

who looks good and sings even better. In this case, Aida Garifullina was a pleasure just for the ears - in Schubert's composition Ave Maria and in V. Bellini's Casta Diva (Norma). In both of them she is accompanied by a symphonic orchestra, but the voice dominates. Listening, I would say it excels. At the same time, the arrival of the strings in the background sounds clean and draws you into the middle of the concert. In contrast to this music, Simon & Garfunkel's The Sound of Silence and Boxer was much more "prosaic", but the instruments, which are given much more space here, sounded with full potential.

and natural force.

The French from Métronome have their thumbs up.

Verdict

Hybrid Le Player 3+, which is sold on the Czech market for 175,990 CZK (the device was lent by the Ostrava company Amarock studio, s. R. O.). Which is about 6,500 EUR, can reveal

a number of hidden details and acoustic hues, which are lost in translation with cheaper players - in this case in PCM signal decoding and subsequent processing. If you are looking for a device that allows you to translate CDs "without losing a dozen" between streaming, Le Player 3+ is a good choice. ❌



top D / A converter with PCM signal processing up to
32 bit / 384 kHz and DSD 512
sophisticated CD transport solution
quality player and controller design



in the set would please the availability of equally
designed components

MÉTRONOME LE PLAYER 3+



Digital inputs:

1 x asynchronous USB type B,
1 x S / P DIF 75 Ohms RCA connector

Analog outputs:

1 pair balanced XLR, 1 pair RCA Resolution:

32-bit / 384 kHz

Dimensions (h x w x d): 115 x 450 x 435 mm

Net weight: 12 kg

Consumption: 35 VA

Price: € 6,500

www.amarockstudio.cz