

Crystal Cable Absolute Dream

Its interconnect and USB cables have already earned a place in the *HFN* hall of fame. But what of the 'Absolute' speaker cable? Review: **Paul Miller**



It is an unfortunate truth that many of the finest-sounding cables utilise noble metals. Unfortunate because these elements are typically expensive and when used in the volume required for a substantial, low resistance speaker cable, very expensive indeed. Crystal Cable's Absolute Dream speaker cable certainly falls into the latter category, using a beefed-up version of the materials and geometry first witnessed in its spectacular Absolute Dream interconnects [*HFN* Jun '12].

Once again these are true 'solid-core' cables, each conductor comprising a single, 'monocrystal' silver strand sheathed in two layers of Kapton and clamped within a PEEK (Polyether ether ketone) dielectric. This, in turn, is surrounded by two peripheral braids composed of silver-plated monocrystal copper and gold-plated monocrystal silver. Each cable employs four of these cores, tightly wound and held in place by a decorative chromed block at each end.

There's an additional noble metal employed here with Crystal Cable specifying a bespoke version of Furutech's rhodium-plated Alpha-OCC 4mm plugs. The expandable split-pin connector is fashioned from a mix of carbon fibre and a non-magnetic 'eutectic copper alloy' which, says Crystal, 'comes very close to there being no connector at all.'

With no formal lab report planned, I ran the numbers anyway to confirm that our 3m set offered a 500pF parallel capacitance, 0.6µH inductance and very



low 22mohm loop resistance. And, as expected, the supreme quality of the Kapton dielectric has kept any leakage beyond our measurable 300Mohm limit.



BREATHTAKING DETAIL

Regardless of the configuration of your system, a speaker cable of this value should not only help it sing like an angel, but it should also pour you a drink and give a foot massage at the same time. The latter I cannot guarantee but, as to the former, these are truly exquisite-sounding cables that, in my system, emphasised the new-found smoothness, the ultra-black background and microscopic detailing offered by the

ABOVE & BELOW: A heavyweight twist of gold, silver and copper with rhodium-plated 4mm plugs, every serial-numbered set comes in its own luxurious presentation case

new Devialet 170 [*HFN* Sep '13]. The 24-bit render of The Beatles' *Abbey Road* album had never sounded so vital, alive and contemporary just as the soundtrack from *The Day After Tomorrow* [Varèse Sarabande 066572] filled the room with a palpable presence. Angelic? Absolutely! ☺

HI-FI NEWS VERDICT

If we thought the prices of Crystal's Absolute Dream interconnects and USB cable were scary then at £23,220 for a 2m set (plus £3890 per single metre), these speaker cable derivatives fall directly into the 'hair-raising' category. Nevertheless, where cost really is no object at all, these precious conductors seem capable of lifting the performance of even the most esoteric of hi-fi systems. For those who are only ever satisfied with 'the best', then here it is.

Sound Quality: 88%

