

Ayre

Reshaping the window



Like many companies Ayre have always had the goal to reproduce music with the same pure and natural sound as the original performance. Our previous designs using zero-feedback, fully-balanced circuits and low-noise, linear power supplies have achieved this sonic goal to an extraordinary level. However, to go beyond this level required the adoption of a new paradigm of sound reproduction.

In the old paradigm, the stereo is viewed as a window that allows us to see the original performance as it was recorded. Of course there are always imperfections in this (metaphorical) window. It may be dirty, scratched, tinted, warped, or otherwise distorted. Therefore the view through the window of the stereo system is never as good as the original recording. The difficulty with this model is that it leads us to the incorrect conclusion that a low quality recording will sound worse with a high performance system than a low performance system. The assumption (attractive, yet incorrect) is that the clearer window of the high performance system will more obviously reveal the shortcomings of the recording.

However, the old paradigm can not explain the sonic performance of the Ayre MX-R. These amplifiers unquestionably offer as much detail, resolution and transparency as any other competing design. Yet at the same time even previously "unlistenable" recordings become musically engaging. We are therefore forced to shift to a new sonic paradigm.

Under this new view a recording may be regarded as "poor", not because of any inherent flaws, but instead because its particular electrical signal can trigger misbehaviour in some part of the stereo playback system that leads to lowered sound quality. It then becomes obvious how to achieve the goal of designing an audio component that is musically engaging with all recordings. Simply ensure the circuit's immunity to misbehaviours triggered by any combination of input signals. The result is an unprecedented degree of both sonic transparency and musical enjoyment.

- Charles Hansen, President & CEO, March 2007

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