

Crimson reviewed by CE Pro

SCREENING ROOM by Arlen Schweiger

Cables Offer Opportunity to Step up Audio Game



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TRIBUTARIES HAS LONG established its reputation as a well-respected manufacturer of wire, cabling and power products. Last year, company president Joe Purdie unveiled a top-of-the-line, high-performance line of audiophile products titled as the 2-channel series under the new brand name Clarus for passive Cables 1. Core Technologies.

The line includes all manner of speaker wire and interconnects, audio, hi-fi, and video digital, analog, optical, ISOS and power cables. It quickly earned a buzz during the Rocky Mountain Audio Fest in October as the products, designed by award cable designer Joe Vance (who's designed for a number of high-end cable manufacturers), made their debut.

Here, a system comprising electronics from Anthem and Permagel Reference Studio 20 bookshelf speakers is also evaluated with a full-range review pair of speakers from Focal's Utopia line for my 2-channel listening. I was eager to test these new cables to see what the hype was all about. My review was limited along with an Aqua Blu.



MDPs for Claret Outrigger
A featured audio cable, such as speaker or interconnect cables, that can be used in a variety of ways. From left to right: 100-wire speaker cables, from 14.95 (100-wire) to 19.95 (100-wire) per foot. From right to left: 100-wire speaker cables, from 14.95 (100-wire) to 19.95 (100-wire) per foot. From left to right: 100-wire speaker cables, from 14.95 (100-wire) to 19.95 (100-wire) per foot.

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Features (A)

No doubt, these cables are practically pieces of art in their aesthetics and craftsmanship. In terms of the pure technical details, Clarus uses the products manufacturer Pure Copper (PCC) Composite Coating (PCC) which is individually polymerized and coated onto the conductors, and the PCC is coated with gold plate construction.

Vance's design also uniquely features a combination of three conductor types: solid heavy-gauge conductors, the conductors and spiral ribbon conductors (with a non-conductive core), which serve as shields to reduce crosstalk and crosstalk.

It's hard to see the quality and care of the work. A neat little detail is that these packaging notes the date the cable was made and made for shipping. Having heard about similar construction, one during a visit to Thompson Cable, it's obvious Vance's attention to detail is a little more than just a marketing tactic.

The three strands of the audio cables is striking in black and orange colors and solidly woven. Power cables in the Claret line are rugged and built at the connection end, which led to real-

Setup (B)

Setup is straightforward for a 2-channel system. My connections include hooking up the balanced audio cables from an Anthem Statement DCC pre-amp to an Anthem P5 amplifier, and then hooking up the cables to the studio monitor pair. I used two of the "high-current" Claret power amp cables (100-wire) for the dual mainline P5 and one power cable for the DCC to play into a 300-watt power conditioner and I connected a basic low-impedance speaker cable to the DCC's main output with a three-digit audio cable. I don't normally use that old DVD player for CD playback, but I wanted to see it again as longer than my other DVD player (DVD player connected to my Claret HD) and the optical cable connection for my computer.

The only real break I had in the three strands was in the cable design area, which has some limitations. For example, the heavy power cable might sag a little on the power conditioner outlet and the gold-plated speaker cable might have some crosstalk. Children, along with some help of a small metal braided piece by

the wire separation, tested my ability to tighten these screws. Neither has affected performance, however, so it's something CE Pro should account for when setting up a listening room.

Performance (A)

Forward listening carefully validated what we always hear about high-end cables—they do make a difference. I'd say that the most apparent is in the ability to make sense of the music. In some respects, the music seems to have more of a sense of direction and focus. The difference is not in the music, but in the way it's presented. The music seems to have more of a sense of direction and focus. The difference is not in the music, but in the way it's presented.

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remember. Since I've listened to thousands of times, like the Allman Brothers' "Jessica" or the Grateful Dead's "Friend of the Devil" delivered more bass line definition and presence. I'd say all individual instructions became more pronounced within the soundstage, especially in the bass line definition and presence.

The last two tracks "Alison Brown" from Steely Dan's "Kooker's Garden" and "The Last Thing on My Mind" really stood out, with the precision that needed punchier than usual. Strong and high-end drumming felt snappy and thick, with clear, more pronounced. Acoustic guitar also benefited from the clarity, giving a fuller, more realistic and vibrant sound over to what tracks like "The Last Thing on My Mind" from Pearl Jam and Jack Johnson's "Cannonball" are in the Claret line.

Pretzel Logic is one of the many vinyl records I played during the evaluation, which revealed a key element of Clarus' implementation--the cable allowed the system to play louder and more effortlessly at higher volumes. I noticed I was not tiring the volume knob as much to attain previous levels, especially for the same playback. I could push to reference levels without hearing distortion or feeling like the electronics were straining.

Value (B)

Clarus' implementation is certainly priced in the market, but when you consider the quality of the cables, it's a fair price. The cables are made for high-end systems, so it's not surprising that the price is high. The cables are made for high-end systems, so it's not surprising that the price is high.

Conclusion (A-)

High-end cables are made for high-end systems. Clarus is going to be a good investment in a system in which the components and speakers are of the same type of high-performance system. It will benefit most from these three

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