

On track

Keeping you on track with the developments at Grahams Hi-Fi

Summer 2006



“One of the five best hi-fi shops in the world”

ARENA Magazine

in this issue...

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HDTV is here!



Hopefully by the time you get this newsletter, Sky will have started installing their HD ready Sky receivers and the High Definition Television revolution will have really begun in the UK. Finally we will be able to start matching the picture quality to that of our surround sound systems, which until now, has been limited by the picture quality of live television. Whilst the introduction of Digital TV in the UK some years ago promised the potential of high quality images, it was driven by quantity rather than quality and we are delighted now that this has changed.

The initial choice of program material coming from Sky will include HD channels for Sports, Movies, Sky One, Artsworld, Sky Box Office, National Geographic and Discovery.

To get the best performance and benefit from these HD signals you are going to need to connect the satellite receiver to a display with a suitable high resolution capability, using a digital (HDMI) connection. The HDMI connector can be likened to a digital version of the ubiquitous Scart connector. It looks very similar to a computer USB connector in size and can carry picture, multi-channel digital sound and control signals. (*Continued overleaf*)

Meridian roadshow and HD open day– June 15th.

As the launch of HD TV in the UK will coincide with the 2006 World Cup, we are holding a **High Definition Open Day** on Thursday 15th June, in conjunction with **Meridian**. You will be able to see their amazing new projectors (*see overleaf*), experience HD TV and (hopefully) watch England win the match.

It's open house from 4.00pm until 8.30pm with light refreshments and our usual Grahams hospitality. Please call us for free tickets to this event.



Grahams Hi-Fi
Canonbury Yard
190a New North Road
London N1 7BS
Phone: **020 7226 5500**
Fax: 020 7359 7620
E-mail: enq@grahams.co.uk
www.grahams.co.uk



new high definition display devices

Whilst **Sky HD** promises a picture quality that is a vast improvement over the current standard (it can be likened to the difference between VHS tape and DVD), many of our new display devices now provide even higher resolution. This not only exploits the benefits of HD TV but it will also provide a higher quality of picture with any of our "high-end" DVD players as well as being forward compatible with HD-DVD or Blu-ray - which will be the next step in the evolution of the silver disc.

We have now added the **Meridian 1080p** projectors to our range, which when partnered with the Meridian DVD players and video processors can provide absolutely stunning results. Pioneer is also launching the first 1080p version of their 50" plasma display which will complement these devices fully. Hopefully we will have the first consumer demonstration of this display model too.



arcam introduces new dvd player/avr home cinema receiver

Arcam has launched two very exciting products, which set new standards for video and audio reproduction.

The DV137 (£1250) is a new generation multi-disc DVD player featuring SACD, DVD-A, DVD and CD playback as well as state-of-the-art video up-scaling. This is Arcam's first universal disc player and delivers exceptional sound quality from all existing audio and video formats.

The AVR350 (£1500), a high-performance 7.1-channel home cinema and music receiver, includes two-way HDMI switching for automatic selection of digital video sources (such as DVD, Sky HD, video consoles etc), as well as many features derived from development work on their flagship pre-amp/processor, the FMJ AV9. Offering sound quality far superior to ordinary mass-market products, the AVR350, when combined with the DV137, brings you an amazing system that can play all types of discs and competes with separates on sound quality at a sensible price with world-class video playback.

creek destiny range

Creek has always been synonymous with producing good quality, well-crafted hi-fi separates. Previously the emphasis has always been on the sound aspect of the equipment rather than the aesthetics. However the new flagship Destiny range provides superb sound with sleek looks and excellent build quality.

The Destiny CD player (£1200) is a new design for Creek. The Company has looked at every aspect of the design such as circuit board layout and both digital and analogue power supplies, which helps reduce digital noise. All of this provides a truly exceptional level of detail, spaciousness and clarity.

The Destiny integrated amplifier (£1100) carries the same design ethos that has gone into the CD player. Electrically, Creek has managed to keep the power supplies separate for each channel; this allows for greater stereo imaging and clarity between channels. The 100W per channel amp offers an optional phono-stage in addition to five line-level inputs and one tape loop and headphone socket. A useful feature is the ability to run two separate sets of loudspeakers which are independently switchable. Both CD and amp come with remote control and are available in Black or Silver.



classé audio

Grahams are delighted to announce that we are now dealers for Classé.

Canada's Classé Audio has earned the reputation of being one of the true high-performance manufacturers of quality amplifiers for over 20 years. Established in 1980, Classé has strived to create products to meet the highest possible fidelity. Classé became part of the B&W group in 2001 and the distribution, financial and organisational resources offered by B&W, the leading UK-based loudspeaker manufacturer, have propelled Classé to the forefront of contemporary high-end audio and video design.

Bowers & Wilkins and Classé share a similar philosophy, both growing from humble beginnings that have turned into world-class products. The brief of the new Classé Delta range was to produce a modern, contemporary design combining North American strength with European quality and design detail.

The products have a distinctive design, a tactile feel and use built-in LCD touch-screens to simplify their ease of use.

Following our evaluation process, the Classé models we now have on demonstration are:

- CDP-300 DVD/CD/DVD A player with 1080p video output and HDMI output at £4,950 (the CDP-102 is a dedicated CD player, built with the same circuitry as the CDP-300 but without any of the video circuitry and costs £2950)
- CDP-202 (£3235) A reference CD player (includes DVD and DVD-A playback).
- SSP-600 (£5450) A surround sound processor/pre-amp.
- CA-5200 (£6450) A 200-watt 5-channel power amplifier.
- CAP-2100 (£3950) A 100-watt integrated amplifier including remote control.

The CDP-102 and CDP-202 are dedicated CD players, optimised for the best performance at different price levels, created especially for music listeners who do not need multi-channel analogue audio or High Definition video features. Both models utilise a TEAC® DVD-ROM slot-loader mechanism for reading discs. Its many advantages include superior disc-handling characteristics, reliability and control flexibility. The CDP-102 and 202 share the beautiful industrial design and elegant control screens found throughout the Delta series. They are the first CD players to offer touch-screen control and video preview on the front panel. The preview feature allows audiophiles the option of enjoying a pure music listening session without video, because DVD-Audio (or DVD-Video) discs may be navigated directly from the front panel.



SSP600



Following extensive listening tests and technical trials, the world famous **Abbey Road Studios** selected Classé amplifiers to partner B&W's reference monitors (which they have used for a number of years). They now have over 30 Classé power amplifiers in use at Abbey Road.



CDP300

what's new at grahams



acoustic energy wi-fi radio

With the current boom in internet radio, **Acoustic Energy** (in partnership with Reciva, the internet radio technology experts) has produced the first Wi-Fi internet radio. This device offers Real Audio, WMV, AAC and MP3 support and is capable of accessing over 99% of internet radio stations broadcast on-line anywhere in the world.

The AE Wi-Fi radio links automatically to existing Wi-Fi networks and uses a broadband connection to access Reciva's Internet Radio Gateway. This uploads channel listings alphabetically by region and genre to the radio. There are currently around 2,500 stations registered on the Reciva Gateway.

The unit receives free channel updates from Reciva whenever the unit is switched on and you can listen to "on demand" streams such as the BBC's 'Listen Again' as well as live radio. It also features a media adapter which enables you to listen to your own PC music library anywhere in the house. The AE Wi-Fi is revolutionary in home audio entertainment and its price tag of £200 makes it an attractive 'must have' addition to the 21st century home.

netstreams

We have recently added a new multi-room music system from American manufacturer **Netstreams**. **Digilink** is their IP (Internet protocol) based multi room music system. This is a revolutionary type of system consisting of in-wall keypads, discreet room amplifiers and various control devices which are all allocated with their own IP address and sit on your home network.



As with the majority of multi-room audio systems, a central location is required to wire all devices in the system, however the distributed sources can be located anywhere in the home.

The system boasts the capability to send the audio signals to a number of rooms from a multitude of sources. Music from a server (such as the Imerge S2000) can stream up to eight different outputs simultaneously.

The topology of the system locates the amplifier close to the speaker (maybe in the ceiling with a built-in speaker). This amplifier not only receives a streamed audio feed and converts it back into an audible analogue signal but also acts as a web server delivering the control interface to a remote touch-screen. The amplifiers are available with 3 different power output levels, 25wpc, 50wpc and 100wpc, all of which can feed a slave power amplifier of your choice.

The in-wall keypads can be either LCD or a simple hard button version. The LCD keypads are pre-programmed and can display all the relevant information from a hard disc server such as album title, artist and even cover art. They have an additional feature of an intercom to other keypads in the house and each keypad can control any device in any other room.

As with any IP network the ability to connect wirelessly is also an option, so with a wireless web tablet, PDA or laptop you can control the system, with the same interface as an in-wall LCD keypad. Digilink can also control Lutron lighting and Panasonic IP web cameras.



Digilink is a unique product, which is totally scalable and has the capability to expand with ease. Its features, ease of use and above all the sound quality offer superb value for money.

The Netstreams Digilink system is currently on demonstration in our basement dem room. Please feel free to call to arrange a personal demonstration.

to have it all

Our “to have it all” section in this issue features a substantial Oxfordshire family home that was recently fully renovated. Grahams were fortunate to be contacted early in the design stages so we could help the owner and architect design and plan the whole installation.

The systems we installed included multi-room audio and video, a Lutron Homeworks lighting control system, wiring for data and networking, telephones, door entry and CCTV.

The scope of the system brief was to install four separate AV systems, all of which are linked to a central distribution unit in a utility room. From this room the audio and video signals from an Imerge CD based music server and an Arcam DAB tuner were distributed, as well as feeds from each local Sky box in the various local AV systems. All of the equipment is housed in a Middle Atlantic rack along with two Audio Access multi-room power amplifiers and a Crestron home control system which distribute music to B&W in-ceiling speakers in additional rooms.

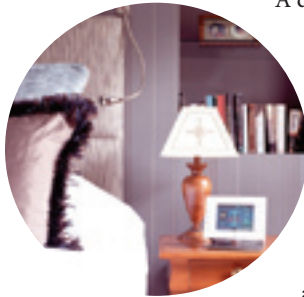


naim hi-line interconnect cable

Naim could never be accused of rushing blindly into any area of the market, and rightly so. This is the first new interconnect they have produced since they started manufacturing CD players back in 1991, so we can be assured they have developed a cable that will truly transform the performance of any source and amp it's used with.

The Hi-Line cable is a 2-core construction that uses dielectric sheathing, which essentially means that each core is separately insulated by hand, and the actual DIN connections have been totally redesigned using high-impact nylon/aluminium components. They now work on the principle of both the plug body and signal pins being movable and not fixed; this at first seems rather disconcerting but it does make sense given that any form of de-coupling will aid the openness and transparency of a given sound being transmitted. It is available in Din – Din (£495), Din – phono (RCA) or phono – phono configurations and will be a standard 1.2m in length.

A data network was installed that allows the connection of telephones and computers to data sockets around the house. We also installed a wireless network system that covers the whole house and is used not only for wireless internet connection from laptops, but also for the wireless touch-screen web tablets that are used to control the local AV systems via a Crestron home control system.



Structured coaxial wiring deals with distributing Freeview digital and Sky+ signals to each television point as well as FM and DAB radio signals to hi-fi systems in the other bedrooms.

Local AV systems were installed in the main family room, the den, the master bedroom and the attic playroom. The dining room, kitchen, en-suite bathroom and dressing room were also included in the multi-room system using in-ceiling speakers. Each room was controlled by either the wireless web tablets, a Crestron in-wall touch-screen controller or via the Lutron lighting keypad which provides additional local basic control.

The main family system comprises a Loewe 32” LCD television, a Sky+ receiver, a Linn Unidisk CD/DVD player, a Linn stereo power amplifier and a pair of Linn Komponent speakers. This stereo system can be easily upgraded at a later date, because the room is pre-wired to accommodate rear surround speakers.

The den system comprises a Marantz home cinema amplifier and DVD player with another Loewe 32” LCD TV and Sky+ receiver. The master bedroom has a Loewe 32” LCD TV and a Sky+ receiver.

All of the above systems are fitted into custom-built joinery.

The attic room has a wall mounted Pioneer 50” plasma screen, Sky+ receiver with an Arcam DVD and amplifier and B&W stand mounted speakers.

Whilst each of the four Sky+ receivers are predominantly dedicated to individual rooms, they are also re-distributed via the central system so any box can be controlled and viewed in any room. This is useful, especially with Sky+ when you may have recorded a program on one box and want to watch it in another room.

Finally, all of the systems we installed are fully HD ready and can be upgraded to work with SKY HD as and when this is available.

A picture of the attic room is featured on the front page.





jacob jensen phones

Some of our customers may not be aware that as part of our "whole house" solutions, Grahams has been supplying phone systems for many years. We generally use **Panasonic** phone systems that allow us to provide intercom, paging and door entry integration. One criticism of these systems is the phone handsets, which are very business like. However, one of the reasons we use the Panasonic phone systems is that they can be used with regular telephones as well.

We have recently added **Jacob Jensen** phones to our range. These stylish handsets can be used as normal "stand alone" telephones or as an extension to the Panasonic systems.

The range includes the slim T1 (£40), T5 (£70), and the T6 (£150) digital cordless DECT phone which is finished in aluminium. All of these stylish phones can be used wall-mounted or free-standing on a desk.

win a jacob jensen t6 digital cordless phone and t1 fixed phone

As part of our initial promotion for these stylish telephones we are running a competition to win a T6 cordless DECT and a T1 fixed phone. The winners who answer the questions correctly will be drawn from a hat. The first prize is a T6 and the second prize is a T1 fixed phone. Entries must be submitted by 30th July 2006 by post or email to comp@grahams.co.uk

cedia certification

We are pleased to announce that both **Phillip Cottle** and **James Shorter** have recently passed their CEDIA installer certification examinations. All members of our installation team are now Cedia certified installers.

David Graham is now a Cedia Certified Instructor and a Subject Matter Expert. This expertise means that he has an authority in certain areas of advice such as home cinema and installation, which helps set standards for certification and training in the UK.

new staff

We have strengthened our Installation team with the appointment of **Matthew Sturtivant** who joined us in May. He brings to this role considerable experience from his previous years in the industry.

board appointment

Tony Diamond has been appointed to the Board of Directors at Grahams. Tony has been with us for four years, during which time he has made a major contribution in operational matters. Tony came to Grahams with a background in both electronic engineering and business management and his Board appointment will help us drive the business forward. We wish him every success in his new role.



questions

1. What does DECT stand for?

- a) Dolby Enhanced Clever Telephone
- b) Digital Enhanced Cordless Telecommunications
- c) Dynamic Evolution Cordless Telephone
- d) Digital Electronic Cordless Telephone

3. How is the signal received on the Acoustic Energy internet radio?

- a) MORSE
- b) WIFI
- c) FM
- d) AM
- e) DAB

2. What is the name of the new digital connection used for connecting DVD and HD boxes to projectors and digital displays?

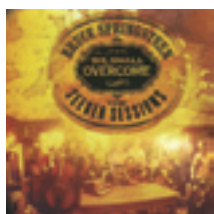
- a) HUM-BAR
- b) HAR-DV
- c) HDMI
- d) HD-DVD

4. Where is the Classé range of equipment manufactured?

- a) Cambridge
- b) Japan
- c) Canada
- d) Los Angeles

who's new and who's who at grahams

grahams recommended music



1. Bruce Springsteen We Shall Overcome The Seeger Sessions

This is Springsteen's first covers album, containing songs written or arranged by Pete Seeger. Recording a Seeger song for a tribute album in 1998 he realised how influential his music is. Springsteen has said, "so much of my writing, particularly when I write acoustically, comes straight out of the folk tradition". A new generation will now enjoy these songs, released in time for Seeger's 87th birthday.

CD + DVD £14.00 LP £15.00



2. Candi Staton His Hands

Following the success of 2004's 'Candi Staton' a compilation of 60's recordings, this is a new soul album. And what an album! A wonderful singer who puts her life experiences into the songs. As she says of the title track "I have lived through every line of that song". Produced by Lambchop's Mark Nevers it features Muscle Shoals' Barry Beckett, who came out of retirement to play his Hammond B3 organ on this album.

CD £14.00 LP £13.00



3. Daniel Mulhern Pigeon Coup

This debut album, on the Naim label, features singer-songwriter Daniel Mulhern. It was recorded at Ray Davies' Konk Studios in five days using mainly vintage equipment. He plays guitar and piano and is accompanied by a fine group of musicians who support him on bass, drums and cello amongst other instruments. His songs have featured in numerous TV dramas, most recently Poliakoff's "Friends and Crocodiles".

CD £13.00



4. Ladysmith Black Mambazo Long Walk To Freedom

This album is a collection of twelve new recordings of classic Ladysmith Black Mambazo songs, beautifully recorded with guest artists such as Taj Mahal and Emmylou Harris. Although they became world famous from their work on Paul Simon's album, Graceland in 1986, this CD begins with a song that was a hit in South Africa in 1973. Also includes a new bonus track featuring their founder, Joseph Shabalala, singing solo.

SACD Hybrid £14.00



5. Oscar Peterson Night Train

Too often an artist is only described as a legend after he dies. Oscar Peterson, born in Montreal in 1925, is a living legend, one of the greatest swing jazz pianists of all time. Despite suffering a stroke in 1993 he is still playing and touring the world. This album was recorded in 1962 by Norman Granz, on his Verve label. A classic trio recording, Peterson is joined by Ray Brown on bass, and Ed Thigpen on drums.

CD £10.00 LP 180gms £18.00



6. Maria Callas Verdi Arias

This CD is part of the excellent 'Legend' series, from EMI Classics. Callas is truly a legend, with her reputation enhanced nearly thirty years after her death. The CD contains various arias from the Verdi operas that she has recorded, and the DVD adds rare footage of Maria Callas performing arias by Massenet, Bellini and Puccini, filmed in Paris in 1965, as well as DVD highlights from the series.

CD + DVD £14.00

This selection of music is available for collection or by mail order. Contact us by phone, e-mail, fax or post. Our contact details are on the front page of this newsletter. Postage & Packing for up to 3 CDs is £1.50. There is a maximum charge of £4.00.

b&w ccm817 in-ceiling loudspeaker

These days customers want great sound, but may not want to see the speakers. Fortunately, this problem can be easily overcome if the room is being refurbished with the use of in-wall or in-ceiling speakers.

Our friends at **B&W** have for some years produced a good range of in-ceiling and in-wall loudspeakers. The best 'in-walls' are capable of staggering performance, however until now, in-ceiling models have lagged behind.

Dr John Dibb of B & W research (the designer of the fabulous 'Silver Signature' loudspeaker) was asked to create a 'no-compromise' in-ceiling design.

It utilises components from the 800 series and the result is an in-ceiling design that simply sounds like a truly, no-compromise standalone speaker. It is incredibly open and dynamic and needs to be heard to be believed. It goes without saying that back boxes (£150/pair) are a mandatory requirement, if you have any social consideration for the room above.

The CCM-817 speakers cost £850.00 per pair and are on permanent demonstration.

Our range also includes high-end in-wall speakers with heavy-duty enclosures that can be built into the wall with prices starting from around £300 a pair right up to several thousand pounds with performance levels to match. These include models from B&W such as the Signature 7NT (£750/pair), the Signature 8NT (£2500/per pair), the CWM-LCR8 (£845 each inc back) and the new **Meridian** DSP-420 digital active speaker system which costs £1265 each. Some speakers are priced individually as they may be used in home cinema set ups for centre channel.



linn's new majik system

Linn has introduced a new CD based music system (CD, pre and power amp) that in effect replaces their entry and mid-level options.

The Majik CD player (£1950) boasts technologies derived from the critically acclaimed CD12. In addition to this, it shares the now firmly established Switch Mode Power Supply that allows all of their products to run more efficiently and quietly. The player itself has the ability to play CD/CD-R/CD-RW/MP3/HDCD and DTS audio discs. It has both coaxial and optical digital outputs.

The Majik Kontrol pre-amp (£1750) is a high quality, two-channel audio pre-amplifier. It comes as standard with a switchable MM/MC phono-stage, five other line-level inputs and one tape output. There is also the handy addition of a headphone socket.

The final piece of the jigsaw is the Majik 2100 power amplifier (£1400) which is based on the highly acclaimed Chakra 2100. It produces 56W into 8ohms. All of the above are available in black or silver finishes.



visit to the classé factory

David, Jude and Paul recently visited Classé's Montreal headquarters to find out more about the company. The trip was an important one to familiarise ourselves with the company, its philosophy, production facility and get some technical background on the products.

Whilst the original founder, Michael Viglas, is still actively involved, the company now has an impressive team including Dave Nauber (formally VP of marketing at Madrigal/Levinson) who is VP of Classé and Alan Clarke (designer of the Linn CD12) who is the group Technical Officer for B&W and Classé.

Classé employs about 50 staff and it has many similarities to several of our existing UK specialist manufacturers. The attention to detail and its thorough testing at various stages in production impressed us greatly. Classé employs specialists in analogue and digital audio design, video electronics design, software development, and mechanical and industrial design. Their equipment is manufactured using both automated and hand built processes - with premium quality and often custom-made parts.

There was a great atmosphere in the factory and the workforce was obviously committed and took pride in their work. Finally we spent time in the purpose-built listening room which was one of the best we have ever heard.

This unique range of products, offers superb value and performance which is backed by a full five-year manufacturer warranty, which says a lot about the quality and reliability. They are naturally an excellent partner with the B&W Nautilus range of speakers.



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