

# On track

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

No. 44 Winter 2010



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

ARENA Magazine

## Christmas 2010 opening hours

Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	10am – 4pm
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> December	Closed
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> December	10am – 6pm
Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> December	10am – 8pm
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> December	10am – 6pm
Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> January	Closed
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January	Closed

## vat

All prices mentioned are at the current rate of 17.5%, and are subject to increase in the New Year when the VAT rate will change to 20%.

## at last a cure for the blues

### ARCAM BDP100 Blu-ray player

We are delighted to announce that Arcam is the first British specialist manufacturer to design and deliver a Blu-ray player, the BDP100. Part of the FMJ range, it offers a level of movie reproduction that few disc players can match at any price. Designed using high quality components to get the best out of the many formats including CD, Blu-Ray Disc (BD) including BD Live, DVD-Video, DVD-R, DVD-RW, CD-Audio (CDDA), CD-R & CD-RW.



Arcam launched its first DVD player nearly ten years ago with the DV88, acquiring a worldwide reputation for combining exceptional music and movie playback in a single device. We supplied DV88s to many of our customers and this unit was the standard-setting player at the time.

Ten years on, the new BDP100 is an obvious upgrade for anyone wanting the best possible quality from their DVDs and from the newer HD Blu-ray format. What is remarkable is that the new Blu-ray player, at £1,000, is the same price as the DV88 was in 2000. (See *Arcam promotion on page 5*).

To ensure the BDP100's music performance meets the same reference standards Arcam has included the class-leading Wolfson Audio 8741 digital to analogue converter (DAC) resulting in an audio performance comparable to a dedicated audiophile CD player.

In addition, while other Blu-ray devices suffer from slow disc load times, the BDP100 has been optimised to playback faster than most other players on the market.

The BDP100 is designed with a single purpose: to deliver the very best music and movie experience to discerning owners. It also features a full suite of discrete infra-red and RS232 codes making it perfect for integration within a bespoke home cinema installation.

Available in either black or silver, this is Arcam's first Blu-ray player, and it is planned that an optional 3D upgrade path will be offered next year.

We have already installed a significant number of these players and are delighted with the performance. Please call us to arrange a demonstration.

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[www.grahams.co.uk](http://www.grahams.co.uk)

## stocking fillers

### Christmas time is here again.

At this time of year, we often receive phone calls from parents and partners asking what they should buy their loved ones for Christmas.

Here are some ideas for Christmas stocking fillers. All are available on-line at [www.grahams.co.uk/](http://www.grahams.co.uk/) shop or in person from the store. We won't stop you from treating yourself either!



### B&W P5 Headphones (£249)

The B&W P5s are the ultimate in high quality commuter headphones. Being close-backed they are excellent at blocking out external sound and also won't annoy the people around you by leaking music. Ear pads made from the finest calf leather and memory foam make these headphones extremely comfortable to wear. Classic styling and high quality materials ensure they will never spoil your look. Include B&W's superb sound performance and the P5s will deliver you happily all the way to your destination.



### B&W Zeppelin Mini (£299)

The Zeppelin Mini is the cutest way to easily add music to another room. With a small footprint and high quality sound you can orientate your iPhone/iTouch in either portrait or landscape mode to make use of Apple's cover flip mode whilst docked. It also has analogue or digital inputs on the back for anything else you may want to connect.



## naim ndx

Following the highly successful 'Uniti' series and the HDX Hard-Disk player, Naim Audio has just launched the NDX: Naim's first dedicated network music player. Primarily, an UPnP renderer, it can 'stream' ripped CDs or high resolution downloads stored on a Computer Network drive, a Naim HDX or Naim UnitiServe. The design of the NDX draws significantly on the acclaimed and widely successful Naim DAC.

The NDX has both analogue and digital outputs, and has onboard internet radio, an optional FM/DAB module, three digital inputs and both digital iPod/iPhone input and USB playback.

The NDX is designed to be used with Naim Audio's reference series amplification. It can be upgraded with the addition of an XPS or PS555 external power supply and/or a Naim DAC. It can be controlled by the handset supplied or a new version of Naim's n-Stream iTouch/iPhone/iPad app, which will also give control over Naim preamps.

The NDX will stream and playback up to 24bit/96kHz resolution, including all common formats such as WAV, FLAC, AIFF, AAC WMA, Ogg Vorbis and MP3 files, and supports gapless playback.

It has integrated Wi-Fi, provided purely for convenience, although we always advise the use of a wired Ethernet connection for best possible performance.

The NDX should be on demonstration by the time you receive this newsletter. It costs £2,995.

## b&w cm8

When B&W launched their stand-mount CM5 and floor-standing CM9 loudspeakers around a year ago, it was clear they had found a robust formula for producing a highly musical product at a relatively affordable price.

Added to the range are the new CM8s which fit in between the CM5 and 9. The CM8's midrange unit uses the same FST technology created for the original 800 series of loudspeakers. The tweeter is the same as that used in the CM9 and this is seamlessly coupled to the twin bass units.

Just before going to press we received our first pair. We were very impressed by the super slim styling and could only hope that the sound complimented the looks. B&W have again raised the bar at this very competitive price point and immediately we were struck by a very open, musical and lively sound. They come in a wide range of finishes including satin white and piano black. We've kept the best bit until last: £1,250.00 per pair.



## arcam rCube

Another new product from manufacturer Arcam is the rCube, a compact, unassuming, uniquely styled and fantastic sounding portable speaker system.

Using the same components found in its reference FMJ range, the rCube is perfect for iPod lovers as it features a handy top-panel iPod/iPhone dock. Not just iPods but virtually any device such as non-iPod MP3/CD players, laptops or games consoles can be connected to the rCube via the 3.5mm mini-jack auxiliary input.

Furthermore, you can take it around the house, down the garden or by the pool, as the rCube has a built-in rechargeable battery that can last up to 8 hours. With 150 watt RMS total power output, a 2-way speaker design and components designed with audio quality in mind, the rCube delivers an impressive sound.

With an optional wireless dongle (adaptor) connected to your iPod, you can stream music from your iPod to the Arcam rCube wirelessly. If you have music stored on your PC, just connect the optional dongle and stream music from your computer hard drive to the Arcam rCube. This amazing product can also share music with up to eight other rCubes or rDACs and can be used to create a rudimentary multi-room system.

At £500, the rCube offers incredible value for the performance and flexibility delivered. Initially rCube will be available in Black but will shortly also be available in Scandinavian White.



## arcam rDAC

The Arcam rDAC is, as the name suggests, an outboard Digital-to-Analogue Converter to improve the quality of digital sources such as your computer, a Sonos system or even a CD player. The rDAC would be a good upgrade for CD players as high as Arcam's own CD17 to improve performance. Able to take several sources the rDAC can take Optical Toslink, Coaxial or a USB input.

Arcam are also releasing a version of the rDAC that will allow you to wirelessly stream music from your PC using the Klear Wireless technology included in their new rCube. All that is necessary is an rWave wireless Dongle available optionally at roughly £90. The rDAC costs £300 and is available now.



*The Arcam rDAC*

## stocking fillers

### Sonos iPod Dock

Sonos has continued in its tradition of releasing savvy updates that are consumer driven and everyone would like to see, with the inclusion of the new Sonos iPod dock. This is a very exciting update with many extremely useful features. It is completely wireless so even if your Sonos amplifiers are hidden away, this only requires power to work.

The dock will not only allow you to play music stored on an iPod/iTouch/iPhone in any room, it can also give you access to your iTunes playlists, something that was quite tricky previously.

The music is streamed digitally from the dock to maintain the best possible music quality, it will allow you to use some music apps and, of course, it will recharge your iPod. At only £99 this is a must for anyone with an existing Sonos system and an iPod.



## grahams web shop

In July, we launched our new-look web shop selling a range of hi-fi products including speakers, speaker cables, furniture, all-in-one systems, radios, a selection of our recommended music and a host of hi-fi spares and accessories. It is designed to provide an enjoyable and convenient way for customers to purchase items whether a replacement drive belt for their turntable or a special gift. We are continually updating the range of products we offer and also all the stocking fillers mentioned here are available to purchase. The web shop which can be accessed via the shop link on our homepage or at [www.grahams.co.uk/shop](http://www.grahams.co.uk/shop)

# new products



## the what?

The What? is a trio comprising Markus Chakra on guitar and vocals, Ben Thorne on bass and backing vocals and custom install engineer Alex Lewis on drums. The What? has a unique sound and musicianship that is inspiring and powerful. A sound that has been developed over the last three years which has also led to memorable live shows, notorious off stage antics and a soon to be released, debut album.

In February 2009, The What? released its first eponymous EP, as featured in a previous edition of this newsletter and over the past year, while still playing regular shows in and around London, The What? has put on its own night of acts called the Roll'n Rock Cabaret. To add spice to the night The What? includes stand up comedy, acoustic performers as well as their own music.

In November, The What? has been back into the studio to record their first full length album at the legendary Fortress Studios in Old Street, home to everyone from Coldplay to Kasabian. The band is aiming to have a CD launch party early in the new year.

[www.thewhatmusic.com](http://www.thewhatmusic.com) to hear audio, or find music on Napster, iTunes and other commonly used web streaming services.

## naim ovator s400

Naim started work on developing the Ovator more than four years ago as a direct response to requests from its dealers for a high-performance speaker that was easy to set up, had stunning aesthetics, and sounded great.

The result of this was the launch of the Ovator S600 loudspeaker in mid-2009. Naim has now launched the second model in its Ovator range. The design brief of the S400 was simple: to take all the elements of the S600 loudspeaker and to produce a smaller model more suited to smaller rooms but which would not compromise the essential musical communication.

Using the same Balanced Mode Radiator (BMR cone) for the midband and treble, it is suitable for amplifiers rated from 35W up to 130W per channel. The Ovator S400 will be assembled at the Naim factory in Salisbury, in the UK, using drivers made for Naim in Germany and cabinets sourced from a specialist cabinet-maker. Naim itself will manufacture the S400's crossover networks.

Offering tremendous value for money at £2,995, or £3,295 depending on finish, they will be available in Cherry, Ash and Black Zebrano as standard finishes. The special finishes at the higher price, are available in Rosewood and Satin White.

We are looking forward to stocking, demonstrating and enjoying this new speaker by Naim.



## meridian m80

Meridian Audio has introduced the new M80, a complete, high-performance compact entertainment system that shares all the technical features and sonic distinction of its predecessor, the F80.

The design is the same as the F80, but now finished in three hand-stitched leather finishes: Obsidian Black, Chestnut and Ivory. Like its predecessor, the M80 includes a host of internal sources, including CD, DVD and DAB/FM/AM radio, as well as analogue and digital input connectivity to a range of music sources, including iTunes via AirPort Express, personal computers or even a Meridian Soolos Digital Media system.

The i80 iPod Dock included with every M80 offers the perfect way to both listen to – and charge – an iPod. The special i80 link also allows the choice of music from an iPod to be selected via the M80 front panel – or using the M80 remote control.

Containing a powerful Meridian 2.1 DSP Loudspeaker System the M80 can fill a large room with sound. Thanks to its DSP capabilities, it can be enjoyed at low levels and at close range from a desk or tabletop. The M80 costs £1,495.



# new products



## arcam promotion

To celebrate the launch of the BDP100 Blu-ray player Arcam will offer, from 1st October, a package promotion with its companion piece the AVR500. Our biggest selling AV packages of recent years have been the AVR300/350 and DV79/137 combinations, so now customers will be able to purchase both the new AVR500 and BDP100 for £3,000.00. That's a saving of over £500! The promotion is valid until the end of 2010.

## linn updates

### Colour Updates

Linn has recently introduced two new colour options for its speakers. The new colours are Oak and Walnut which join the existing options of Black Ash, Rosenut, Cherry and White. The existing woods have also been enhanced further with a more lustrous finish to give them an even more luxurious look and feel. Linn has also made choosing your speakers easier and more flexible by allowing you to order all of its speakers in the same choice of colours throughout all the ranges rather than giving you special options for one range and not another.

Linn has not stopped there, however, and is also offering a colour match service. This is, once again, available for any of the speaker ranges and, for a relatively small fee, will allow you to purchase your Linn speakers in any one of 200 standard high gloss finishes. You may even choose a custom finish to complement the interior of your home.

### Akurate Updates

Linn has announced it is updating the source, pre-amp and power amps in the Akurate range. These will all have a beautiful new casing with the Akurate DS and the Akurate Kontrol both receiving major internal upgrades to improve the audio performance. Linn has kept the option of upgrading your systems from passive to Aktiv using more amplifiers and external speaker crossovers to give a substantial upgrade to the sound performance. The new Akurate system was released in early in November.

## secondhand and ex-demo stock

Occasionally we take equipment in part-exchange from customers who have purchased new products from us because they are changing or upgrading their systems. This is a great way to change, and in many circumstances improve, individual components within your system. It also removes the burden of having to sell equipment privately. We are able therefore to offer secondhand equipment to other customers who are interested in upgrading or just keen to snap up a bargain! As well as secondhand stock, we also occasionally have ex-demonstration items available to purchase. All secondhand items are supplied with a six-month warranty.

A selection of both secondhand and ex-demonstration items are listed on our 'Special Offers' page which can be found within the Hi-Fi section on our website.

If you see something of interest or have a general enquiry please call our sales team on 020 7226 5500.



## facebook & twitter

Grahams Hi-Fi is now on the two most used Social Media networks in the world! Find our "Grahams Hi-Fi" page on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @grahamshifi. We promise only to say something when there is something worth saying!

We are Social Media novices so please feel free to make suggestions and recommend things you would like to see on these pages.

## to have it all

This month's "to have it all" features an installation we carried out in Scotland recently. The country house, dating back to 16th century was completely re-furbished and modernized to provide a great mix of contemporary and traditional design. The client, a customer of Grahams for over 25 years, called us in initially to deal with the design and installation of a multi-room music system. The client's extensive collection of over 1500 CDs was already partly digitized, but needed to be managed in a more coherent manner. The Meridian Sooloos system, with its large, clear and easy to use touch screen seemed to provide the solution.

Aesthetics were very important and whilst the Meridian digital active speakers would have been an obvious choice, the final selection was the Definitive Technology Mythos 1 speakers which look absolutely stunning in the large receptions rooms. The kitchen uses a pair of B&W XT2 wall mounted speakers. Music in three of the rooms is powered via Naim Audio NAP 200 power amplifiers and others rooms using an ADA 6 channel amplifier.

At the time of our first visit, we were told that BT was supplying the home network hardware along with the phone system and we noted the Lutron Graphik Eye single room lighting controllers were being fitted into a number of rooms. Because these items appeared to be in-hand, we concentrated on the hi-fi installation part of the house. As the project progressed the client started asking our advice about the cost and specification of the network and phones as well as how to expand the lighting to control the exterior grounds. We offered to take a look and eventually ended up re-engineering the single room lighting control system to enable us to install Lutron Homeworks. This gave the advantage of simplifying the number of keypads, improving their function, adding the ability to use iPad and iTouch for control, providing remote programming, remote access and easier future expansion.

The final result is spectacular as the photos show.

When we examined the BT proposal for the phones and network it became obvious that it was considerably over specified, which was consequently reflected in the price. Grahams re-specified the Cisco network hardware and installed the latest Panasonic IP phone system which provides all of the features required, as well as internal intercom and expansion to the door and gate entry system.

Other features of the systems we installed included PS Audio power management and filtering devices with UPS (Uninterruptable Power Supplies), which allow us to keep important equipment running without interruption as well as giving us remote monitoring of the power usage and being able to remotely re-boot items should the need arises.

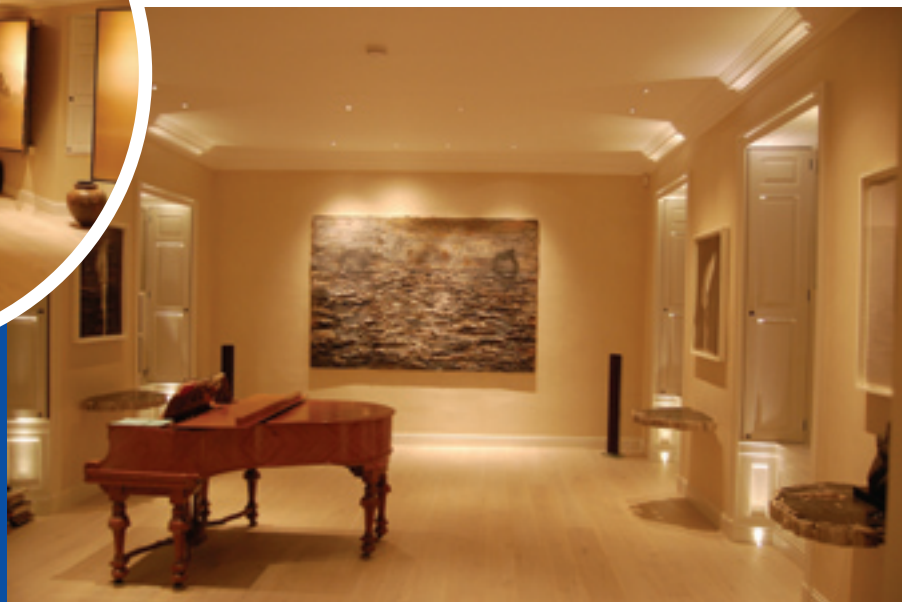
We can fully support the Meridian Sooloos system, the Cisco data network, the Lutron lighting system and even the Panasonic IP based phone system from our London base. The end result is a beautiful home which has been enhanced with with 21st century technology.



*The lighting and hi-fi are controlled by the iPad*

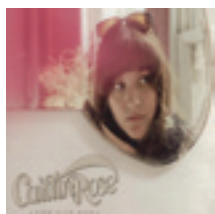


*Meridian Control 15*



## to have it all

# grahams recommended music



## 1. Caitlin Rose Own Side Now

This may be a debut album, but following on from her EP 'Dead Flowers' last year, she is already a very assured singer-songwriter. She is only twenty-three, but she sounds like she has been making music for years. This thoroughly enjoyable modern, country-tinged album was recorded in Nashville, where she has lived since she was seven, and interestingly has not yet been released in her home country. The album was produced by Mark Nevers of Lamb Chop fame.

**CD £12.00**



## 2. David Bowie Station To Station Special Edition

This re-issue contains Bowie's 1976 album re-mastered from the original stereo analogue masters. It sounds better than ever, and enclosed with it is a two CD live concert, recorded on 23rd March 1976 at the Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, New York. This concert, known as the Thin White Duke bootleg, has not been officially released before and contains some of Bowie's best live performances, including definitive versions of 'Suffragette City' and 'Life On Mars'.

**3 x CD BOXSET £15.00**



## 3. Mavis Staples You Are Not Alone

Sixty years after she began singing with her family group, The Staple Singers, Mavis Staples has been making some mighty fine soul and gospel music on her own lately. This joyful new album, which follows 2007's excellent 'We'll Never Turn Back', is produced by Jeff Tweedy at Wilco's studio, 'The Loft'. Mavis is joined by her band, as well as members of Wilco, in an album of covers and traditional music, as well as two new songs written for her by Tweedy.

**CD £12.00**  
**2 x LPs 45 rpm (inc CD!) £25.00**



## 4. Richard Thompson Dream Attic

This is an album of new material, but, unusually, it was recorded in front of a live audience, during a series of shows at San Francisco's Great American Music Hall, early in 2010. Thompson, along with his four-piece band, obviously got his adrenaline running as he produces some blistering guitar solos as he, in his own words, "captures the energy of the moment". The limited edition CD includes a bonus disc, containing acoustic demos of all thirteen tracks.

**2 x CDs £14.00**  
**2 x 180gmm LPs £18.00**



## 5. Ray Charles The Genius Sings The Blues

This album came out in 1961, on Atlantic Records, and consists of twelve songs that a young Ray Charles recorded between 1952 and 1960. Everything about this album is outstanding, from the iconic cover art, a photo taken of Charles by legendary photographer, Lee Friedlander, to the music, his own brew of rhythm and blues, gospel and the blues. For this version Mobile Fidelity went back to the original mono masters to correct previous problems of static and noise.

**SACD (CD compatible) £28.00**  
**LP 180gmm £28.00**



## 6. Neil Cowley Trio Radio Silence

This is the third album from the Neil Cowley Trio, and their first on the Naim Label. Their debut CD, 'Displaced', won the 2007 BBC Jazz Award for Best Album. The group consists of Neil Cowley on piano, with Richard Sadler on double bass, and Evan Jenkins on drums. Cowley's percussive and energetic piano playing blends seamlessly with his rhythm section, making the trio one of the most exciting groups on the British jazz scene. Listen out for the hidden track at the end.

**CD £10.00**  
**24-bit download £14.00**  
**LP £18.00**

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 the newsletter. Postage & packing for 1 CD is £1.00 and for up to 4 CDs is £3.00. 1 LP is £3.00 and there is a maximum charge of £5.00. There is a 10% discount for the purchase of all six recordings

## loewe updates

For anyone who read our last newsletter, or has been in to see us recently, you may have noticed the brand new Loewe Individual range using LED technology. These beautiful looking (and very thin) TVs have really set a new performance benchmark for Loewe, to the extent that it is now updating a number of its other models, starting with the Connect. The smaller Connect 26 has already been upgraded to LED technology with the 32" and 40" coming in the next few months.

Loewe is also taking a step towards making its TVs appeal to a much larger market with the addition of the BBC's iPlayer. Possibly one of the most sought after services by customers, this is currently under test in London and Loewe hopes it will be ready for the new TVs in time for Christmas.

iPlayerHD





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## 2011 calendar

Our bespoke Grahams 2011 Calendar is now available for collection. This year we have produced a beautiful calendar featuring some of the installations we have done recently. We will be doing a similar calendar for 2012 and if you would like your installation featured please let us know. These calendars are a limited print run, so if you would like to reserve one for collection please call or email us ([sue@grahams.co.uk](mailto:sue@grahams.co.uk)) so we can put one aside for you.

## staffing

Grahams is well known for the quality and experience of its sales team. Each tends to specialise in different aspects of our product range which means we can offer in-depth knowledge across our whole range of products and services. Our sales people can visit your home to give you personal advice on your current and future requirements. A measure of the quality of our team is that we have customers all over the world who rely totally on our advice and experience.

Supporting our sales force are knowledgeable project managers and experienced and trained installation engineers. We are fortunate to have strong in-house programming skills offering the latest home automation technology from Crestron to the Apple iPad.

Music is something that is of key interest to most of our staff. In particular John Oakman is an accomplished classical singer, Darren plays bass guitar and Alex is a drummer.

Project Manager Darren Hancock is a keen runner and has been training for a year to take part in three races over the next five months to raise £3,000 for the British Heart Foundation following his father's heart attack in 2008.

The first race which was successfully completed on November 7th was a three man team event covering 8 miles through Wantisden Valley woodlands in Suffolk with physical and mental obstacles on the way which included swimming across a river, wading in chest high bog water through a pitch black tunnel, rope net scrambles and much more.

In December he will be taking part in the Helly Hansen Adventure race which is also a three-man team event. This will consist of a 10km run through woodland, 24km off road mountain biking and 1.5km kayaking. Again this will also have a number of physical and mental challenges on the way.

The final chapter in his challenge will be the Virgin London Marathon on April 11th.

Darren has a Just Giving page to let you sponsor him in all the above challenges:  
[www.justgiving.com/bhfruplechallenge](http://www.justgiving.com/bhfruplechallenge)

We wish him all the best and will keep you posted on his successes in our next newsletter.

## email version of newsletter

Our newsletters are published on our website as PDFs which can be downloaded. If you would prefer to receive our newsletter electronically, please email us: [newsletter@grahams.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@grahams.co.uk) with your contact details and we'll add you to our email list.

## charity update

In our last newsletter we mentioned that Sue Spilsbury was raising money in memory of our MD's wife Eva Graham. We are pleased to inform you that a total of £2,168.19 was raised for Macmillan Cancer Trust. Thanks to all of you who so kindly donated to this worthy cause.



*Eva and Tony Graham on their wedding day in 1957*