



Cables Section

This month Tony Bolton looks at The Chord company cables.

The Chord Company was founded in 1985 by Sally Kennedy to satisfy the demand for high quality interconnect cables for use with Naim equipment. Two years later the first version of the Cobra interconnect was introduced, followed a few years after that by the original version of the Chameleon. The new versions of both these cables, alongside the new Crimson model are under review here.

As is my usual practice, I gave each cable 48 hours running in on a Blue Horizon Proburn cable burn in accelerator, before settling down to do some listening with the leads connecting the Leema Acoustics Antilla 2S Eco CD player to the matching Tucana II amplifier. I listened to each of the cables for a few hours before doing the comparative listening using the aria 'Celeste Aida', from Verdi's opera of the same name, as sung by Placido Domingo ('Domingo Favourites', Deutsche Grammophon 445 525-2) and the track 'Ja Vidi' by Christophe Goze from the album 'Chill Arabia III' (Bal De Lune records. LUNECD19). This being a fusion of Middle Eastern and contemporary Western beats and sounds.

HI-FI WORLD

INTERCONNECT CABLES CHORD CRIMSON VEE 3

**CHORD
CRIMSON VEE 3
INTERCONNECT
£55 FOR 1M**



EXCELLENT - extremely capable

VALUE - keenly priced

VERDICT

A big sounding cable that will add a bit of zest to a flat sounding system.

FOR

- fast bass
- good imaging
- well projected mid-range

AGAINST

- slightly forward high frequencies

The Chord Company Ltd.
+44 (0) 1980 625700
www.chord.co.uk



The new Crimson cable has taken the place of the Chrysalis as the starting point in the Chord range. It uses two sets of multi-stranded oxygen free copper conductors, arranged in a twisted pair configuration and covered with a

dual layer shield. The ABS plug casing is new and covers gold plated contacts inside the RCA phono plug.

SOUND QUALITY

Starting with the Domingo piece, I was immediately struck by the impressive level of bass output for a

cable at this price point. Although not hugely deep, it gave an impression of weight and solidity that surprised me. Domingo's voice was quite well handled although there was a tendency to a slightly nasal quality to his voice.

Changing to 'Ja Vidi' I found that the opening drum beats were well described and the beat had a fair amount of get up and go to it. Mid range sounds had a strong presence although the tambourine had a slightly splashy quality to it.

CONCLUSION

Bearing in mind that this cable will be partnered with budget electronics, the tonal balance should add a bit of zest to the sound while retaining a good overall balance. It could be a little forward for some systems though.

INTERCONNECT CABLES THE CHORD COBRA VEE 3



This new incarnation of the tried and trusted Cobra interconnect is made with twin silver-plated oxygen free copper conductors, insulated with FEP and covered with what is described as a high density, high frequency shield. The VEE 3 RCA plug is silver plated and con-

nected to the lead with silver solder.

SOUND QUALITY

This time Domingo's voice had somewhat greater body and depth to it. The trumpets were better controlled and smoother sounding, while the violins seemed to reach higher than they managed on

the Crimson, but sounded more controlled and realistic.

The tambourine sounds on 'Ja Vidi' certainly sounded more inviting through this cable, losing the slight splashy effect and gaining a more three dimensional shape. The bass was noticeably deeper and I felt as though I could see the bottom of the note more clearly. The mid-range had a better sense of integration into the music and the whole sound felt better balanced.

CONCLUSION

I have a 20 year old pair of Cobra interconnects and comparing these to the new model, I could hear the family resemblance, but the performance of the new model is streets ahead in every aspect. This lead is well enough managed that it could be used in a far more expensive system without disgracing itself.

**THE CHORD
COBRA VEE 3
INTERCONNECT
£95 FOR 1M**



OUTSTANDING - amongst the best

VALUE - keenly priced

VERDICT

A well mannered interconnect that punches above its price point with a smooth and well integrated sound.

FOR

- balanced sound
- open soundstage
- smoothness

AGAINST

- nothing at the price

The Chord Company Ltd.
+44 (0) 1980 625700
www.chord.co.uk

INTERCONNECT CABLES CHORD CHAMELEON VEE 3



This is another long-standing design that has had an effective make-over. The insides consist of three sets of silver-plated conductors, covered with a 93% braid and a cotton fibre wrap to suppress mechanical noise. The RCA plugs are

silver plated with an ABS outer shell.

SOUND QUALITY

For the first time I found that I was being made aware of the background sounds and echos in the studio. Each of the performers seemed to have gained some space around them

and it made for a very inviting listen. The texture of all of the sounds was filled out and better described, with the attack of the trumpets having particular impact, although it was very well controlled.

The sway of the rhythms in 'Ja Vidi' seemed to be more obvious with this cable and the soundstage seemed to be occupied by sounds that had matured and put on a little weight. The bass seemed to go very deep and be quite substantial, whilst retaining a good level of agility.

CONCLUSION

This is a cable that, despite the fairly moderate price, offers performance that is significantly above that expected at this price point. It is well mannered, smooth and detailed. It may be too revealing for budget electronics though.

**CHORD
CHAMELEON VEE
3 INTERCONNECT
£120 FOR 1M**



OUTSTANDING - amongst the best

VALUE - keenly priced

VERDICT

An excellent cable offering a taste of real high end performance at an affordable price.

FOR

- smooth treble
- very deep bass
- open and detailed sound

AGAINST

- can be revealing so partner carefully

The Chord Company Ltd.
+44 (0) 1980 625700
www.chord.co.uk