



A linear Design Ikon

Many are those of us who have a relationship with danish industrial design, being it the chairs of Arne Jacobsen, the PH lamp, Heins elipse table or kitchenware from Stelton, all timeless pieces found in many a home. But with the exeption of B&O, not so much of this enheritance cross over into in the hi-fi industry. Up until now. Time to meet the Magne Bergmann!

TROND TORGNESKAR

Magne is Bergmanns entry level instalment in their reference turntable line. It appears with a range of of very sophisticated solutions, not necessary new, but not previously resolved so elegant and innovative.

The arm is a Tangential and playback is therefore in a straight line, exactly as the LP's are engraved. This eliminates the tracking and symmetrical playback faults you inexorably have to deal with with standard radial arms.

The arm is also air-borne, which eliminates rumble from the drive and the usual friction. It also limits the possibilities of mechanical transferred vibration, and protects the most sensitive parts from this problem.

But this is not all- the heavy platter rest simply on air. The platter has a mechanical contact with the spindle,



but again there are few mechanical contact points and an absence of possible distortion sources that apply. The platter are also far better insulated from the substrate in this manner, so that the construction does not need to incorporate spring suspension or an extremely massive base, but achieves a reasonable unsurpassed degree of insulation using only fibre board.

COMPLETED

All this elegant technology are given a thorough and extremely sober packaging. Design-wise it belongs among the most beautiful items I've seen, and I know that beautiful and fidelity is two words not often found in the same sentence. This time it is definitely justified. The clean-cut matte finish and aesthetics and minimalistic design that almost automatically bring to mind Bauhaus (and then I think design collective, not DIY store) allows Magne to appear with a sleek, yet powerful design. Arne Jacobsen, Le Corbusier and Jonathan Ive would gladly have had their name on this product, if you understand what I mean.

SOLD!

Yes, as mentioned, both air bearing and the tangential tracking tone arm has been tried before. And all of us that at one time or another has tried to fiddle with this stuff, know that there are challenges. A tangential tracking tone arm must be leveled extremely accurate not to have problems, and the bearing of the arm and platter require large amounts of air.

This means a pump and pumps tend to give of a slight sound. The people behind Bergmann probably know that too much fiddling does not sell in the end, just as they obviously know about the house's interior minister who will allow the fathers vinyl fetish to flourish, only if the instrument is an aesthetic pleasure. And when they powers to design a turntable so hushed in design is superior, of course, leveling an arm is just peanuts. It is made with two screws at the arm base. And the air pump is built into a box along with the player's separate power supply and is surprisingly silent. Not totally quiet to be true, but it turned out to be due to minor shipping damage. There is something about the Danes. They are better than us at football, they are very nice people, they know their business, and they are good at pastry, quite simply the good life, but most of all in design. Bergmann Magne is simply the most beautiful record player I've ever seen. But I have also assorted Danish design classics around the house, so I know the lingo.

I was sold before I had heard Magne play! And God knows play, it did.

IN THE REFERENCE SET UP

Magne was duly set up in Fidelity's reference rig with a Parasound JC 3 riaa and Dynavector XX2 cartridge.

The first LP out was the second Souvenir release from the Trondheim soloists on 2L. It is a record I know very well, and that I regard as one of the very best sounding classic discs available. I've played it countless times on my

turntable, used in the evaluation of much of the equipment I have had back for review, and not least, I have heard the ensemble play some of this program live.

The way Bergmann Magne renders this extremely intense recording was still a revelation.

We are being presented with a lot of extremely good equipment in Knut's listening room, and much of the very best equipment has a lot of similarities, as it should be due to it's purpose of rendering as close to reality as possible. Meanwhile, there are some components that have apparent qualities that stand out in class. And I don't spill any beans if I already reveal that Bergmann Magne is in this class.

GIGANTIC SOUND

The sound was simply gigantic. Not only arge, as with much of the best equipment, but nothing less than gigantic.

The musicians became extremely three dimensional, located in a huge room. Transparency, or more correctly the translucency was at least as dramatic. Just like Magne has an elegant visual authority, and an indisputable authority also in the way it reproduces the music. The sound is so open, clean, fluent and three-dimensional that it almost requires adaptation. There is so much information, so many details and so much naturalness and timbre of the sound presented that it actually takes some time to take in what is going on, especially if you have not been exposed to a vinyl player of this caliber before. It is actually quite strikingly apparent that the absence of mechanical

noise from the arm and platter creates a transparency and a resolution that is intense.

You hear it all. Intonation, timbre, timing, space, physicality, squeaks of chairs and instruments ... All the details and the little things that create the goosbump feeling of being there. Bergmann Magne plays with a fine naturalness that takes one step to the side and let the music all the way to the forefront so that you almost catch yourself in stifling a sneeze in order not to disturb the musicians.

When the same musicians start playing, it is with the unforced explosivity and viscosity of everything that happens, a degree of transparency and nudity that can only be described as reality. Some might argue that it is just barren, though not thin and unobtrusive, but physical, dynamic and totally real. Naked as in reality.

The analogue woolen blanket that some are looking for, you will not find here. What you will find however, is a relaxed, almost arrogant easiness that is brutally explosive when the music calls for it.

EXTREME INSIGHT

Bergmann Magne reproduces a tactile translucency and is extremely transparent. This means that errors, whether they are committed by those who play or the equipment you play on, does not have anywhere to hide. It gives nothing away freely, and it means that believing you can get away with a pickup or a RIAA who do not inhabit the same qualities, is dumbfounded. And not the least, it is counterproductive. Parasound JC 3 and Dynavectors equally stunning good XX2 was symbiotic partner to Bergmann Magne. They possess the same translucent transparency and lightning resilience, while not for a moment lacking in substance and authority.

The often sheer curtain between the performer and the listener is not there. You take part in the music with such a trio of components in your system, and it is often an intense, but always riveting experience.

Many components contribute to an interpretation of reality. Light accentuated midrange, perhaps? Or a little rhythmic midrange hump, some tiny focus on the top to create the illusion of resolution when in real life it is only a matter of distortion. Magne subscribe obviously not to that kind of reality. However it is linear in all senses of the word, both in playback and mechanic. Magne is through luminous, dramatic but sober. There is no exaggeration, only transparency and musicality. The requirement is both on

the equipment, and the listener. There is no hokum. God knows that it impresses, it just don't need hokum to communicate the music's soul. It peels away the layers between performer and listener by removing noise, resonance and distortion.

What you as a listener is left with is what happened in the recording moment. You hear the soloist placement without any doubt. You hear what the soloist is communicating. You hear more of the way he plays, the instrument he plays, notes his contribution and how they build up the instruments body and eventually is let loose in the air. Not least the room he plays in and how it influences the interaction. You hear if there is a subway under the church or the recording studio they play in if the rest of your equipment is up to the task you will hear more magic. More presence. More of the poetry of the moment. If it was there in the first place, Magne makes sure you hear it.

SHEER INTENSITY

The intensity is like a good performance, and therein lies the naked. The reality is in fact always stripped bare. And to approach it, we must speak a little sonically nudism. When recorded music is rendered as open and naturally as here, it quickly becomes an addictive experience. And I know what I'm on about. My own Wilson Benesch was probably born out of the same approach to the musical reality, but Bergmann Magne has probably even a bit more of all the WB Gramophone is so insanely good at. Insight, transparency, dynamics, naturalness and indisputable transparent foundation. The feeling of really being

present and hear everything that goes on. It is usually far more than most of us have ever been aware of.

CONCLUSION

With a record collection and a really good set up, one is really in possession of a time machine. Equipment capabilities might move us to the moment the notes were created, either in Abbey Road, Rainbow Studio or Newport. We will take part in the magic, and we can experience it again as often as we want. We're not listening to recorded music, but a performance.

To play a disc becomes an event, not a platitude.

If the goal is to achieve such a moment, Bergmann Magne is one of the best tools I know. A greater compliment to a hifi component, I'm not able to give. If there is anything I could imagine changing?

Well, if the pump is completely silent, we will not know the final verdict until we check another one. Mechanically it was a delight, but my job is to nitpick so I could wish for the raising and lowering mechanism to have a greater degree of attenuation. Cartridge's are expensive and pristine. And when we're on the arm, I think maybe the internal arm cable could have been a bit more solid. It was a little too much heart in throat-factor when I dismantled the pickup before packing. But this is in the name of it, just nitpicking.

Bergmann Magne is one of the very best gramophones I have heard, and in relation to the superior sound quality the price is not at all intimidating. It is admittedly pricey, but not at all expensive. I have already started saving.

Price: NOK 79 900

Importer: NAT



Mr. and Mrs. Bergmann with the Magne.