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TU-800M Tribute 唱片調聲墊

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HARMONIX TU-800MM “Tribue” Million Maestro LP Tuning Matte Naturally Reveal the Elegant Texture

For those experienced audiophiles should have bought some accessories for their own Hi-Fi system, for example, spikes, platforms, sand tuning pieces, CD Mat.....etc. Most of the reason was to improve the sound performance of their audio equipment by eliminating the resonance; to reduce the vibration from inside or outside of their equipment, so as to obtain the “true sound” from their equipment without any coloration. This is, to hope that the tuning devices would restore the sound system of its own “beautiful sound quality”. On the other hand, to make good use of the tuning devices would beautify the “beauty of make up”. However, all tuning devices are either “absolutely” or “relatively” effective. The “absolutely” tuning devices can restore the excellence and shortcomings of the audio system details; the “relatively” tuning devices can be a magic tool in the sound tuning. However, according to my experience, those “absolutely” tuning devices are rarely available in the market, just like the phoenix feature or the unicorn horn. In fact, many of them are even counter-productive. My requirement of the “absolutely” tuning devices should basically master at least these two elements - “not to change the frequency response” and “not to change the music character”. Lately, the analog record music get recovery, and has become unavoidable music enjoyment tool in the audio market, and along with fact, there are many different record mats available for the vinyl nowadays; with different materials or thickness, in the price range of hundreds of dollars to thousands of dollars. Today, the vinyl tuning device I am listening to, and its price would be one of the most expensive type, at the list price of HK\$10,000.-!

It is product designed by the famous Japanese tuning master – Mr. Kiuchi. Thus, there is no objection for the price.

Hand made “Magic Mat”

The Harmonix tuning devices created by Mr. Kiuchi has long been recognized by the world. Its products starting from the tuning feet, AC power line stabilizer, audio cables, CD Player, Preamp & Power amp as The Heavy Duty Kit on my turntable is made of graphite. Therefore, I can try this “magic mat” without any problem. Also, due to the thickness of this “magic mat” is 0.5mm, I need to adjust the VTA of the tonearm by 0.5mm as well.

well as loudspeakers, and all of them are the great products. (You may check it out from its website: www.combak.net for details). Several years ago, I did buy its ALS-777 AC Line Stabilizer for my own recording use, and I am still very satisfied with its performance.

Today, this TU-800MM LP record tuning matte is the new product from Mr. Kiuchi, and every single piece is made by hand. When I am holding it with hand, my first impression was its pretty light weighed, and feel like a piece of paper (just feel a bit rough when you touch it). The manufacturer did not disclose its working principle and what material it is made of. On its surface, it is just like the clock to be divided averagely into twelve cells, which in the clockwise direction of its 12, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 o'clock position to place a silver metal device in the length of 8cm and width of 1cm. Then on its 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 o'clock position to place 3 silver metal dots of circle in the diameter of 1cm. Its back is just a completely black “paper”. Its thickness is only 0.5mm and its weight is just 47g. The LP vinyl will only be in contact with these silver metal strips and dots.

Things to Pay Attention

My listening system is as follows: the British Nottingham Analogue Space 294 plus the Heavy Duty Kit, Nottingham Anna 12” Toneone, Japanese Accuphase AC-5 MC cartridge, American Rogue Audio HERA Reference vacuum tube preamp, Chinese made LM503PA 845 vacuum tube power amplifier (both the 845 and 300B tubes were replaced with the German Elrog products), Canadian Verity Parsifal Ovation loudspeakers, and the American Zu Audio interconnect cables, powercords and speaker cables.

Before you use it, please pay attention to the manufacturer’s advice : none of the other mats made of the absorbing materials i.e. plastic, vinyl or leather etc. should be placed underneath this “magic mat”. Otherwise, its sound effect will be greatly reduced!

Absolutely “Shocking”

As I have two different LP clamps: the Stillpoint and the first generation of the Harmonix “magic claw”. Therefore, I can do my review in detail. Firstly, I tried to use the “magic mat” with the Stillpoint clamp.

I actually think my own system sound pretty balance and pleasant, and if there is any changes made to it would easily be noticeable. When the music was played with this “magic mat”, I immediately discovered that the imaging was a lot sharper than before. The original very slight silhouette of the shadow disappeared, and the most important change was more pure sound with no peaking. It sounded so natural without any artificial details.

Repeated listening with a number of familiar LPs, my carefully assessed the overall impression is as follows:

1. Very balance in full range and no specific frequency band to be too outstanding.
2. The mid-high frequency is a lot more dynamic, high frequency, ultra high frequency extension is clear and elegant; midrange is natural and a lifelike, either vocals or musical instruments are both clear and delineated, and the mid low frequency is not bloomy or fuzzy. The bass drum, bass violin, cello & bass are in a better sense of reality. Low frequency volume is enough and retractable freely, and the deep low frequency response sounds open and freedom.
3. Transient is fast and accurate, the soundstage is wide and dimensional, and the imaging and level of depth is a lot deeper and clearer.
4. Sound quality is realistic with more density, and also neutral with no coloration.

All of the above features are positive, and are in line with my aforementioned “absolutely” tuning devices requirements. In order to avoid any illusion of mind, I have done many times of A/B comparison, to take off the “magic mat” and put back the “magic mat”. The result retain the same as mentioned above.

To use the Stillpoint with the “magic mat”, it was just like looking at the view through a crystal glass window before, and now to open the window to enjoy the view!

I originally thought that the above result has already discovered all the advantages of the “magic mat”. However, when I read the note from the manufacturer that “Recommend use in couple with our HARMONIX TU-812MX Million Maestro record clamp for even better playback sound reproduction.” I originally thought that it might just be the official terminology as a type of promotion technique. Anyway, I got my second-hand Harmonix “Magic Clamp” (the first generation model) at very “good price” from a best friend of mine who is also a wealthy serious audiophile. Thus, there is no reason not to try to use it with the “magic mat” as recommended by the manufacturer.

The truth is that the “recommendation” by Harmonix was absolutely not a promotion technique, but it actually gave me a “shocking” sound performance!



Specification :

■ Weight: 47g ■ Diameter: 298mm ■ Thickness: 0.5mm ■ Price: HK\$10,000

In addition to the above mentioned 4 advantages, the dual “magic” analog tuning devices being used together did reproduce by far more elegant sound quality. Listening to the LP of Chie Ayado, the female vocal was so real and natural; the sound quality was so detailed and smooth. Moreover, the music background was so clean without any noise that gave me a big surprise. The Jazz drums issued by the bursts of low-frequency has excellent cohesion, even better was a very lively and vivid low frequency; and it was not the kind of dead hard low frequency that made people’s ears uncomfortable. I then also listened to the LP of BACH unaccompanied Violin Sonata being recorded with vacuum tube microphone by Tacet, the dual “magic” analog tuning devices reproduced a very smoothly rounded and full body violin sound, and it did fill up my listening room with the elegant melody from the famous “Stradivari” violin. It is truly enjoyable to keep listening to it!



Conclusion

The best advantage of the TU-800M “Tribute” Million Maestro analog record tuning mat is that it offers a lot more detail and better sound quality without changing the balance of your turntable system, to let the music sound more natural and lively and it can make people easily melting into the lovely melody. Although the selling price of it may not be easily affordable by all the LP fans, it is absolutely qualified to be the “absolutely” tuning device which should be the best choice of the picky vinyl audiophiles. If you have already got the Harmonix “Magic Claw”, you must get one piece of this!

Postscript

After I have experienced in listening to the dual “magic” analog tuning devices for almost a month, although I am not a wealthy audiophile, I am truly surrendered to his magic tuning technique. Thus, I have clenched my teeth to obediently offer my money to buy this “magic mat” for my own listening enjoyment.