The digital and analog circuits are separated galvanically in order to prevent interference between them. Optocouplers form the bridge.

The "heart" of the Reimyo-DAC is the 20-bit K2 signal processor from JVC. This is the same method the Japanese use to master their famous XRCDs.

Try as you might, you won't find any of these in the Reimyo. Although they proudly point out the particularly low noise and distortion provided by 20-bit signal processing using JVC's K2 technology, it seems to us that the two complex C-core transformers – one each for the digital and analog circuits – and the galvanic separation of the two areas via optocoupler are somewhat more interesting and substantial. This Japanese model works without upsampling using a 20-bit filter and eight-fold oversampling. Awaiting you at the analog output is one pair each of XLR and Cinch outlets.

Have you ever incorporated Harmonix tweaks in your sound system? If you have, then in addition to what is usually a dramatic improvement, you'll also have gotten an "idea" of the true sound that these parts exude, which, in addition to all the other finesse, is a high-end effect common to many top devices. The DAP-777 has an almost overabundance of this. From the very first sound there dominates the impression that something astonishing, unique and no less than captivating and explosive is going on.

Compared to the performance of the incomparably expensive Reimyo, the efforts of the more inexpensive D/A converters come across as mere trials and errors. It's just sensational how much verve, meticulousness and inherent substance this slim device has to offer. And it all happens not in the manner of the cool perfection radiated by digital equipment from DCS, but rather with a warm gesture that captivates the listener emotionally. The Reimyo does more than develop three-dimensional sound images with perfect resolution and timing precisely balanced between tranquil flow and impelling drive. It exhibits grand musical intuition and understanding – yes, almost instinctively.

Hooked to the VRDS drive of an X-01, this Japanese converter surged to a truly masterful performance and, with its exquisitely supple, spacious and pleasantly sonorous portrayal, surpassed even the Esoteric player's integrated converter component with its somewhat more technical and compact imaging. The DAP-777 differs more in price than in sound from those absolute top converters. Superb results from this super DAC.

Cinch or XLR?

Digital drives often provide both outputs. Which one should you use?

The optical connection falls mostly flat for quality reasons. HiFi fans listen using either the Cinch or the XLR digital out. BNC is also great, since it is standardized at a wave impedance of 75 Ohms, but appears only seldom. We listened to NBS's as always superb Statement cables from the former Classic series (about 3500 euros) on identical equipment combinations in both Cinch and XLR versions. The result: The spectrum became somewhat larger using XLR while the tonality appeared a nuance more sonorous and harmonious. A small advantage therefore goes to the symmetrical one.