

Power cable

聖 Hijiri H-SLC „MILLION” SOPHISTICATED LISTENER’S CHOICE

Manufacturer: **COMBAK CORPORATION**
Price (when reviewed): **32 990 PLN/2,5 m**

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MADE IN JAPAN

Provided for test by: **MOJE AUDIO**



—Review—

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聖HIJIRI

This is of course a coincident (although some say there are no coincidents) that when preparing a monographic article on the XRCD technique, I listened some of the discs using the Japanese TAD Compact Evolution One loudspeakers and the 聖 Hijiri H-SLC „Million” speaker cable. The latter came from the artisan, Mr. Kazuo Kiuchi, who also owns the XRCD24 brand. These relationships are even deeper, because his components and accessories, for example power cables, interconnects and speaker cables, as well as anti-vibration elements, are used in the Japanese JVC studios, where remasters are made for this type of releases. Coincident? - you can decide yourself.

聖 Hijiri, in Japanese meaning 'maestro' or 'important leader', is the brand presented by Kiuchi-san in 2015. In Combak Corporation's, the mother company, lineup it became something of the "next step" in relation to the Harmonix brand. In turn, with the appearance of the "Million" models, it became the top line. Let me remind you that an analog interconnect HGP-10R „Million” as well as **Harmonix X-DC Studio Master Million Maestro** power cable were presented, the latter still as part of Harmonix lineup.

| H-SLC25R „MILLION”

H-SLC "MILLION" is therefore the last piece of a puzzle, a system conceived as a whole, bearing the common name "Million", complemented by the "Sophisticated Listener's Choice" term. The latter is not just a description taken from promotional materials, but a part of the product's philosophy, sort of stamp or seal used by Japanese artists proud of their works. And what does "Million" stand for? As we read in promotional materials: "it is meant to symbolize the BEST OF THE BEST cable we make".

The cable was being developed for three years and it shares its DNA with the X-DC Studio Master Million Maestro power cable. As usually in the case of small Japanese producers who direct our attention to music rather than technological aspects of their products (unlike many large corporations) there is very little information available about the design of this cable. What we



know is that development took three years due to painstaking listening sessions that lead to numerous small changes in the design and "tuning" of the sound. We can safely assume that some listening sessions and comparisons were also held at JVC studios.

The H-SLC cables are handmade, one pair at a time. They are made of copper wires, but we do not know what kind of copper. The only available information reads: "conductor material: own design and specially prepared copper". What we do know is that the copper is directional – arrows placed on heat-shrink suggest the correct connection. Solid spades these cables are terminated with, are made of silver-plated PCOOC.

The standard offered lengths are: 1.5 / 2 / 2.5 and 3 m, but one can also order longer runs. Let's add that in the "Million" series, in addition to the aforementioned cables, there are also Harmonix TU-666M „BeauTone" Million Maestro 20th Anniversary Edition anti-vibration feet, that I have been using for a few years.

The cables' look is exactly what one can expect from Mr. Kiuchi's product, which is extremely "personal". The box they come in is modest but striking and it resembles a beautifully wrapped gift. Opening it makes you feel as if you were opening a gift wrapped in a special paper. The cables are quite thick and nice-looking - they are finished with a three-color braid: navy blue, black and red. In the middle of cable's length there are wooden elements with a logotype, which also act as anti-resonant elements. It took Kiuchi-san a lot of time to select proper type of wood, size of this element and optimal placement on the cable. However, as I already said, he is an artisan who treats his works/products very seriously because they represent him to the outside world.

- Testing Methodology

The 聖 Hijiri H-SLC "Million" speaker cables connected the Soulution 710 power amplifier and – successively - two pairs of loudspeakers: Harbeth M40.1 and TAD Compact Evolution One. For years, I have been using the Acoustic Revive RCI-3H loudspeaker cable stands so also the 聖 HIJIRI rested on them together with the cables they were compared to, i.e. to two other speaker cables sets: Siltech Triple Crown and Crystal Cable The Ultimate Dream. It was an A/B/A comparison with the A and B known. The music samples were up to 2 minutes long, but I also listened to the whole albums.



- Sound

Recordings used in the test (a selection)

- Byrd, McLean, Coltrane, Taylor's *Wailers*, Prestige/Analogue Productions CPRJ 7117 SA, SACD/CD (1957/2013)
- Chet Baker, *Baker's Holiday*, Limelight Records/Verve Records SUHD 00960, Test Pressing SACD/CD (1965/2004)
- Coleman Hawkins, *The Hawk Flies High*, Riverside/Mobile Fidelity UDSACD 2030, SACD/CD (1957/2006)
- Jean-Michel Jarre, *Magnetic Fields*, Dreyfus Disques/Epic EPC 488138 2, CD (1981/1997)
- Jolivet, *Concerto Pour Violon/Chausson, Poème*, wyk. Isabelle Faust, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Harmonia Mundi France/King International HMSA 0025, SACD (2006/2015)
- Kazumi Wabe, *Jazz Impressions*, Ewe Records EWSA 0163, SACD/CD (2009)
- Mario Suzuki, *Masterpiece II: Touching Folklore Music*, Master Music XRCD24-NT021, XRCD24 (2018)
- Ornette Coleman, *The Shape of Jazz to Come*, Atlantic Records/ORG Music ORGM-1081, SACD/CD (1959/2013)

Japanese issues available at



I could not let go this thought, and yet - if you think about it for a moment - it's stupid: seeing the XRCD24 logo next to the Harmonix, Reimyo and Hijiri logos, I subconsciously began to identify the sound of this type of disc, encoded in my head by listening to a few dozen titles in a short time, with the sound of the H-SLC "Million" cable. Stupid, but only if it was a loose association, I wanted to share with someone. In this case I am quite sure: the XRCD24 technique and the reviewed speaker cable have a very similar "personal" sonic character.



It is a sound set to present the fullest possible and most dynamic midrange. Both high and low tones are pristine, but the resolution and speed of the midrange makes us focus our attention on it. One could say that it is a "targeted" sound, in the sense that from many parallel sonic signatures one was chosen that draw listeners attention most to the music they listened to. Sitting in front of good speakers, connected using Mr Kiuchi's cables, we find ourselves immersed in music. If we really want to, we can start to analyse the sound, it's not a problem, but the first impression is so well-known to me from my own system - it's the emotions over the analysis every time.

First things first. Speaking of focusing on the middle of the band, I did not mean shifting the tonal balance in this direction, nor that the extremes were lacking something. It's absolutely not like that, but also proves what I started this test with, i.e. the

obvious association between this cable and XRCD24 format. Because the treble is very nice, strong, and the attack is more pronounced than in the Siltech's cables and – even more so - Crystal Cable's. It is similar the Tellurium Q Absolute performance.

Listening to the guitars from the latest album produced by Mr. Kiuchi, ie *Masterpiece II* with guitarist trio lead by Mario Suzuki, I heard a beautiful combination of box and strings. The strings in his release were a bit more expressive than with cables made by Ms and Mr van Kley, and the performance was placed closer to me. It was obvious, that the creator of this cable wanted to immerse listener in emotions which are the heart and soul of music. The shift of attention I mentioned did not result from the sound being lean, because the bass was powerful and saturated. It was presented nicely on Jarre's *Magnetic Fields*, where I found known to me from the best performances, saturation and impact.



It is difficult to call this sound "warm", but again and again during this test, the word came to my mind. And this is not the case, it is a cable with good selectivity and detailed, resolving, fast and open. I think that the need to use the word starting with "w" stemmed from the excellent formation of bodies of phantom images, from perfect vocals. Like, for example, on the Chet Baker's *Baker's Holiday* album, that I have the "Test Pressing" of.

It delivers a wide panorama, with sections artificially placed at the edges - brass on one side, and drums and piano on the other. But in the middle, suspended in the space between the speakers, there is Baker's big, deep vocal. Although he was rather young at that time and the voice was quite high, this particular album played via Hijiri presented him as a bit older, more experienced man. The trumpet was presented in a similar way, ie it had a strong lower mids. With the Hijiri cable, this feature, that is, the way the sound was prepared by the sound

and remastering engineers, and then emphasized by pressing and playing it, was particularly obvious.

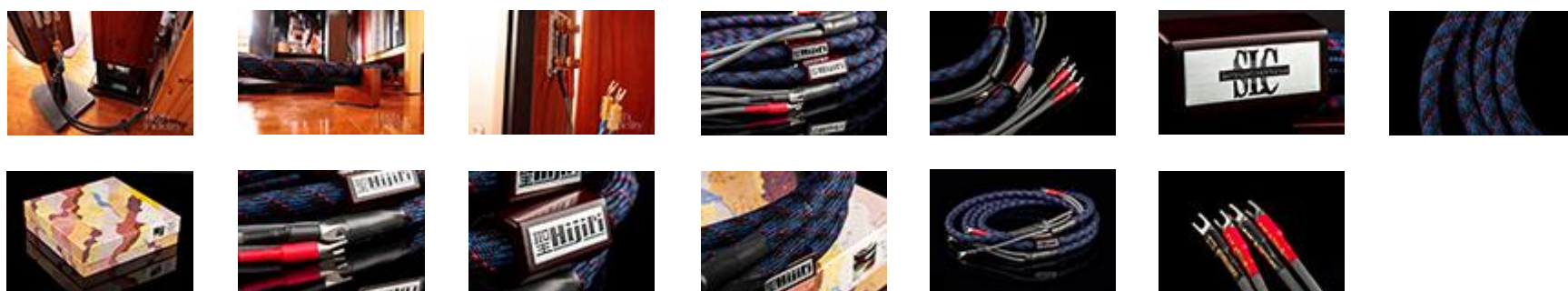
Because, on the one hand, it is a very accurate cable, and on the other hand it goes so deep into the sound that what we hear is no longer just about hi-fi, but about music and how IT changes. It is clear that it is about sound changes, but because the technical aspect largely "disappears" from before our eyes/ears, so it seems to us that it does not exist at all and we rather think about what it was called for and what defines its meaning. Therefore, both the vocal and the band on the aforementioned album were powerful and dense. This is the density known from XRCD24 discs - I'm sorry to repeat myself, but I can't help it - thanks to which they sound so great, so greatly bypassing the weaknesses of the Compact Disc format.

There is also, of course, a slight warming of the upper treble, something like "gilding" that makes the cymbals sound nicer, more "friendly" than when presented "raw". This is not a big change, but you should know about it. There are no colorations to the whole presentation, it is not closed, because the attack and selectivity of the midrange are strong, stronger than with my reference cables. And there is also excellent dynamics. Since the foreground is placed close to us and it focuses our attention, we perceive this presentations as particularly immersive and very natural.



Summary

The Hijiri H-SLC "Million" has everything we expect and require from the top high-end cable: tonal richness, depth, resolution, dynamics, etc. However, above all, it has a soul, a soul of a warrior and an artisan in one. Like the man who created it. This cable delivers remarkably natural presentation, reminiscent of the aesthetic choices of what we get with XRCD24. This is an outstanding cable, that will be hard to top in its price range.



Associated equipment

ANALOG SOURCES

- **Turntable:**
AVID HIFI Acutus SP [Custom Version]
 - **Cartridges:**
Miyajima Laboratory KANSUI, |
Miyajima Laboratory SHILABE, |
Miyajima Laboratory ZERO (mono) |
Denon DL-103SA,
 - **Phono stage:**
RCM Audio Sensor Prelude IC,
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DIGITAL

- **Compact Disc Player:**
Ancient Audio AIR V-edition,
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AMPLIFICATION

- **Line Preamplifier:**
Polaris III [Custom Version] + AC Regenerator,
 - **Power amplifier:**
Soulution 710
 - **Integrated Amplifier:**
Leben CS300XS Custom Version,
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LOUDSPEAKERS

- **Stand mount Loudspeakers:**
Harbeth M40.1 Domestic,
- **Stands for Harbeths:**
Acoustic Revive Custom Series Loudspeaker Stands
- **Real-Sound Processor:**
SPEC RSP-101/GL

HEADPHONES

- **Integrated Amplifier/Headphone amplifier:**
Leben CS300XS Custom Version,
 - **Headphones:**
HIFIMAN HE-6, | HIFIMAN HE-500, | HIFIMAN HE-300, |
Sennheiser HD800 | AKG K701, |
Ultrasone PROLine 2500,
Beyerdynamic DT-990 Pro, version 600 -
 - **Headphone Stands:**
Klutz Design CanCans (x 3),
 - **Headphone Cables:**
Entreq Konstantin 2010/Sennheiser HD800/HIFIMAN HE-500,
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COMPUTER AUDIO

- **Portable Player:**
HIFIMAN HM-801
 - **USB Cables:** Acoustic Revive USB-1.0SP (1 m) | Acoustic Revive USB-5.0PL (5 m),
 - **LAN Cables:**
Acoustic Revive LAN-1.0 PA (kable) |
RLI-1 (filtry),
 - **Router:**
Liksys WAG320N
 - **NAS:**
Synology DS410j/8 TB
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CABLES

- System I
 - **Interconnects:**
Acrolink Mexcel 7N-DA6300, |
preamplifier-power amplifier:
Acrolink 8N-A2080III Evo,
 - **Loudspeaker Cables:**
Tara Labs Omega Onyx,
 - System II
 - **Interconnects:**
Acoustic Revive RCA-1.0PA | XLR-1.0PA II
 - **Loudspeaker Cables:**
Acoustic Revive SPC-PA
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- POWER
 - System I
 - **Power Cables:**
Acrolink Mexcel 7N-PC9300, all system,
 - **Power Distributor:**
Acoustic Revive RTP-4eu Ultimate,
 - **Power Line:**
power cable Oyaide Tunami Nigo (6m); wall sockets 3 x Furutech FT-SWS (R)
 - System II
 - **Power Cables:**
Harmonix X-DC350M2R Improved-Version, | Oyaide GPX-R (x 4),
 - **Power Distributor:**
Oyaide MTS-4e,

ANTIVIBRATION ACCESSORIES

- **Stolik:**
SolidBase IV Custom, /all system
 - **Anti-vibration Platforms:**
Acoustic Revive RAF-48H, /digital sources | Pro Audio Bono [Custom Version]/headphone amplifier/integrated amplifier, |
Acoustic Revive RST-38H/loudspeakers under review/stands for loudspeakers under review
 - **Anti-vibration Feets:**
Franc Audio Accessories Ceramic Disc/ CD Player/Ayon Polaris II Power Supply /products under review, |
Finite Elemente CeraPuc/ products under review, | Audio Replas OPT-30HG-SC/PL HR Quartz,
 - **Anti-vibration accsories:**
Audio Replas CNS-7000SZ/power cable,
 - **Quartz Isolators:**
Acoustic Revive RIQ-5010/CP-4
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PURE PLEASURE

- **FM Radio:** Tivoli Audio Model One