



Harmonix

TU-812MX^{LP} Clamp

TU-800M-W^{LP} Mat

Editor | 樂德動

Recently we have tested many different LP accessories. Following the test report of the [Five Spices Powder Chan's LP clamp] in our last issue, we make persistent effort to get the astronomical luxury produced super great sounding LP tuning devices, which are the Japan made Harmonix TU-812MX LP Clamp (Net Retail at HK\$25,000.-) and also the Harmonix TU-800M-W LP Mat (Net Retail HK\$9,500.-) complement each other.

TU-812MX Million Maestro LP Clamp

According to the manufacturer of Harmonix as mentioned on their website that the interference of resonances induced by the analog record itself and turntable mechanisms employed in the tracking of the complex grooves inscribed on the record surface. Since the cartridges will more faithfully reproduce source sound, these undesirable distortions produced by analog

record resonances will annoyingly be heard. Conventional record clamp attempted to address this problem by simply pressing the LP down against the turntable in an effort to quiet such non-musical vibrations. While effective in some frequency ranges particularly the low frequency in fact most of the clamps merely trade one set of resonances for another. The extraordinary performance of the TU-800MX can deal with this problem amazingly effective that all resonances of analog records and turntable by tuning the record itself and record platter assembly at a frequency outside the audio band. It results that musical clarity is greatly increased, and the separation of musical instruments releases unprecedented depth of sound. It allows you to enjoy and discover the potential of LP.

TU-812MX weighs 360g (0.79 lbs.), diameter of 85mm (3.35"), and height of 43mm (1.69").



TU-812MX

The shape of the TU-812MX is exactly the same as its previous model, TU-812M, which comes with the wooden handle, metal frame with six claws attached with six round wooden discs respectively on each claws as the surface touching on the analog record, and there are also pit graves under the metal frame. Although it looks so similar, it can still be differentiated easily. The metal part of the TU-812MX is shiny in silver (just like the chrome) and its wood is in darker color; while the metal part of the TU-812M is in black chrome and its wood color is slightly lighter.

It is not a large area of a circle at the bottom of the record clamp, nor the bottom edge of the round record clamp. It is using the six claws to press on the LP. Such design is full of new ideas, and only this one, the most unique. Some audiophiles say that a large area of the circle at the bottom of the record clamp touching with the vinyl record would form a cavity and the cavity would generate resonance and feedback to the analog record. The six-claw design of this TU-812MX LP Clamp will eliminate such problem. I also see another theory to support the TU-812MX: Different materials do

have its own resonance characteristics which cannot be eliminated, but they can be resolved by shape. The pit grave pattern under this six-claw metal frame is shaped like a flower petal – it is not designed because it looks good, but it is actually designed to reduce the resonance. Although all these points have not been confirmed by the owner and designer of Harmonix, the tuning master, Mr. Kiuchi, but at the end it is a good thought!





Test Sound Equipment: -Acoustic Signature Thunder -Moerch DP-8 -Air Tight PC-1 Supreme
 -Nanotec PH-1S(DIN->RCA) -McIntosh MP1100(Analysis Plus Power Oval 2)
 -Accuphase C-3850(Analysis Plus Ultimate Power Oval) -Accuphase P-7300(Isoclean Super Focus II)
 -B&W 802 D3 -Analysis Plus Silver Apex -Dignity Audio Bravo -Audio Note ISIS LX168

The manufacturer reminded consumers that they should never use any of the rubber made or leather type of record mat underneath the TU-812MX as these type of record mat would absorb the delicated sound of the music signal.

Approximately one month ago, I have listened to 5 different types of LP Clamps, and I can still remember them all. Thus, I decided to listen to the TU-812MX first.

I am using the same turntable system including the Acoustic Signature turntable, Morch Tonearm, Air Tight cartridge, Nanotec Tonearm Cable,

McIntosh Phono Preamp. When I put the TU-812MX clamp on top of the LP to play music, the change of the sound immediately surprised me! I originally got several pieces of the mid-priced models of the “LP Clamp from Five-Spiced Powder Chan” aside so as to be able to use anytime to compare some similar characteristics. Anyway, the outstanding sonic performance of the TU-812MX is as high as its price, and I wouldn’t need to use any of them for the comparison at all.....!

I have chosen a very good recording LP, “I’m Glad We Met” by Carol Kidd, to playback those dynamic songs with fast rhythm; “Lean Baby”, “I Guess I’ll

Hang My Tears Out To Dry” etc. Without using the TU-812MX, it sounded already pretty good that good body imaging, vivid movement, powerful bass and sweet vocals and so attractive. However, “it is not the best, as there is even better”. After using the TU-812MX, the piano, bass, drums would perform to be even more vivid and powerful. A strong and powerful dynamic unlike the sturdy ruthless dead sound reproduced by those heavy-duty metal LP Clamps. Moreover, it has very good tenacity and elasticity, and the sound of the piano is beautiful and dynamic. Even the bass also appeared to be more solid while having a deeper submergence and tenacity as the true sound performance. The reverberation harmonics are more abundant and drifted farther. The vocal of Carol Kidd is of course a lot more attractive; more cohesive with high imaging, and the timbre is purely clean, fresh and beautiful! In some slow rhythms, the TU-812MX also brought a faint intoxication. Carol Kidd’s vocal in the songs “Don’t Go To Strangers” & “Georgia On My Mind” etc. beautiful slow songs, it’ll perform with a purer, more noble and more analog beauty. Even singing with a few more static notes, we can all appreciate the new great contributions the TU-812MX can bring!

Moreover, with the TU-812MX playback Sonny Rollins “Way Out West”, Tenor Sax is more awe-inspiring and the timbre is more clear and mellow. At the beginning of the first song, “I’m An Old Cowhand”, the percussion is also vivid, focused and solid but not the type of dead solid.

The body structure of the TU-812MX is beautifully concentrated and heavy, but it is not particularly heavy in the range of the LP Clamps. As mentioned in our last issue, HiFi Stay Dharma, De Baer Center Weight, Oyaide STB-MSX and STB-HWX are heavier than it. However, its full-frequency control, instrumental separation, and the most important is the dynamic beauty, really stand out from the crowd. None can be compared with it. I can reconfirm all these advantages of the TU-812MX by listening to the playback of Clifford Curzon’s “Liszt”.

Talking about the dynamic beauty, as mentioned in our last issue, the Furutech Monaco LP Hi Fi Review May 2018

Stabilizer, De Baer Center Weight did impress me. The former sound pace is the lightest but not heavy, and neither of them got hard edges or sharp angles. However, the ability of the TU-812MX can reproduce a strong and resilient dynamic beauty and it can also further explore all the faintness details in the recording, making it highly true sound reproducible and reproducing the true natural beauty of the original recording. Unlike the other products to hide all the evil sound as a single goal, that even the faintness details in the recording are also smoothed to be slipped away together!

Many LP audiophiles know that the heavy duty LP clamps would suppress the high frequency easily, especially for those floating turntables. Many years ago, I had used a Sota floating turntable with spring suspension and I picked a light weight wooden LP clamp being hand-made by a senior serious audiophile. I loved it because it provided the warm sound and it would not suppress the high frequency. Not sure if it is for the consumers’ consumption mentality, generally those LP clamps selling for thousands of dollars are not light weight at all (the Furutech Monaco LP Stabilizer weighed at 210g is the rare available choice). I do not know if the manufacturer thought a lightweight design of LP clamp selling at high prices would create an illusion of “cheating” for consumers! The TU-812MX weighed 360g, I am not sure how it would perform on the floating turntables. Although I can assure you that the TU-812MX works wonderful with the Acoustic Signature Thunder hard platter turntable! Listening to the Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto by Takashi Nishizaki with the TU-812MX, the violin sound is slightly sweeter with moist, but it also more cohesive with higher imaging. The ups and downs are still chic, and at the fast pace part even more exciting. The high frequency jumps up high, full of ambience, and the soundstage especially the top part is even higher, wider and farther than before without the TU-812MX. Such improvement is difficult to found from other LP clamps as they could not do it!



TU-800M-W

It is the same to use the TU-812MX to playback the vocals of Carol Kidd and Michael Kwan Ching Kit that the vocals can be even more cohesive with higher imaging, the contours of the edges can be clearly defined, the voice of the high frequency is raised upper and upper to develop a much higher, wider and deeper soundstage at the top!

TU-800M-W Tribute Million Maestro LP Mat

When I read the 1999 Harmonix product catalogue, I saw the old all metal TU-812 LP Clamp, and I believed that it was their first LP Clamp. At the same time, I also saw an all metal LP Mat TU-800 on the catalogue, and I also believed that it was their first LP Mat. The main characters of this article the TU-812MX and TU-800M-W and they should be the two new generations of current models that evolved from those 2 old models being made in 19 years ago.

There are currently 2 different models of Harmonix LP Mats available, one is the TU-800M with thin silver pieces in circle and strips on top of Hi Fi Review May 2018

the black base, weighed 47g. Another one is the TU-800M-W (Wood) with thin wood veneer pieces in different sizes of circle, weighed 32g. Both LP mats are with the diameter of 298mm and the thickness of 0.5mm. The manufacturer has warned customers that this black material in light film form should always be kept in flat and strictly prohibit to bends or enfolded.

Both models of the TU-800M LP Mats are hand-crafted piece by piece by Harmonix Tuning Maestro and it is the only tuning mat in the world that can remove the distortion caused by turntable mechanism; and by cartridge during trucking over record groove. The effect is miraculously impressive that the sound is natural, smooth and crystal clear with rich details, and the soundstage extends in full scale like a live performance.

I first put the TU-800M-W on top of the original soft mat of Acoustic Signature Thunder Turntable, (TU-800M-W is very thin, VTA?.....very little variance, fine, no need to adjust, will leave it to customers to fine tune themselves), the sound is

significantly warmer and smoother and also very clean with less interference. Just the tone, it is already very pleasant to listen and it is also so quiet as if all the interference by resonance has been eliminated. The imaging is more focus, greater ambient, better instrumental separation, and even the dynamic ups and downs are smoother and improved.

After using the TU-800M-W, the vocal of Carol Kidd is a lot warmer and smoother, it is so attractive; after adding the TU-812MX LP Clamp, the vocal is even warmer with full body, clean and pure with very rich analog taste, it made me drunk! I have also used these twin treasures to listen to Michael Kwan Ching Kit's "Heroes Out of Juvenile", how could you listen it again without them? Now I can hear Michael's easy listening songs "In the Wilderness" and "Red Dust" with wide and open soundstage, high density, strong dynamic, clear and mellow imaging. How to get the listeners not to be drunk in it?

Listening to the "Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto" by Takashi Nishizaki with the TU-800M-W LP Mat, such taste of wood, taste of vinyl, taste of analog are simulated greatly. Moreover the high frequency extension, the amount of information, and the sense of diffusion are also increased!

I have tried to remove the original soft mat of the turntable and put the TU-800M-W directly on top of the platter, the warm and moist feeling was discounted, less a bit of moisture, less a bit of body,

a little more cold. Thus, it is better to use both together, although it is mentioned in the user manual that the TU-800M-W should not be used together with other record mat.

TU-800M-W LP Mat is good at bringing warmth, moist and richness to music, silent background, calm and smooth changes while the TU-812MX LP Clamp is more focused on the imaging outline, enhancing the dynamic and better control. Using both together in your turntable system, to reproduce the bass of Sonny Rollins' "Way Out West", "Jazz at the Pawnshop", and the piano of Clifford Curzon's "Liszt" to be so thick but steady, vigorous, rich information, strong, clean and distinct that demonstrate the unforgettable attraction of HD analog playback, it is simply wonderful!

