

The Audiophile Man



CABLE REVIEW

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ELEKTRA, EROS AND EXTENDED HELIOS MAINS FROM TITAN

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Three Titan Audio mains cables reviewed by Paul Rigby, this time. Two are new, the Elektra and the Eros while the third, the Helios, has been extended to 3m to power up a pair of electrostatic speakers

The Helios used to be Titan's entry level High Current cable. That said, the company has just released a new cable called Nyx at £100 (which I hope to look at in the future) so the Helios is now one further up the price ladder.

According to the Product Development office, Gary Campbell, the idea behind the creation of the Helios was quite simple, "...improved current and high quality connectors at an affordable price. To do this we developed a cable design that would use long grain copper."

The last time I encountered "long grain", I was eating a Lamb Dhansak. Apparently, there's another definition which is lighter on the spices. The less complicated the grain structure of a cable, the fewer the impurities, the better the signal path, "While reducing the cable resistance, you increase the speed at which current can be transferred," said Campbell. "The IEC pins, like virtually all of our cables, are plated to match the cable material which therefore gives the best signal path between connections as distortion and resistance can be a massive factor in any cable connection."



Elektra

The Elektra and Eros are related. Elektra being the source cable and Eros being the high current. The Elektra is the less expensive of the two, “The aim is to increase current over a standard kettle lead so that the components can breath but equally, if not more important, shield them from any interference. Source components such as DACs, streamers and phono stages are exceptionally vulnerable to mains noise and airborne frequency.”

The Elektra uses a silver-based plating over copper, “The reason for this is not the obvious one of silver being a better conductor but the fact that silver is a better shield against EMI than copper. We use a PTFE dielectric.”



Elektra

Unlike the Elektra the Eros is not plated instead, “We developed it using OCC single crystal copper,” said Campbell. “We were one of the first if not the first to do this in a power cable. Again like the Helios, the idea is simple. Higher current would be achieved with a clearer signal path, single crystal cables are the ultimate signal path. Testing performed by QUB (Queens University Belfast) showed a three and a half times current delivery over OFC cables and almost twice the current delivery of competitor cables at similar price ranges (as of 2017). So many consumers never get to hear their system at

it's best because of limited current delivery to their amplification, whether that be caused by cheap cables that are not even capable of 13 amps or simply because the cable resistance doesn't allow for a constant quality flow. The results are still that of a hose pipe being pinched and limiting the flow of water. The idea of current flow is similar to that of a car engine, just because the engine is capable of 250bhp doesn't mean that's what it's producing all the time and a large component to those figures can be turbochargers and in some ways that's exactly what these power cables do, they almost work like a turbo charger for your amplification. They are not tweaking the sound or using filters or any special magic they simply allow the system to breath."

SOUND TESTS

I began with the dynamic rock track from Neil Young, *Walk Like a Giant* from the triple album set, *Psychedelic Pill*. Featuring distorted lead guitar from Young and a driving backing beat.



Elektra

I began with the Elektra which offered an expansive and information-rich sound which was very attractive. The Young vocal was focused and compact in its presentation. Yes, there could be a slight etching when he placed some force behind his delivery, although nothing to cause offence but this, almost embossed, vocal effect was part of a greater

focus and insight that spanned the soundstage. A soundstage that was not only broad but had real height.

That focus also added emphasis which meant that subtle and low-lying details were picked up and lifted up towards the ear. Right at the beginning of the track, about 30 seconds or so in, I noticed the usual cymbal hit but, this time, I also heard a quick touch on the ride cymbal. A effect that was previously difficult to pin down. The Elektra had a knack of doing this right through the track.



I changed the music to the original pressing of Jonny Desmond *In Las Vegas* on Coronet and the classic *I Can't Get Started With You*.

Despite the slight leaning towards stridency when the brass was howling and the vocals hit a mighty crescendo, the Elektra cables produced a level of precision across the midrange that tracked every stray piece of detail. If you want to know what's going on in your music, this cable will solve the case for you. Bass, meanwhile, offered a powerful and meaty support base.



Time I changed cables so I plugged in the more expensive Eros and reverted back to Neil Young.

The Eros brought a new level of maturity to the table, adding balance to the soundstage.



Eros

There was that same level of focus and precision as the lower cost Elektra. The bass guitar was a notable benefit of this effect. There was an admirable degree of detail

around this instrument which, on this particular track is all too easily relegated to a series of tones and not much else.



Eros

The Eros did give it a sense of personality though by giving string plucks a start/stop structure with gaps in between each string delay and the next pluck. The improvements were subtle but any improvement in this area was welcome. Bass in general terms was massy in weight, giving the music a solid foundation.



Eros

The upper frequencies were impressive. The Young vocal was suitably varied, slightly wobbly in its high-pitched Neil Young fashion and full of nuance while treble-based cymbal strikes had a welcome floaty fragility. Young's lead guitar also benefitted from the enhance clarity as a result of the mature focus as well as space around this instrument.



Eros

The sense of clarity and detail was gratefully received when the record was changed to Jonny Desmond's *In Las Vegas*. The sense of midrange insight to extract detail from both the saxes and clarinets enhanced the busy nature of the soundstage while the rather shy piano was picked out and presented as a full part of the mix. Meanwhile, Desmond's own vocal performance flowed in a wholly romantic and effortless manner.



Finally, I added the 3m long power cables to the rear of my Quad ESL57 electrostatic speakers and spun the Neil Young disc again.



Helios

My first impression was to hear an immense amount of new space and air in and around each and every instrument in the large soundstage arena. No doubt as a reduction in overall noise, this effect resulted in a range of positive results across the sonic spectrum.



Helios

Firstly, the bass frequencies seemed to be lifted up from the basement of the soundstage. There seemed to be more bass information presented to the ear. Instead of a dead pool of low frequency tones laying on the floor, the bass appeared to be formed with its own boundaries. It hovered like a 'thing' instead of a ghostly cloud coming from nowhere in particular.



Helios

On the other end of the sonic spectrum, the greater amount of air allowed far longer reverb tails from cymbal strikes while the Young vocal was less constricted and compressed. The drums residing more in the midrange area also exhibited freedom of movement.



Helios

On the Desmond jazz vocal track, the lowered noise also affected the vocal which was less a sepia-tinged nostalgia fest and more a focused, controlling element in the song. The brass section now had a greater resonance suite of detailed textures and that shy piano offered a more information, as did the saxophones whose reedy nature was really apparent here.

CONCLUSION

If nothing else, this test shows the importance of mains cables to the hi-fi chain. The Elektra is ideal for those who like a detailed and etched suite of frequencies to extract as much information from music as possible while the more expensive Eros adds a balanced maturity that infuses the soundstage with detail and clarity. The specialist Helios cables used for electrostatic speakers also emphasise that this category of speaker really needs attention and tweaking. The sonic changes initiated by all of these mains cables were both dramatic and significant.

TITAN AUDIO HELIOS, ELEKTRA & EROS MAINS CABLES

Prices:

Helios – £200 for 1.5m

Elektra – £400 for 1.5m

Eros – £650 for 1.5m

Website: titanaudio.co.uk

ELEKTRA

Good: precise midrange, punchy bass, broad soundstage, detail

BAD: slight midrange stridency

RATING: 7

EROS

GOOD: balanced output, characterful bass, focused mids, broad soundstage

BAD: nothing

RATING: 8

Paul Rigby

(The Audiophile Man)



HELIOS

GOOD: low noise, spacious soundstage, extended dynamics, lifted bass

BAD: nothing

RATING: 8

Paul Rigby

(The Audiophile Man)



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REFERENCE

[Origin Live Sovereign turntable](#)

[Origin Live Enterprise 12" arm](#)

Avid Acutus Reference turntable

SME IV tonearm

[Van Den Hul Crimson XGW Stradivarius Cartridge](#)

[Soundsmith Paua Mk.II cartridge](#)

[Leema Elements CD Player](#)

[Benchmark DAC2 HGC](#)

Icon PS3 phono amplifier

Aesthetix Calypso pre-amp

Icon Audio MB845 Mk.II monoblock amplifiers

Quad ESL-57 speakers with One Thing upgrade

[Tellurium Q Silver Diamond cables](#)

[Studio Connections Cables](#)

[Blue Horizon Professional Rack System](#)

[Harmonic Resolution Systems Noise Reduction Components](#)

[CAD GC1 Ground Controls](#)

[All vinyl was cleaned using an Audio Desk's Ultrasonic Pro Vinyl Cleaner](#)

TITAN AUDIO

By PAUL RIGBY



PAUL RIGBY

I've been a journalist and editor for 35 years and still retain my good humour. Who'd have thought? I have worked within a range of industries, writing for hundreds of

national magazines and newspapers in the UK, Europe and the USA covering: aviation, music, computer technology, computer gaming, hi-fi, mobile technology, home automation, lady's lifestyle, plastic model making, antiques and more. I currently write for national magazines in the subjects of business, music, hi-fi and general technology.