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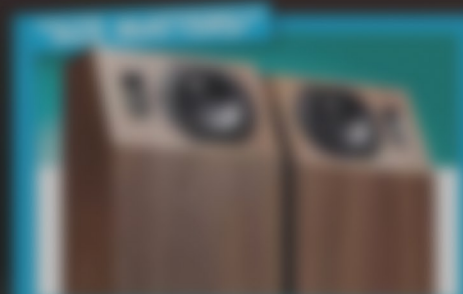
COOL CONNECTOR
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ONE OF A KIND



Vertere's Solo mono moving-coil cartridge



Monitor Audio's mini Radius 2 stand-mount



Music Preamps 4x100 power/boost amplifier





Mono culture

For monophonic audiophiles Vertere has produced a new MC cart. **Neville Roberts** digs out some records from his youth

Vertere's Solo mono moving-coil cartridge features a telescopic aluminium alloy cantilever fitted with a diamond stylus sporting a Shibata III profile. This is connected to the generator coil, which is only horizontally active so that it just picks up the lateral groove information. As with the other MC carts in Vertere's range, the Solo has a mass-tuned aluminium alloy body and three-point contact design precision-machined into the top surface to provide the required contact between the tonearm headshell and cartridge. Two of the contact points are toroidal rings machined around the two screw threads for the supplied headshell stainless thumb screws. The third contact point is situated at the front of the cart and, although the cartridge will fit any standard tonearm, there is an alignment ridge on the front that helps with mounting in Vertere arms.

The Solo's low-mass 'single' cross-coil generator has a tuned synthetic rubber suspension and the coil sits in the magnetic field produced by a samarium-cobalt magnet, which is fixed in the body with a quad-point contact mounting secured with four

stainless spike screws. The Solo has a dynamic compliance of 8cu, which nudges it into the low compliance category, but it should still suit most high-quality tonearms. It offers an excellent frequency response of 10Hz to 45kHz and provides an output of 0.4mV, which will be fine for most moving-coil phono stages.

The Solo is fitted into the titanium headshell of a second Vertere Super Groove SGTA-HB tonearm (provided for testing purposes), which makes it easy to swap the cartridge with an SGTA-HB tonearm that is fitted with a similar stereo cartridge. The carts are used with my valve phono stage setup and I first play an Image Hi-Fi Vinyl Essentials test record to check resonance and tracking ability. The resonance peak is between 8 and 10Hz, which is ideal. The tracking ability tests show that the Solo manages an excellent 80 microns. Now I'm ready for some listening.

Sound quality

For the first test I opt to play a *Music For Pleasure* mono LP from 1969 of the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Artur Rodzinski, playing Grieg's *Peer Gynt*

Suites. The well-known *In The Hall Of The Mountain King* movement sparkles during the crescendos with an energy and dynamic range that I have not experienced before when playing this recording – even with a mono amp connection. The Solo really conveys all the emotion of this stunning performance.

I next listen to some light music from Henry Mancini and his Orchestra: *The Pink Panther Theme* on *The Best Of Mancini Vol. 2* mono LP. The tinkling on the percussion comes across much clearer with the Solo. The tenor saxophone playing the main theme is so realistic that it almost seems to be in front of the orchestra, although it can't really be so with a mono recording! Overall, this relaxed, moody and swinging piece comes across brilliantly.

If the information is there, you can be sure that the Solo is the cart to find it

I finish with The Shadows' *Jigsaw*. The eponymously titled first track has the classic Shadows guitar sound with plenty of top end from their electric guitars. The bass is definitely cleaner and punchier with the Solo and I also find that the noise floor is lower than before and the music stands further away from any background noise.

Conclusion

I have an enormous amount of fun re-discovering my old mono record collection with the Solo. It is amazing just how much information is stored within the depths of an LP. If the information is there, you can be sure that the Solo is the cart to find it. This is an excellent addition to the Vertere moving-coil cartridge lineup, and is highly recommended for all monophonic audiophiles ●

DETAILS

PRODUCT
Vertere Solo

ORIGIN
UK

TYPE
Mono moving-coil cartridge

WEIGHT
11.4g

FEATURES
● Aluminium telescopic cantilever
● Shibata III, nude diamond stylus
● Samarium-cobalt magnet

DISTRIBUTOR
Vertere Ltd.

WEBSITE
vertereacoustics.com

Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY

★★★★★

VALUE FOR MONEY

★★★★★

BUILD QUALITY

★★★★★

TRACKING

★★★★★

OVERALL

★★★★★

LIKE: High-quality mono cart captures the best that mono LPs have to offer

DISLIKE: Nothing at the price

WE SAY: A superb cartridge that extracts the very best from mono recordings