

### HP's Golden Ear Awards

#### THE SUPER MAGGIE MULTICHANNEL SYSTEM

\$17,365 (w/o subwoofers)

[www.magnepan.com](http://www.magnepan.com) (See review)

#### THE ASR BASIS EXCLUSIVE PHONOSTAGE

\$5950

[www.asraudio.com/asr.html](http://www.asraudio.com/asr.html)

(See review)

#### THE VPI SUPER SCOUTMASTER

##### PLAYBACK DECK

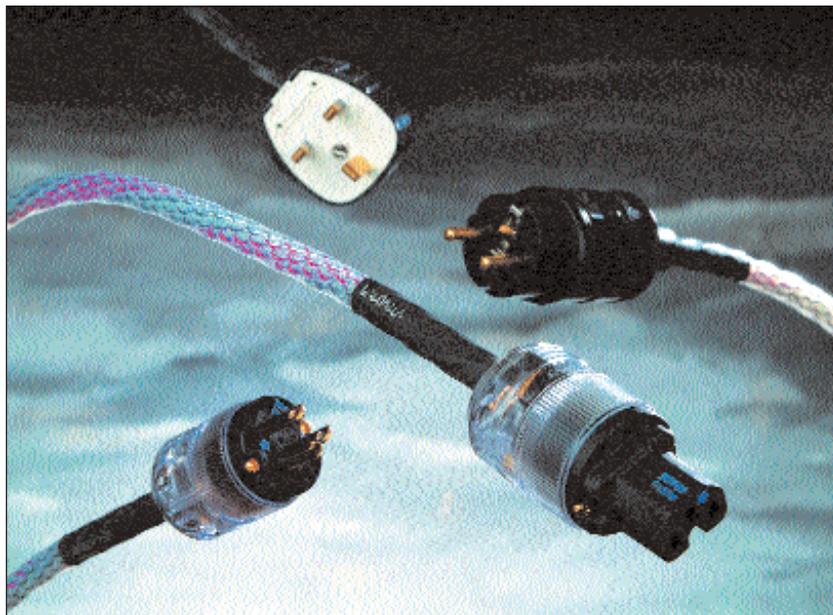
\$5000

[www.vpiindustries.com](http://www.vpiindustries.com) (See review)

#### THE NORDOST VALHALLA AC CABLES

\$2749/two meters

[www.nordost.com](http://www.nordost.com)



Nordost recently introduced its own line of power line connecting cables, which were much awaited by the cognoscenti, in hushed expectation. There are three models, the Shiva and the Vishnu and the all-out statement attempt, the Valhalla (also the model name of the best Nordost interconnects and speaker cables, and expensive enough to pay for a "pre-owned" Mercedes). I didn't find the Shiva much out of the ordinary, and the Vishnu (what's with the Indian names here?) on a happy par with the outstanding Kimber Palladia. It's the Valhalla that has the magic (hope you don't need too many of these) in reducing AC line garbage almost to the level achieved by battery-operated electronics, but without dynamic compression or frequency-limiting side effects.

#### THE LECTOR CDP-7TS COMPACT DISC PLAYER

\$3950

[www.docet-lector.com](http://www.docet-lector.com)

I know of no other regular compact disc player that exceeds the perform-

ance of this two-piece (and quite sexy looking) tubed unit from Italia. It's the first that provides an analog-like sound for CDs. Whether or not this is achieved with some jiggerypook of the frequency and dynamic spectra (as I suspect), the end result, in this case, is what counts. It undeniably tracks the sound of the absolute, a feat that puts it in a class by itself. And the price is supremely right (well, it was, before it just went up \$700), although the demand is such that you may have to wait in line at your dealer's door for the next batch to come through the importer's good offices. And just wait till you read the results, next time around, of our A/B comparison against the \$60,000+ Burmester player.

