

Contents

COVER STORY

REINVENTING AMPLIFICATION

166 SOULUTION 711 AND 701 POWER AMPLIFIERS AND 725 PREAMPLIFIER

Never before has sheer beauty of timbre been combined with such startling dynamics and bass solidity. Jonathan Valin and Robert Harley weigh-in on what may very well be the world's best solid-state electronics—no matter what your definition of “best.”

61 The Absolute Sound's 2014 Product of The Year Awards

This is the big one! We name the most outstanding products of 2014 in these, our most prestigious awards.



48 Methods for Quantifying Sonic Performance

Which makes a better music server—Mac or Windows? In Part Three of this groundbreaking work, Charles Zeilig, Ph.D., and Jay Clawson employ their newly developed method for assessing sound quality to answer that burning question.

the absolute sound®

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert Harley

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Jonathan Valin

ACQUISITIONS MANAGER AND ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Neil Gader

MUSIC EDITOR
Jeff Wilson

PROOFREADER
Mark Lehman

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Spencer Holbert

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Torquil Dewar

ART DIRECTOR
Shelley Lai

theabsolutesound.com WEBMASTER
Garrett Whitten

SENIOR WRITERS

Anthony H. Cordesman, Wayne Garcia, Jim Hannon, Robert E. Greene, Ted Libbey, Arthur Lintgen, Dick Olsher, Andrew Quint, Don Saltzman, Paul Seydor, Steven Stone, Alan Taffel, Greg Weaver

REVIEWERS AND CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Duck Baker, Soren Baker, Greg Cahill, Stephen Estep, Vade Forrester, Jacob Heilbrunn, Garrett Hongo, Andre Jennings, Sherri Lehman, David McGee, Kirk Midtskog, Bill Milkowski, Derk Richardson, Karl Schuster

Reprints: Nick Iademarco, Wright's Media, (877) 652-5295, (281) 419-5725, niademarco@wrightsmedia.com.

Subscriptions, renewals, changes of address: 888-732-1625 and outside the U.S. 760-317-2327 or write The Absolute Sound, Subscription Services, PO Box 469042, Escondido, CA 92046.

Ten issues: in the U.S., \$29.90; Canada \$45.90 GST included; outside North America, \$64.90. Payments must be by credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express) or U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank, with checks payable to NextScreen, LLC.

Address letters to the editor: The Absolute Sound, 8868 Research Blvd., Suite 108 Austin, TX 78758 or e-m

Newsstand Distribution and Local Dealers:
Ingram Periodicals, 18 Ingram Blvd, LaVergne, TN 37086-7000
615 213-5223

Publishing matters: contact Jim Hannon at the address below or e-mail jhannon@nextscreen.com

nextscreen

VICE PRESIDENT/GROUP PUBLISHER
Jim Hannon

NEXTSCREEN CHAIRMAN AND CEO
Tom Martin

ADVERTISING REPS

Cheryl Smith
(512) 891-7775

Marvin Lewis
(718) 225-8803
(MTM Sales)

Scott Constantine
(609) 275-9594

Publications Mail Agreement 40600599
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: Station A / P.O. Box 54 / Windsor, ON N9A 6J5
NextScreen, LLC, 8868 Research Blvd., Suite 108
Austin, TX 78758. (512) 892-8682 fax: (512) 891-0375,
tas@nextscreen.com, info@theabsolutesound.com

©2015 NextScreen, LLC., Issue 249 January 2015. The Absolute Sound (ISSN #0097-1138) is published 10 times per year in the months of Jan, Feb, Mar, April, combined issues in May/June & Jul/Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, and Dec; \$29.90 per year for U.S. residents, NextScreen, LLC., 8868 Research Blvd., Suite 108 Austin, TX 78758. Periodical Postage paid at Austin, Texas, and additional mailing offices. Canadian publication mail account #151566 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Absolute Sound.
Subscription Services PO Box 469042 Escondido, CA 92046.
Printed in the USA