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BLACK RHODIUM'S ALLEGRO DIGITAL CABLE: DRAINING THE NOISY BITS

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Offering a 75 Ohm digital connection, Paul Rigby reviews Black Rhodium's Allegro

Hand built at the Black Rhodium factory in Derby, this 75 Ohm cable uses the GN Legacy VS-4 Vibration Stabiliser. That's the piece of metal situated half way along the cable. The company says that it is designed to reduce distortion by limiting the effects of vibrations travelling through the conductor wires.

Silver plated conductors are joined by silver plated copper cable while that cable itself is covered in a tightly braided screen to protect the inner cores from picking up radio frequency interference (RFI). Further screening is provided by twisting the cores. RFI is further tackled by two large ferrite cores located close to each of the plugs, you can see them bulging under the green outer skin. Low Loss PTFE Insulation is added while termination is complete with Graham Nalty Legacy Range GN-4 RCA connectors.



SOUND TESTS

I hooked up the Allegro to my reference Benchmark DAC2 HGC which was connected to the good quality transport from my Leema Essentials CD player. I began with Bing Crosby's brief and to the point song, Mandy, from the reissued CD, Bing on Broadway. Partly to gauge Crosby's baritone textures but also Buddy Cole's small group jazz backing.

I was immediately impressed with the open, airy nature of the Crosby vocal. As soon as he began to sing, his vocal occupied a large studio space which, as a secondary effect, added to Crosby's relaxed delivery, making the song seem further 'at ease'. The air that spilled in and around Crosby's voice also allowed more emotion and texture to exude forth. As such, the song seemed to have more significance. After

all, you're looking for any singer to give you their heart and soul during a performance. The added Crosby textures meant that he could provide new subtleties.

As for the jazz backing? There was a tremendous focus at work here. Every instrument seemed tight and sprightly. The piano had a bounce and mobility that had it leaping around the soundstage like a March Hare while the upright bass offered a welcome heft. There was a genuine weight and grounding to this area of the frequency spectrum that contrasted nicely with the percussion, especially the later brushwork sequence.

I then moved to more dynamic rock and Depeche Mode's Enjoy The Silence. The increased energy of this track revealed a slight edge to the Allegro (no more than that, though, the Allegro never moved into a harsh sonic territory) that added an extra degree of precision to the percussion, enhancing the crispness of the beat and the impact of the bass, giving the drums a heightened impact. You could describe the guitars in a similar way. The plucking of each string was an event while subtle workings of the string work: sliding, reverb and the like, were all accounted for by the ear. Nothing was lost in terms of how the music was delivered to the ear.

I was impressed by the synth work on this track which showed a striking insight. Each synth style and tone was described accurately. Some elements of the synths on this familiar track were finely etched. Such was the exactness of the delivery.

CONCLUSION

For the price, the Allegro allows a lot of information to get through to the ear. As with all top quality cables, this digital design's main job is not to, in itself, enhance the music, but to remove noise and extraneous aural rubbish to allow the hi-fi to do its job properly. In those terms, the Allegro does a great job.

BLACK RHODIUM ALLEGRO 75 OHM DIGITAL CABLE

Price: 0.5m terminated with RCA or BNC connectors, £160.00.

1m terminated with RCA or BNC connectors £180.00.

Longer lengths are available pro rata.

Website: www.blackrhodium.co.uk

Tel: 01332 342233

GOOD: midrange extension, low noise, detail, value for money

BAD: nothing

RATING: 8

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GROOVY

8/10

