



— CH Precision M1 Monoblock Amplifier and L1 Linestage Preamplifier (with X-1 Power Supply) **\$94,750 and \$47,925**

This deluxe, Swiss-made, bridgeable, high-current monoblock amplifier and two-box (separate power supply) dual-mono linestage preamp—authored by the same engineers, Florian Cossy and Thierry Heeb (the C and H of CH Precision) who designed Goldmund’s distinguished electronics back in the day—seem to have some of the same sonic DNA as that of another Swiss company, Soudation. Like Soudation’s 701/711 amplifiers and 725 preamplifier, the M1 and L1 are ultra-fast on transients, ultra-high in resolution, ultra-low in noise and coloration, and quite beguilingly beautiful in timbre. CH Precision’s amp and preamp use no global negative feedback at their default setting (although users can add as much or as little NFB as they choose by means of menus accessed via the LED screens built into the front panels of both units). Personally, I chose not to use any NFB, as I think feedback slows

these astonishingly “fast” electronics down. When they are configured in their default positions, I would be hard put to choose between the M1/L1 and Soudation’s 711/725 in every regard save for the bass, where the SMPS-powered Soudation (the CH Precision uses an extraordinarily high-quality transformer-based power supply) still holds an edge in weight, power, and color. When it comes to resolution and speed, however, the two fight to a virtual draw. Indeed, with a slightly less dark (i.e., “bottom-up”) balance the CH Precision may draw ahead by a nose in these two areas. (Then again, it may not.) Which should you choose? Well, that depends on your speakers, your source, your room, and you. One thing is certain: Those shopping for the best in solid-state need to listen to both these marques. (Review forthcoming)

JONATHAN VALIN

Magico M Project Loudspeaker

\$129,000

Simply put, this \$129k, 450-pound, five-driver, three-way floorstander with its aerodynamically shaped carbon-fiber-panel enclosure and massive aluminum top, bottom, front, and rear plates is the most realistic and enjoyable transducer I’ve heard in my home. In addition to its curved chassis, the M Project incorporates all sorts of other advances—from its 10-percent-larger diamond-coated beryllium tweeter, to its unique graphene-carbon 6" midrange driver, to the extraordinarily expensive, one-off Mundorf caps in its re-designed elliptical crossovers, to its three 10" high-sensitivity nanotube-carbon woofers. Intended to showcase Magico’s most advanced technologies, the M Project succeeds in every conceivable way, sounding much fuller, more powerful, more beautiful, more lifelike, and more appealing in the bass and power range, and less tippy in the brilliance range and top treble, than previous Magico loudspeakers, without any sacrifices in the transparency, resolution, speed, and low distortion that have made Magicos so popular with “transparency to source” and “absolute sound” listeners. Indeed, this is the fastest, most detailed Magico yet, but also, far and away, the richest and loveliest sounding. (For you “as you like it” listeners, this thing sounds jaw-droppingly good on well-recorded rock ‘n’ roll.) The only downside to the M Project beyond its price is its availability, which, alas, is virtually nil. Only fifty pairs of these showpieces were manufactured—and nearly all fifty were sold to wealthy audiophiles long before the first M Project was built. So... why is something that almost no one can buy getting my Golden Ear Award? First, because it is so damn fabulous sounding, and second, because the technologies introduced in this speaker are already trickling down (or up) into other Magicos, including the Q7 Mk II, which showed so staggeringly well at Munich High End this year, and which Robert will be reviewing in the very near future. (Review this issue)

