



Pro-Ject 2 Xperience

Here's the eyecatching acrylic build of Pro-Ject's Perspective model, but at much lower cost

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PRICE £550

While it may resemble Pro-Ject's £750 Perspective turntable, the fact is that apart from the lid the 2 Xperience has no components in common with its more costly brother. Aesthetically it's a pleasing design, the traditional shape managing to have a contemporary feel without being as obvious in its modernity as that of decks in the company's RPM series. Henley Designs

screws from the motor), balancing and aligning the arm and cartridge, and plugging in the mains power via the 'wall wart'-type transformer supplied. A screw-threaded record clamp is provided to 'bond' the record to the platter, its use resulting in deeper bass and a more precise sound. A gentle twist after the first point of resistance is felt is all that's required; overtightening gave the music a very compressed and restrained air.

Having reviewed several Pro-Ject turntables over the last few years I had

Along with this was an honesty about the quality of the recording that those coming from a warmer, more euphonic source may find a little disarming. With a much-loved 1961 copy of Beethoven's Emperor Piano Concerto [RCA Victor LM 2562] there was excellent insight into the recording, a nicely balanced tonal colour around the Steinway piano and satisfying dynamic range.

The thing that did surprise me was the air of *joie de vivre* to the performance. Every record played sounded as if the musicians were really enjoying themselves, the slightly extrovert presentation reminding me of the slightly cheaper RPM6.

The addition of a Pro-Ject Speed Box (£45) – an outboard quartz-locked power supply – proved very worthwhile, adding a little more control to the timing, plus a better sense of the placement of the performers in a venue that seemed to have grown in size in all directions. This little box is designed to fit underneath any of the Pro-Ject decks and immediately gives the advantage of push-button speed changes between 33 and 45rpm as opposed to having to move the belt up and down the stepped acrylic pulley. (A neat little tool is provided for this job that avoids the transfer of grease and other contaminants to the belt.)

Surprising was the air of *joie de vivre* to performances – as though musicians were really enjoying themselves

is offering a 25% discount on any Ortofon cartridge bought with the deck. I fitted an MC30 Supreme (£635 less discount), swapped the adequate but uninspiring interconnect supplied for a Chord Company Siren (£110), and later replaced this with a Black Rhodium Oratorio DCT (£700).

Setting up the deck merely requires attaching the platter and drive belt (remembering to remove the little red transit

certain expectations regarding the sound, and in part I was correct. There was the somewhat cool, at times almost detached, feel that I have come to recognise as a characteristic of the company's acrylic-bodied designs. I do not mean unemotional; play Edith Piaf and the agony and the ecstasy were there for all to hear, but there was a calmness about the rendition that I have not found in many mid-priced products.

