



Pure gold

This mid-price moving-coil cartridge from AVID HIFI leaves **Neville Roberts** feeling deeply satisfied

Located in the middle of the range of AVID HIFI's three high-end MC cartridges, the Boron has many of the design features of the top-of-the-range Reference Ruby, such as the generator assembly and magnet design.

The magnet assembly is housed inside the black main body and the front gold section with the boron cantilever protruding from the lower part offers a degree of protection for the coils. Another gold section at the rear also provides protection for the fine wires from the coils as they make their journey to the four cartridge pins at the back. I particularly like the clip-on stylus guard, which slides on to the body from the front to protect the stylus when not in use.

In common with AVID's Reference Ruby cartridge, the body of the Boron is a 5-axis precision-milled aerospace grade aluminium body. This is designed to remove unwanted vibrations away from the critical record-stylus interface, thereby reducing what is commonly called 'needle-talk'. The same cross-shaped Alnico magnet assembly and coils are used as found in the Reference Ruby to provide a reasonable output level of 0.32mV. The Boron's dynamic compliance of 8.5cu just nudges it into the low-compliance category, making it likely to suit high effective mass tonearms (greater than 25g).

The "extra-long" boron cantilever is fitted with a solid diamond Micro Ridge stylus to offer excellent tracking

ability coupled with great information retrieval from the groove.

After connecting the output of my record deck to my valve phono stage, my first task is to fit and set up the Boron in my tonearm with the recommended 2g tracking force. I then use an Image Hi-Fi Vinyl Essentials test record to check the cartridge/tonerarm resonance and tracking ability. The resonance peak is around 10Hz and there is no hint of any resonance with the 6Hz or 14Hz tracks – perfect! The tracking ability test demonstrates that the Boron can track up to an impressive 80 microns.

Sound quality

I kick off with Lyn Stanley's *Little Drummer Boy*, which is a mash up of the traditional Christmas song and Dave Brubeck's *Take 5*. The instrument focus with the Boron is well defined, with a punchy and tight bass. All of the instruments and vocals are situated

within a very believable soundstage. Next up Tony Mottola and his group playing some classic Latin music. *Summer Samba* is reproduced clearly and effortlessly, with the percussion fresh and open while the flute solo is bright. The perfectly balanced interplay between guitar and wind instruments, and the tonal detail of each instrument is very impressive.

Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 4 In F Minor* by the Cleveland Orchestra has a very deep bass drum that's beautifully reproduced and very well extended. The exuberant presentation of the full orchestra is really well rendered and the strident trumpet blasts during the

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opening *Andante Sostenuto* are clear and bright without sounding harsh.

Chasing The Dragon's Interpreti Veneziani performance of Vivaldi's *Concerto For Violin, Strings And Harpsichord RV386* delivers superb clarity, together with excellent realism and refinement. The instrument placement within the soundstage in my room is also very well defined.

I conclude with Rodrigo's *Concierto De Aranjuez* with the English Chamber Orchestra and John Williams on guitar. Williams' playing is intimate and detailed, and the well-known second movement is both enchanting and delicate throughout.

Conclusion

At home across a wide range of musical genres, the beautifully made Boron delivers an elegant and high-end sound quality to your system. The cartridge will be an excellent choice for pairing with a good-quality phono stage and fitting in a top-quality tonearm ●

DETAILS

PRODUCT
AVID HIFI Boron

ORIGIN
UK

TYPE
Moving-coil cartridge

WEIGHT
9.1g

FEATURES

- Cantilever: boron
- Stylus: elliptical solid diamond
- Magnet: cross-shape Alnico
- Recommended Tracking Force: 2.0g ±0.2g

DISTRIBUTOR
AVID HIFI

WEBSITE
avidhifi.com



Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY



LIKE: The Boron delivers elegant and realistic performances

VALUE FOR MONEY



DISLIKE: Nothing at the price

BUILD QUALITY



WE SAY: A great moving-coil cart with excellent musicality that really draws you into the music

FEATURES



OVERALL

