It still has that distinctive sound – the Dynamique Audio Halo 2 RCA/XLR cable.

Written by Fi-Play on June 10, 2022

Common analog audio signal cables typically use RCA and XLR connectors, with many audiophiles preferring XLR cables. This is due not only to the need to pair with fully balanced power amplifiers or other equipment, but also to the better interference immunity of XLR cables over long distances. Furthermore, many brands recommend using XLR cables in their high-end models to ensure optimal sound performance. For example, most studio monitoring equipment uses XLR connectors (for both analog and digital signals), thus XLR naturally has its technological advantages. The British cable brand Dynamique Audio, catering to a wide range of user needs, offers both RCA and XLR cables in its Halo 2 series.

Constant pursuit of quality and balance

Dynamique Audio is a professional cable manufacturer from the UK, offering a comprehensive range of products including power cords, speaker cables, signal cables, network cables, and USB cables. They emphasize that all their products are designed and manufactured in the UK, yet the prices are not particularly expensive. Almost all of their cables are designed, manufactured, and packaged in-house, rather than relying on off-the-shelf designs, giving them greater control over the design process. Dynamique Audio has immense confidence in its audio cables, even emphasizing that they "can last a lifetime," and they do not believe in any inferior materials. For example, filling audio cables with unnecessary materials may create an impressive appearance, giving the illusion of thicker conductors, but all this extra filler only degrades sound quality, destroying detail and rhythm. Therefore, Dynamique Audio cables are mostly thin and flexible, making them easy to store.

Dynamique Audio uses pure silver or silver-plated copper wire as conductors in both entry-level and high-end cables. Besides superior conduction speed compared to copper, they believe silver conductors also offer superior sound quality. Furthermore, with proper cable design, the bright yet somewhat thin sound characteristic of silver conductors can be improved. This philosophy is applied to the Halo 2 RCA/XLR signal cable I'm introducing today. Internally, it uses 4N pure silver conductors, constructed with solid wire. Structurally, it utilizes two sets of 21AWG, two sets of 24AWG, and two sets of 26AWG pure silver solid wire wound in a triple balanced spiral array to achieve optimal conductor spacing, and is insulated within an air gap PTFE layer.

Silver is the most conductive natural metal, and its sound performance surpasses that of most pure copper materials. However, if silver is used improperly (e.g., insufficient conductor thickness or purity, poor insulation, or inadequate geometry), it can sound thin and shiny. When designed correctly, silver as a conductor can achieve extremely high levels of detail, dynamics, and musicality. Each solid conductor is plated with at least 100 micrometers of silver, far exceeding similar products. Solid conductors are predominantly used because, technically, they offer more advantages. There is no interaction between different strands in braided conductors, eliminating uneven or discontinuous conductivity, resulting in a better, cleaner, and more detailed sound, while avoiding the graininess often found in braided conductors. When braided conductors are necessary, manufacturers determine precise conductor dimensions and layouts to achieve optimal sound quality.

Different Geometric Layouts: For different applications, the manufacturer employs various cable geometric layouts to effectively eliminate electromagnetic/radio frequency noise interference. These include twisted-pair and star winding (a design similar to "magnetic coaxial," offering more effective noise immunity than twisted-pair). Additionally, there is the manufacturer's patented "spiral array" geometric layout, which arranges conductors in an orderly fashion with spacing between them, thus providing stronger mechanical vibration resistance. The Halo 2 signal cable uses this "spiral array" winding method.

Furthermore, the Halo 2 utilizes a unique resonant damper. While manufacturers typically fill conductors with cotton material to reduce micro-distortions that may arise within the cable, this creates an additional dielectric layer, leading to other losses. Therefore, Dynamique Audio designed a unique and complex resonant damper. This damper is made from a solid aluminum billet, CNC machined, polished, and anodized. It is filled

with a special material that absorbs electromagnetic interference and is bonded to the cable with high-elasticity adhesive, ultimately absorbing electromagnetic interference and reducing resonance. This method is completely passive and does not alter the cable's electrical parameters like other damping or filtering methods, resulting in a quieter and more airy sound. The Halo 2 signal cable also allows customers to replace the metal XLR connectors to accommodate a wider range of equipment.

Regarding cable insulation, the Dynamique Audio Halo 2 uses various forms of PTFE (polytetrafluoroethylene) Teflon insulation, with FEP (fluorinated ethylene propylene copolymer) for extrusion insulation and PTFE (polytetrafluoroethylene) for air dielectric. The manufacturer's air dielectric system features a lower dielectric constant (this constant is used to measure how much signal loss is caused by insulation treatment, so a lower constant is better). Due to the use of oversized Teflon hollow tubes, this means that most of the conductor is actually "suspended" in the air, thus achieving ideal electrical insulation. In the manufacturer's higher-end cables, an even larger "super air gap" insulation method is used to achieve richer, more delicate sound quality while effectively reducing mechanical resonance.

Transparent and bright, dynamic and sharp

Replacing system cables is, to some extent, a form of fine-tuning. The process of changing cables to achieve the best musical impact and reproduction from the equipment is a joy for audiophiles. When switching to Dynamique Audio Halo 2 RCA or XLR cables, you'll find a significantly more immersive and realistic sound when listening to female vocal tracks. The sound is natural, open, and smooth. There's no longer any separation between the listener and the music; only the music driving the listener, allowing you to be completely immersed in the musical space. Compared to the cables I used before, the Halo 2 series cables offer superior analytical power, delivering transparent and layered vocals while faithfully reproducing the fullness and emotional depth of the recording. The music you listen to tells a story, rather than simply providing sonic information.

Playing Lady Gaga's "I'll Never Love Again" soundtrack, Lady Gaga's vocals sounded natural and even smoother and more pleasant to listen to. The Halo 2 cable delivered excellent sound reproduction, presenting the singer in a three-dimensional space. The vocals were well-positioned and centered, and the background music was serene with outstanding depth. The female vocals and accompaniment formed a good sense of layering, showcasing the vocals in a three-dimensional way. In terms of analytical power, it was significantly improved compared to the previous cable, with reduced isolation and enhanced clarity. The female vocals were fully displayed, with a soft, delicate texture that was deeply penetrating, without any harshness or shrillness. The spaciousness of the sound was a clear advantage of this cable. The Halo 2 cable made the music more pleasant and enjoyable. The improved spaciousness extended beyond instruments to include vocals, and with the sudden increase in the overall soundstage, I felt that this cable was very suitable for listening to large-scale orchestral works. Of course, the Halo 2 signal cable is suitable for all types of music, but large-scale orchestral pieces will allow this cable's advantages to be fully utilized.

Or, when replaying the piano piece "Fugue State," one can feel the performer's light touch on the keys, like a ballerina's toes lightly leaping and twirling on the stage, giving an impression of dexterity and agility. Furthermore, listening through the Halo 2 series signal cables, one can also feel the nuanced variations in dynamics between the piano keys, clearly perceiving the performer's delicate handling of these subtle changes, rather than simply the strengths indicated on the score. This demonstrates the excellent micro-dynamic performance capabilities of these two Halo 2 series signal cables. When playing the disc of "Smetana: My Country," the three-dimensionality of the entire concert hall space and soundstage is particularly pronounced, with significantly enhanced transparency, a deeper black background, and a more prominent contrast between the dynamics of the music and the background. When the string ensemble flows forth, the overall sound is mature and sweet, rich and full, with a bright and sparkling high-frequency response, yet without any harshness or harshness, possessing a warm and natural beauty.

Summary

After listening, I was pleasantly surprised. The musical picture presented by this Dynamique Audio Halo 2 RCA/XLR cable was beyond my expectations. The feeling was the unique stereoscopic quality of Dynamique Audio; the captivating color of the music was irresistible, and every note was vividly present. Regardless of the type of music, it comfortably filled the space with musical details, which were smooth, transparent, and incredibly comfortable.