



Continuum Audio Labs introduces Obsidian Turntable and Viper Tonearm at Munich High-end Show

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Continuum Audio Labs, the world's finest manufacturers of turntables and tonearms, is pleased to announce the introduction of their new analog playback system, the Obsidian turntable and Viper tonearm. Designed by a team of world-class engineers and designers whose expertise spans the disciplines of physics, metallurgy, mechanical engineering, vibration control, and industrial design, the system represents a major accomplishment in terms of sonic performance, mechanical sophistication, and aesthetic design. By every criterion, the Obsidian and Viper set a new benchmark in their class. Continuum CEO, Dr. Murali Murugasu, observes the significance of the Obsidian and Viper when he commented, "Having already established landmark designs such as the Caliburn and Cobra, creating a new design that would advance analog playback was a formidable challenge. Not only do the Obsidian and Viper do so on their merits, but doing so at its price is truly an accomplishment."

While the Obsidian and Viper combine to make a powerful system, each component delivers outstanding performance in its own right. Beginning with the Obsidian turntable, the engineering feats are significant. The primary goal of the platter and suspension system is to reduce and eliminate unwanted noise and resonance using natural elements and good physics. For example, the element tungsten is prized for its high density (1.7 times greater than lead) and natural damping characteristics. Although expensive and difficult to work with, tungsten is used because it allows us to achieve greater mass in the same space. The Obsidian utilizes tungsten in key points of the Obsidian including the arm post, contact points for the arm suspension, and bearing ball and shaft. The bearing itself utilizes a magnetically opposed (but non-floating) design. The net effect of these constructs is that all platter resonances are below 10 Hz and thus have a negligible impact on Obsidian's sound.

Beneath the platter and suspension lies another engineering tour-de-force: the motor. Dubbed “The Quiet One” for obvious reasons, this motor was specifically designed for Continuum Audio Labs. A turntable motor must be quite and provide stable operating speed; the Quiet One addresses both parameters. Speed stability comes from a 35mm, 60-volt zero-cogging DC motor that was designed and manufactured specifically for optimum performance with Obsidian’s platter mass and physical harmonic characteristics. The motor is controlled by a servo amplifier running at 53.6 kHz and has the highest power currently available in a motor of its size, far above the range of audibility. A very high-resolution, closed-loop encoder circuit assures nearly perfect speed stability. Noise is addressed through the use of graphite brushes which provide the current conducting capacity required to drive a heavy platter and a specially designed damping system that attenuates brush noise.

If the Viper tonearm looks familiar, it does so for good reason. Drawing on the familiar contoured shape popularized by the award-winning Cobra tonearm, the Viper then utilizes the latest finite-element analysis (FEA) software to create a tonearm with the optimum stiffness to mass ratio in order to minimize unwanted resonances. The tonearm bearing is literally a source of unwanted friction in most tonearms. In the Viper, is a sapphire “V”- jewel paired with a hardened stainless steel pivot to assure smooth, free, unimpeded movement and ideal tracking on any record. The swash plate rides on damped miniature bearings manufactured to ABEC 9 standards, the tightest tolerance (0.0012 mm) and highest quality available. A 30mm adjustable tungsten central tower provides a massive, stable support for the tonearm.

Finally, the Obsidian is set-up to allow the owner to add a second tonearm of virtually any length or design, giving the experienced listener ultimate flexibility for tonearm/cartridge setup.

DISPLAY LOCATION

The Continuum Audio Labs Obsidian and Viper will be on display in the Constellation Audio Room (MOC, Atrium 4, 1st Floor, Room F-118) from May 5 – 8, 2016.

SPECIFICATIONS

OBSIDIAN

Drive System: Hi-torque DC motor, pyramid round belt.

Speeds: 33/45 rpm with precise speed adjustment

Bearing: 25mm magnetically opposed Tungsten shaft

Platter: Two-part composite-nest aluminum platter weighing 25kg

Arm Mount: Stainless steel, infinitely adjustable, magnetically coupled, tungsten damped

Wow and Flutter: <0.03% (WRMS)

Minimum Dimensions for set-up: 550mm x 350mm

Total Weight: 30kg without arm

VIPER

Wand: Interchangeable Wand - Reshape™ Shape Optimised Resonance Tuned Compound Curve Wand pioneered by Continuum Audio Laboratories.

Effective Length: (from stylus to pivot point) 239mm

Azimuth: Azimuth is adjustable and repeatable.

VTA: Adjustable using a 30mm central tower with a fine-thread VTA adjustment

Overhang: (from Stylus to spindle Centre) 17.3mm

Offset: 23 Degrees

PRICING AND AVAILABILITY

The US retail price of the Obsidian is \$35,000 and \$10,000 for the Viper. Deliveries to worldwide markets are scheduled to begin in Q3 of 2016.

ABOUT CONTINUUM AUDIO LABS

For more than a decade, Continuum Audio Labs has continued their mission of building the world's finest analog playback systems, succinctly summarized as "The Quest for Perfection." Its team-oriented approach brings together talented individuals from many disciplines who share a passion for great music and a commitment to produce extraordinary products.

CONTACT

For additional information on Continuum Audio Labs products, please contact Irv Gross at irv@continuumaudiolabs.com or at (860)-550-0601.