



random



repeat

source



volume



AMP

Digital

8

0

analog

CD

ENTER

0:17



PLAY / SELECT



EJECT

Have you ditched your CDs in favour of streaming or transferred all your silver discs to a hard drive? No? Me neither. Here's a pure CD player. From Denmark. And one that the manufacturer calls a "Pure Audio CD player" for good reason.

Danish contemporary art

The headline alludes to the report on the Rega Saturn Mk. 3 in image hifi 6/2022 (Back to the future). It is obvious to make this connection because the Lyngdorf CD-2 belongs to the same price category as the British player. It also confirms the view that the CD as a medium is far from over. This viewpoint is apparently shared by several manufacturers – as long as they continue to develop such good-sounding devices, we need not fear for the future of the CD as a physical medium.

There are two reasons for taking a closer look at the company and its history in Lyngdorf's case. Firstly, many readers of image hifi will have at least heard the company name Lyngdorf before, and perhaps one or two of them will have come across one of their amplifiers with integrated room equalisation. Nevertheless, the CD-2 is the premiere for a Lyngdorf device in image hifi. Secondly, the history and development of the company is inextricably linked with one of the personalities in our industry who have had an appreciable impact on developments.

Company founder and namesake Peter Lyngdorf can look back on a history of almost fifty years in the hi-fi industry. He started out in 1975 with a distribution company for home entertainment.

In 1980, he opened a small hi-fi shop in Aarhus, Denmark, by the wonderful name of HiFi Klubben. As this shop quickly be-



came a meeting place for hi-fi enthusiasts, he expanded his concept and invited customers to become members of HiFi Klubben and enjoy special offers, music events, workshops, etc. The concept was a great success and today HiFi Klubben has 101 shops and 825,000 members, called Klubbers, throughout the Northern European market, the Netherlands and Germany. In 1983, the not totally unheard-of loudspeaker brand Dali was founded, followed by sales partnerships and changing shareholdings in companies such as Snell Audio and NAD. Lyngdorf was particularly interested in digital signal processing and now has over thirty years of experience in the field of digital room correction using DSP. This experience led to the development of amplifiers with integrated digital room equalisation. The Lyngdorf company itself was founded in 2005, and in 2007 the legendary piano makers Steinway & Sons made the naming rights available to the fledgling company, so that the full company name is now Steinway Lyngdorf. The company employs 38 people in Denmark (if you count the employees of

all the companies founded by Peter Lyngdorf and his holdings such as Dali and HiFi Klubben, in total there are more than 1000 employees). Peter Lyngdorf has currently been working with Lars Risbo and Bruno Putzeys at Purify ApS in Roskilde, Denmark, since 2014. There, they have dedicated themselves to basic mathematical and physical research in order to develop solutions for digital and analogue circuits. This is, of course, a very technical and scientific approach to developing good-sounding devices. We will find out whether this approach has any effect on the sound character and playback capabilities of the Lyngdorf CD-2.

Let's now take a closer look at our test subject. The Lyngdorf CD-2 looks very stylish, the design is immediately recognisable as Scandinavian in its clarity and lack of frills and therefore fits in very well with the manufacturer's other devices. On the far right are two pushbuttons for switching the device on and off (the "hard" power switch is located on the back of the housing) and for opening and closing the CD tray. The CD tray is located on the right, with a lar-







ger rotary/push switch in the centre. This can be used to select the tracks on the CD by turning it and to start playback with a short press. A longer press takes you to the device menu where you can set various parameters such as display brightness, output level and sampling rate of the digital output. All this can also be done using the supplied remote control. The display on the left-hand side of the front panel is very easy to read and can also display CD text if required. A pair of RCA and XLR connectors as well as the two digital outputs are waiting to be connected at the rear. There are no digital inputs, which distinguishes the Lyngdorf CD-2 from some of its competitors. The internal converter section deals exclusively with the signals from the CD drive. The sampling rates for the digital outputs are selectable (44.1 kHz-16 bit; 48/96/192 kHz-24 bit). All Lyngdorf devices only leave the manufacturer following a 24-hour burn-in and calibration phase.

At the start of the listening sessions, I gave the CD-2 a quiet spot on one of my bFly-audio device bases and connected it to the system using the tried-and-tested Transparent MusicLink. The CD-2 sounded fresh, open and dynamic right from the start. Al-

Left: The tidy interior of the CD-2 from above. Below: The multi-filtered power supply unit with its many discrete components. Behind the output sockets you can see the output stage, behind the drive the module for digital signal processing

Above: Clearly structured: the front of the CD-2, seen here with open CD tray and the very easy-to-read display

though it had already been played for 24 hours, the performance improved significantly during the period under review, with homogeneity and coherence

Partnering Equipment

Turntables: Linn Axis with Linn Basik Plus tonearm, Pro-Ject RPM 5 with 9 cc tonearm, Thorens TD 160 S Mk. IV with TP 16 Mk. IV tonearm **Cartridges:** Grado Timbre Reference 3 (MI), Ortofon Vinyl Master Red, Ortofon VMS 20 (MM), Excalibur by TAD Gold High Gloss (MC) **Phono preamplifier:** Trigon Vanguard 2 with Volcano 2 battery power supply, Lehmann Audio Black Cube with PWX auxiliary power supply **CD drive:** Cyrus CdxT, Pro-Ject CD Box DS2T **CD player:** Eternal Arts DP Mk. II **D/A converter:** Pro-Ject DAC Box RS **CD recorder:** Tascam CD-RW 900 II **Preamplifiers:** Cyrus Pre xpd with D/A converter and PSX-R auxiliary power supply, Cyrus Pre VS with PSX-R auxiliary power supply, Lehmann Audio Black Cube Linear **Power amplifier:** Cyrus Stereo 200 **Loudspeakers:** Dynaudio Contour 1.3 SE, Dynaudio BM 5 Mk. III (active), Dynaudio Sub 250 (subwoofer) **Headphone amplifier:** Lehmann Audio Black Cube Linear **Headphones:** Grado SR 325, HiFiMAN 400i **Cables:** Pro-Ject and Horn Audiophiles (phono), HMS (digital), in-akustik, Isophon, Kimber, Melodika, Monitor Audio, Straight Wire, Taralabs and Transparent MusicLink **Accessories:** Black Forest Audio DÄD!MÄT and bFly-audio VARIO turntable platter mats, BaseOne and FlatLine device bases, PURE and Line Mk. 2, Q-Satellite dampers by bFly-audio, SoundPucks, SoundSpacers and SoundSheets from Black Forest Audio, Cardas Myrtle Woods, Sun Audio power strip, power cables from Sun Audio, in-akustik and Cyrus, Furutech Disc Demagnetizer RD 1, Furutech DeStat SNH – 2, Sound Improvement Disc Model 14, Audioprism CD Blacklight, Pro-Ject VC-S2 alu record cleaner

increasing in particular. The CD-2 demonstrated high resolution and great clarity from the outset. The soundstage is very balanced and has comprehensible spatial dimensions with a clear positioning of the various instruments. In terms of overall dynamics, the CD-2 is extremely powerful, but the reproduction of the most delicate fine dynamic relationships is also one of its strengths. The CD-2 first demonstrated its capabilities with a very good recording of the Swiss composer and pianist Nik Bärtsch and his band Ronin. Bärtsch describes his idiosyncratic music sometimes as Zen funk, sometimes as “ritual groove music”. Incidentally, Bärtsch calls the individual tracks “modules”, perhaps a little over-intellectually. “Modul 41_17” (album Holon, ECM Records 2049, DE 2008, CD) begins with a very simple piano figure. This figure is first played by bassist Björn Meyer, then by saxophonist Sha and finally by Kaspar Rast on drums. Together they

weave a web of sound reminiscent of minimalist music composers such as Steve Reich. But after about five and a half minutes, the fine weaving comes to an end, a short call from the master, and the musicians startle the listener with dynamic elemental force on bass, drums and saxophone and draw him into a precisely circumscribed, but nevertheless passionate, gripping experience. I am spontaneously reminded of a concert with this band I enjoyed about three years ago, where, after a brief orientation phase, the whole hall was gripped by the groove and vibes of the band. The Lyngdorf CD-2 reproduces the band’s playing in an incredibly differentiated manner and with sufficient substance. Tonal colours, such as those of the saxophone, remain intact even in the thickest turmoil, the treble range is wide and airy without any overemphasis. In addition, the sound of the CD-2 has a calmness to it that is difficult to describe, something that the lis-



tener doesn't notice at first and only gradually becomes aware of.

This calmness is so difficult to grasp because the Lyngdorf is anything but a bore and certainly doesn't get caught napping dynamically. The timing, as the recording described above clearly shows, is also flawless. On first hearing, it sounds rather unspectacular, without sensational highlights or superimposed timbral escapades. Here, a very high resolution seems to have the effect that all details are "there" and can be heard effortlessly, without this ability to differentiate being due to a bright or even obtrusive character. All the fine details are wonderfully integrated into the cohesive and holistic overall picture. And this result actually reflects the Danes' technical approach. Basically, Lyngdorf follows an approach that corresponds to the hifi principle "Start at the Beginning", which has been known for decades. As Roland Hoffmann from Steinway Lyngdorf told me in a pleasant and informative telephone conversation, they try to avoid errors at the very beginning of the signal path when reading the CD and processing the signal, and can then dispense with sound correction in the output stage. This is why a CD-only drive from Stream Unlimited is fitted, which reads the data on the silver disc without interference and also runs very quietly (the tray itself does not extend quite so smoothly, but this should only be noted in passing). In order to ensure that the readout process is undisturbed by microphony, impact noise and similar influences, the CD-2's feet have been fitted with an absorbent layer on the underside. As with all devices in general and CD players in particular, care should be taken to ensure that the CD-2 is positioned perfectly horizontally. The best possible ground potential is also achieved electrically through a particularly carefully designed "low noise" circuit and corresponding circuit board layout, and mutual interference between components is avoided. Lyngdorf keeps the signal paths as short as possible and avoids cable runs and soldered cable connections. The entire technology is sitting in a sturdy aluminium housing, which is reinforced with additional aluminium blocks at key points. For the digital-to-analogue converter, Lyngdorf uses the Wolfson 8740, which has proven its sound quality for years and which receives a signal upsampled internally to 96 kHz/24 bit, as

Left: Specialising in CD playback: the Stream Unlimited drive. The components for digital signal processing, mounted slightly higher on a circuit board, are clearly visible behind the drive. In this way, Lyngdorf also ensures spatial separation from the other components



The rear panel with the analogue outputs on the left, the optical and coaxial digital outputs as well as the hard power switch and the mains socket on the right. The CD-2 comes with a decent mains cable

this is the ideal working range for the converter module. The electronics are supplied by a multi-filtered power supply unit with four separate supply voltages for analogue and digital.

You can hear this care in development and production, which serves the sole purpose of transporting the audio signal as purely and as unadulterated as possible. For example in chamber music, where the communication between the musicians is always important and consequently the ability of a device to reproduce this communication. The String Quintet op. 97 in E flat major by composer Antonín Dvořák dates from his “American” phase and is one of the compositions that the Czech composer wrote during, or under the influence of, a longer stay in the “New World”. This piece is somewhat overshadowed by the famous Symphony “From the New World” op. 95 and the “American Quartet” op. 96, which have become much better known than the quintet. Very unjustly, in my opinion. The musicians of the Vogler Quartet, supported by Tatjana Masurenko on the second viola, give the quintet an enchanting performance (cpo 555 022-2, Europe 2016, CD). The second movement with its dance-like lightness and lively themes is captivating; the CD-2 succeeds brilliantly in depicting the musical interaction between the performing musicians. This is due on the one hand to the incredibly detailed, yet very balanced reproduction, and on the other hand to that elusive calm in the soundstage described above. I attribute these characteristics directly to the fact that when de-

signing the CD-2, particular emphasis was placed on the lowest possible noise levels, a short signal path and the minimisation of external influences. This means that small signals don’t have to fight their way through a fog of interference and the delicate and finest details become audible without the ear having to strain. This concept and this painstaking technical attention in no way results in a cool or even soulless reproduction! The CD-2 simply delivers what has been immortalised on the disc. Showmanship and any form of pretence are alien to it. Yet it is capable of conveying sufficient emotion. I put this to the test with the album Fairy Tales For Hard Men (Cooking-Vinyl Cook CD 115, UK 1997, CD) by Jackie Leven, who was born in Kirkcaldy, Scotland, and died far too early in 2011. In the song “Extremely Violent Man”, the musician takes a hard look at his lyrical self and describes an oppressive and hopeless family situation that repeatedly leads to violence. The haunting atmosphere of this song is created not least by details such as the reverb trails on the very directly recorded vocals or the explosive sound envelope of hard-strummed guitar strings. Here the CD-2, with its clear but also very powerful reproduction, places itself entirely at the service of the music.

The CD-2 has no preferences when it comes to music playback. Whether jazz, piano recordings or electronic music – the Lyngdorf is dedicated to all genres with its own neutrality, focussed on the music and the listener. In addition to the above-mentioned characteristics, it also provides fatigue-free long-term

listening pleasure, probably a result of the natural, distortion-free reproduction without artificial highlights. If you want to listen to the highly recommended Lyngdorf CD-2, make sure you take enough time to do so. It doesn't flaunt its qualities obtrusively and isn't forward in grabbing attention. But it is possible that this pure, uncluttered sound character brings us closer to the music immortalised on the CD than other concepts.

Lyngdorf CD-2 CD player

Digital outputs: 1 x RCA/phono socket (coaxial, galvanically isolated), 1 x optical (TOSLINK) **Analogue outputs:** 1 x RCA, 1 x balanced XLR **Frequency response:** 20 Hz – 20 kHz (± 0.02 dB) **Signal-to-noise ratio:** 114 dBA **Dynamic range:** 100 dB (output -60 dBFS 1 kHz) **Distortion:** 0.0018 % (20 – 20,000 Hz) **Crosstalk attenuation:** -120 dB (20 – 20,000 Hz) **Output impedance:** 75 Ohm, 110 Ohm (balanced XLR) **D/A converter:** Wolfson WM8740 **Output voltage:** max. 3.5 Vrms/7.0 Vrms (RCA/XLR) **Special features:** Output level in steps of 0.5 dB to -12 dB adjustable; selectable sampling rates for the digital outputs: 44.1 kHz – 16 bit; 48/96/192 kHz – 24 bit; Lyngdorf Intersample Clipping Correction to avoid clipping on high level CDs **Dimensions (W/H/D):** 45/5.7/37.3 cm **Weight:** 6.1 kg **Warranty:** 2 years **Price:** 2999 Euro

Contact: Drei H Vertriebs GmbH, Kedenburgstr. 44, 22041 Hamburg, phone 040/37507515, www.3-h.de
