



• ACCESSORY OF THE YEAR

Stillpoints Ultra

\$225 each

These deceptively simple devices house some sophisticated technology inside them. Their purpose is to dissipate micro-vibration through elaborate internal structures that include tiny ceramic spheres. Replacing stock loudspeaker spikes with Stillpoints Ultras rendered a wholesale improvement in the sound, particularly in the blackness of backgrounds, resolution, and the increased sense of music becoming detached from the loudspeakers. One of the most effective accessories RH has tried. *RH (218)*



Clearaudio Double Matrix Professional Record-Cleaning Machine

\$4000

Clearaudio's Double Matrix Professional record-cleaning machine not only cleans both sides of your LPs simultaneously, saving time and tedium, it does this trick for \$1200 less than the original Double Matrix in a svelte, compact aluminum chassis that looks twice as good as the first DM did. Most well-made record cleaners do an excellent job of cleaning LPs; what the DM Professional offers is an increase in convenience, reliability, and functionality that puts it in a class of its own. *Jonathan Valin (214)*



• TECHNOLOGY BREAKTHROUGH OF THE YEAR

Berkeley Alpha USB

\$1695

Functionally, the Alpha USB does what many sub-\$300 devices do: converts USB to S/PDIF. But that's where the similarities end. The Alpha USB is not just the best device of its kind; it also provides a state-of-the-art method for getting music out of a computer and into a DAC. Adding the Alpha USB is like sharpening the focus on a camera and snapping images into vivid clarity. The entire presentation becomes more coherent, better resolved, and more lifelike. This device fully reveals the glory of high-resolution sources, particularly in its portrayal of the finest textural and spatial details. The Alpha USB wins our Technology Breakthrough of the Year Award because its performance exceeds that of every other product in its category. *RH (214)*

