

Live

SEE IT > DO IT > SPEND IT

SINKING THE ESTONIA

Were M16 and the Russians behind the ferry disaster?

SULTANS OF SPIN

The ultimate turntables

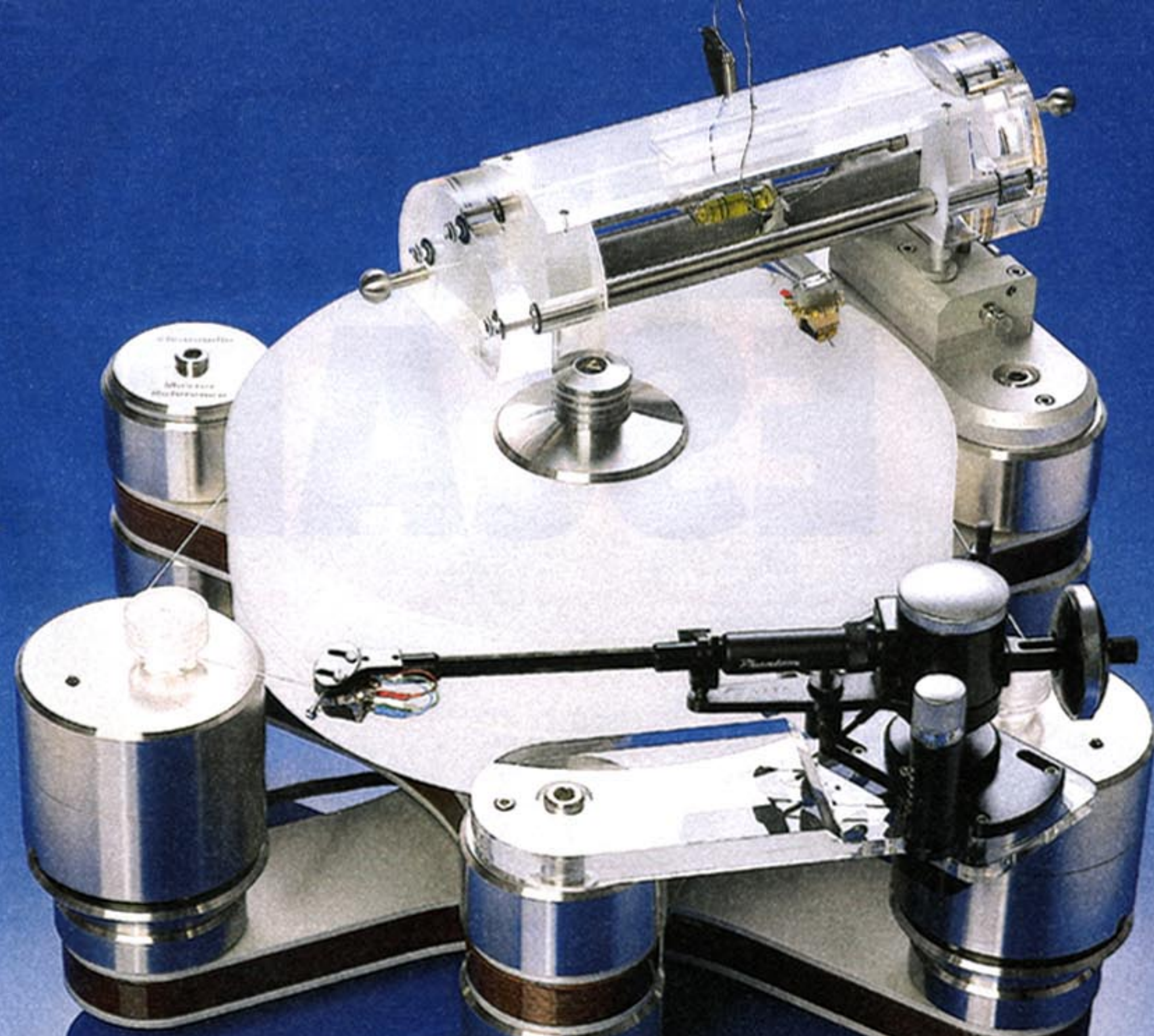
QUAD ALMIGHTY!

James Martin pulls a fast one on Tom Cruise

INTO THE GROOVE

FEARNE COTTON: Ditch your iPod and join my vinyl revolution





The vinyl frontier

High-end turntables for serious music lovers

CLEARAUDIO MASTER REFERENCE AMG WOOD TURNTABLE

£11,100, stoneaudio.co.uk
 Electric speed change No
 Suggested arm Clearaudio Master TQ-1 Tonearm, £4,050
 Suggested cartridge Clearaudio Goldfinger, £5,640
 That's no misprint: this 50kg feat of German engineering really does cost £11,100 – and that's before you

add the suggested specialist arm and the cartridge made of 14-carat gold. The deck's acrylic platter is a full 8cm thick, and is boosted by bronze-plated bearings, three separate motors and a trio of drive belts. But you'll be remortgaging your house to buy the thing – and a suitably excellent hi-fi amp and

speakers – once you've heard it in action. If you want to know just how good recorded music can sound (like your favourite singer, orchestra or band has stepped out of the studio and into your own home, basically), then you have to experience this Master at work.

★★★★★

CLEARAUDIO PERFORMANCE

£1,670, stoneaudio.co.uk
 Electric speed change No
 Arm included Yes
 Cartridge included Yes
 It's fitting that this comes in black or white, as its delivery is equally clear-cut. If a recording is a little

dry or harsh you'll hear it, as the Performance tells it like it is. Powerfully. It's not just the sound that's special either: due to clever magnetics, the platter effectively floats on air, keeping it well away from vibrations. This just has to be heard. ★★★★★



MICHELL GYRO SE

£940, michell-engineering.co.uk
 Electric speed change No
 Arm included Yes
 Suggested cartridge Roksan Corus Black, £200
 A beautifully built deck – as you'll appreciate when assembling it. Don't fancy

doing that? No worries: just ask your retailer to do it for you. You'll then find the Gyro SE takes everything from thumping techno to complex classical in its stride, producing an incisive sound that oozes emotion.

★★★★★



FUNK VECTOR

£760, thefunkfirm.co.uk
 Electric speed change Yes
 Suggested arm Rega RB250, £125
 Suggested cartridge Goldring 1042, £165
 With a unique retro design, this is a standout spinner. From the funky to the

orchestral, it delivers music with power and pace, boasting bold dynamics, impressive scale, full-bodied vocals and crisp bass. Arguably the best-sounding deck under £1,000 – our only gripe is its slightly home-made feel. ★★★★★



ROKSAN RADIUS5

£750, roksan.co.uk
 Electric speed change No
 Arm included Yes
 Suggested cartridge Roksan Corus Black, £200
 The Radius5 comes from a long line of pedigree turntables, designed with a multi-tier structure to

minimise vibration. It's available in maple and walnut finishes or better-sounding acrylic (above, £850). It's a crisp, clean, informative performer that can make rivals seem muffled. If you want to hear more from your music, give it a spin. ★★★★★



PRO-JECT RPM 9.1

£1,100, project-audio.com
 Electric speed change No
 Arm included Yes
 Suggested cartridge Ortofon MC15, £150
 If you find the smoothness of many turntables a tad timid, try this for size. Once

you've got it positioned using the supplied spirit level, it'll charge through your LPs – if you love dance or dramatic classical, you'll be in heaven. It can't match the Clearaudio Performance for all-round excellence, but it's a good alternative. ★★★★★