

Affordable\$\$Audio

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Acoustic Revive: RCA-1.OPA (RCA Interconnects)

XLR-1.OPAII (XLR Interconnects)

SPC-PA Speaker cable

By Anthony Nicosia

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Specifications:

RCA-1.OPA (RCA Interconnects)

PCOCC-A Single Core Interconnect Cable

Cable Length: 1mm Pair

Price: \$900

XLR-1.OPAII (XLR Interconnects)

PCOCC-A Single Core Interconnect Cable

Cable Length: 1mm Pair

Price: \$975

SPC-PA Speaker cable

PCOCC-A Single Core oval Speaker Cable

Speaker Cable Length: 2-meters

Price: \$1650

3-meter length

Price: \$1950

Available in Bi-Wire, Y-rag (spade) or Banana termination

Ask for quote

Power Reference (Power Supply Cable)

PCOCC-A Single Core Interconnect Cable

Custom made version of C-037 (connector) & P-037(plug) terminations

Power Cable Length: 2-meters

Price: \$725

Manufacturer: SEKIGUCHI MACHINE SALES CO., LTD

<http://www.acoustic-revive.com/english/index.html>

US Distributor: The Lotus Group

<http://www.lotusgroupusa.com/>



Today is the final part in a series of reviews I have been doing about Acoustic Revive for *Affordable\$\$Audio*. Final that is unless of course something new and exciting strikes me as being imperative that I feel just must be told. These last few items from this company are more expensive than the others I have reviewed but being they had such a great impact on my review system I felt I would be amiss if I did not include them in the review series. Those of you with equipment geared more towards the upscale end of affordable, yet far from being over the top, might just find these products to be of interest. These audio accessories are much more conventional in their purpose. These are not like the RD-3 Disc Demagnetizer, RIO-5 II Minus Ion Generator, RGC-24 Ground Conditioner, CS2F Outlet Stabilizer or REM-8 EMF Canceler in lending themselves to being toward the unique side of audio tweaking. These are products that can be found in everyones system, interconnects power cords and speaker cables. Of course being that these products are from Acoustic Revive you will find that a tremendous amount of research has been applied to every small detail of their development. I will give you a basic overview of what design concepts they have incorporated into the cables, but to do true justice to the product please go to their website where you can read the full account of every

painstaking attention to detail this company has gone through to bring you the finished product. There are countless cable manufacturers with varying design concepts all proclaiming to have the answer to the never-ending quest for the perfect transmission of music from the source component through a path that ultimately leads to our speakers. While one may debate design philosophies in each and every product made by any manufacturer, the only test that matters to me is the resulting end sound in my review system. With this thought in mind let us move forward with an open mind and most importantly a critical ear.

Since all the Acoustic Revive products up for review today use a single core cable let us first discuss this concept. Multi-wire twisted construction, rather than single core, is usually a more flexible cable allowing for ease of use in our audio systems. The potential drawback of multi-wire is that having many cables in such close proximity to each other can lend itself to stray electrical current which can produce distortion from incidental sound outbreak. Acoustic Revive uses a cable that is both flexible and yet single core in construction. They took a PCOCC cable then annealed it to make a PCOCC-A version with the goal being to improve on both the flexibility and conductivity of the finished cable. This original single-core conductor is oval-shaped in an effort to combat the “resonance peak” they found on transmission when using a round-shaped design. However this oval-shaped design makes it more difficult to wind smoothly and therefore someone must be watching at all times when the wire is on the winding machine, standing by to adjust the wire if need be. This of course adds to the costs. Surrounding this cable is an air floating structure that is designed to help prevent the sound from losing a feeling of energy. Instead of using a PVC material as a buffer, they turned to the largest manufacturer of silk in Japan to make a natural silk tube especially for them. Again this concept is to keep the natural feeling of energy alive within the cable. In order to make this silk tube Acoustic Revive turned to the Ebisawa Corporation, a company that provides high quality silk knits for clothing. Mr. Takashi Ebisawa, an executive director, from Ebisawa Corporation explained that they had never tried to develop anything for use by an audio company before. They had to use a newly developed special jig to weave this silk in a very slow process while using a silk grade they call grade extra. This extra grade is there highest grade silk which added to the cost and coupled with the painstaking time it took to make each very thin tube drove the cost up. Mr. Takashi says that because of this it costs more to make than even a large sweater.

Next up was the development of a flexible Teflon coated copper tube to be used as shield material to help eliminate incidental sound and distortion while allowing for greater flexibility. This coupled with an outside layer of CSF tubing designed to absorb electromagnetic waves, increases the shield effect and cuts the noise that comes out of the cable itself. This special Teflon coated copper pipe and CSF tubing was developed for Acoustic Revive by the Shinagawa Business and Industry Ltd., which is a general electric insulation part maker. The SF tube is their registered trademark and they have been making it for about twenty years. This request from Acoustic Revive to develop a carbon SF tube (CSF) was not as easy as it sounded. Impregnating the thread with carbon paper particles made it very fragile, so they had to use a very small carbon paper particle in order to retain the tubings strength. As for the flexible Teflon coated copper pipe, it is the OFC (Anoxia copper) version of their stainless steel flexible pipe that was originally used as noise shield material for medical equipment. Being that it oxidizes easily it must be Teflon coated right after production, the problem being Teflon can not be sprayed on and therefore the pipe must be soaked in the Teflon, again a more expensive process.

Now let us move onto the connectors and plugs where we see Acoustic Revive turning to experts in the field for assistance in a joint effort to make something unique. Since 1962 Matsukin Ltd. has been making high quality connectors and plugs for use in the audio industry. Acoustic Revive sought them out to develop an RCA plug, Y rag and Banana plug for use in all their interconnects and speaker cables as well as their XLR connectors. Mirror facing and Super cryogenic treatments were used to increase the conductivity. The plugs are made from 2017 Duralumin and brass which are fixed to the main body in order to control resonance. Each plug is also processed with a thick silver and rhodium plating. These plugs are totally handmade by a specially chosen Japanese Meister (master), as are all the cables we are about to review below, who carefully assembles and inspects each cable by hand. For the speaker cables, the connectors used are an expensive Rhodium plated design. The power cables however use a custom version of Acoustic Revives own P-037 plug and P-037 connectors. Here the metal parts of each are Super cryogenic treated without the plastic parts attached. This was done separately because it was found that this treatment would present a danger to the plastic as they were prone to more easily break after the cryogenic treatment.

I am going to look at both the RCA-1.OPA (RCA Interconnects) and the XLR-1.OPAII (XLR Interconnects) together as they are so similar in design and use. The difference between the two naturally being their connectors but otherwise the results obtained from one applied equally to the other in these review findings. All the cables for review today came in the same type of attractive red box, were they were wrapped up in plastic and had bubble wrap on both ends to protect the connectors. When I first held these interconnects I immediately noticed how soft and supple they were. They would have no trouble bending around corners in my system and looked quite attractive in their black net cover-



ing. They plugged in with ease and locked into place for a tight fit without any problems at all. So much for their constructions, design and looks, but how did they sound? There were some obvious differences between them in the fact that my amplifiers when used in mono configuration with XLR cables were designed by Monarchy Audio to sound better when used with XLR cables. Aside from that though both RCA and XLR cables were exquisite. Neil Diamond's *The Greatest Hits 1966-1992* (Columbia C2K52703,CK 52763) "You Don't Bring Me Flowers" duet with Barbra Streisand seemed all it should be. Here I heard the strength and power of his voice coupled with her strong yet delicate singing presentation. The layering of voices when they overlapped never left one confused but rather clearly kept the two voices separated and the cables allowed you to feel the magic between them as they performed. On "Brother Love's Traveling

Salvation Show" the cables allowed the bass from the drums to roll through my speakers with great power and heft. There was a nice balance of left to right soundstage presence as well as good front to rear depth. I felt as if I was at an actual revival meeting as I heard the backup singers, Neil Diamond and the audience interact and create a three dimensional show right in front of me. I almost had to remind myself I was sitting in my room alone doing a review. Having gotten a taste of Barbra Streisand I decide to listen next to Celine Dion's *Let's Talk About Love* (Music/epic BK68861) where the two of them sing together on "Tell Him". Both voices were clear and controlled with a sense of purity to them even as they released their power. My wife likes to listen to Celine Dion and now I remembered why. Both of them together put on a performance that grabbed my attention as the Acoustic Revive cables allowed them to be experienced seemingly unrestricted by the boundaries of the physical cables themselves. Wrapping up my interconnect experience I decided to play Philip Glass's *Solo Piano* (CBS MK 45576) where I heard my favorite piece called "Mad Rush". This song was originally written for the Dalai Lama's entrance into New York City's Cathedral of St. John the Divine during the fall of 1981. If you have yet to hear this piece and you like Philip Glass you are in for a treat. Hearing him play the Baldwin Piano and listening as you can feel the effect of the decay of notes lasting just long enough to meet the next series gave it that you are there feeling to the Cd. The cables did not seem to restrict the sound as I felt the sense of a full sized piano in my room playing music with great depth. As the song progressed so did the increased tempo as the music flowed unobstructed through the cables.



Moving right along now to the SPC-PA Speaker cables, they too were quite supple like the above mentioned Acoustic Revive interconnects again making them ease to work with. The spade and banana connections looked and felt first rate as they easily made a tight connection. I must say they had quite a dramatic impact on my system. Where the interconnects were a bit more subtle in letting themselves be felt, the speaker cables let you know they were there right from that very first moment sound passed through to the speakers. Deciding that a change of paste was in order, I pulled out my Pearl Jam *Ten* cd (Epic/Associated ZK 47857) and proceeded to rock out with the song "Why Go". Here the cables let the beat from the drums be expressed in all their glory as I felt the power of the performance. The quickness of the guitar riffs, pace and timing of the song, all were revealed in stellar fashion. The vocals also had a very natural sound to them. I felt like I was thirty years younger at a club listening to the band and enjoying the evenings music. Switching over to something a little more subdued, I dug out a Fleetwood Mac cd, in honor of my wife who loves their music. Here on the cd *Behind the Mask*, (Warner Bros. 9 26111-2) I had a nice experience with the song, "Do You Know". Here the



music would throw off a nice spacious soundstage, left to right and front to back. A nice added touch was that I could now hear the background vocals a little more prominent and with greater detail. I could not detect any glaring problems with these cables, bass, midrange, upper frequency response, all seemed to deliver the goods and did so at levels loud enough to please most of us. In an effort to protect my hearing I will only play music so loud before I back it down. There were times when I did not like a particular song, but I soon discovered it was not the cables but the performance that I felt was lacking. The SPC-PA delivered music just the way I was feeding it, for better or for worse. At this price level I would, except these cables to be this good, and they were. No complaints here as they looked and sounded the part of quality cables while their connectors made setup a snap and ensured proper contact between amplifier, preamplifier and speakers.

Finally, we now come to the Power Reference Power Cord which, unlike the previously mentioned products, is quite stiff in comparison. The nice thing about this power cord is that it can be bent and will stay that shape. This makes it much easier when bending around corners or over other cables. Here I compared this power cord not against the standard inexpensive cords that come with most amplifiers but rather against other after market types. At this stage of the game most of us have experienced what it is like to swap out the inexpensive cords that are factory supplied and appreciate the changes that come with this type of upgrade. I have a variety of cables on hand varying in price from \$89 upwards to \$499 apiece. At \$725 for a two-meter length the Acoustic Revive power cord is definitely more expensive, but lets see what we get for our return. Listening to James Taylor's *Covers* cd (Hear HRM-30829-02) with the opening song "It's Growing", I could hear a change in the sound to the music and it was definitely not subtle.

There was a slight improvement in soundstage width, but that was not what amazed me the most. I was now hearing what I perceived to be a much smoother presentation where the lower bass felt to have more weight along with a sense that the upper midrange had taken on a deeper tone as well. Instruments sounded to have a truer timbre to their character and details were more pronounced. Hearing the group, Return to Forever featuring Chick Corea, Stanley Clarke and others, with "Hello Again" from their *MusicMagic* cd (Columbia CK 34682) I most certainly enjoyed the change in cables. Here I felt more accuracy in the way the horn section sounded as well as a fuller sound to the synthesizers. Rather than sounding slightly distant the male and female vocalists were perceived as being closer to me instead of at the other end of the room. The change with these cables was so pronounced that one might suspect a different amplifier had been inserted into the loop.



Final Thoughts

In conclusion I would like to say that this combination of cables truly did transform my system in such a manner as to be quite obvious and most assuredly for the betterment of the music. To be able to hear a cello resonate with all its intricate variations and a singers voice fluctuate when moving up and down the musical scale was indeed a difference I truly did appreciate. I had a feeling of being restricted only by the room I heard it in, the speakers I played them through and the ears I had to listen with. Each cable brought with it something a little different, the interconnects let pure sound flow through so as to feel unrestricted and clear, while the speaker cables added a layer of complexity as well as spaciousness. The power cords in turn presented me with a more natural dynamic sound to the music within the soundstage that the speaker cables had opened up. All in all this was a truly remarkable integrated combination of cables that put a smile on the faces of all who came by my house to listen.

The Listening Environment:

The listening room is 18 foot 8 inches long by 13 feet wide. The room's cathedral ceiling starts at 8 feet high then slopes upward to 13 feet at its peak in the middle. Flooring is a soft hardwood covering with an oriental rug placed dead center in between (but not under) the listener and the audio system. There are no doors that open or shut into other rooms also there are two large openings one facing the speakers and the other to its side and slightly in front of the right speaker. There were two Acoustic Revive RWL-III Panels one behind each of the two Legacy Focus 20/20 Speakers, used as an acoustical treatment for my room. As for my audio equipment it is tucked nicely inside of a Cherry Synergy Twin S30 Salamander audio rack.

Review equipment:

Monarchy Audio SM-70 Pro Amplifiers (two used in mono block configuration)

Monarchy Audio Model 33 Preamplifier

Samsung HD-841 universal player

Oracle Delphi Mk I turntable with custom made interconnects
Grace 707 tonearm with Denon 301 II MC cartridge
Whest PhonoStage.20 + MsU.20 power supply
Legacy Focus 20/20 loudspeakers
PS Audio UPC-200 Power Center
PS Audio Power Port Receptacle
Acoustic Revive RTP-2 Series Power Conditioner
Blue Circle BC86 MKIII power line pillows (2)
PS Audio Transcendence Silver interconnects
Kimber Kable PBJ interconnects
Anti-Cable speaker wire 10 foot pair
Anti-Jumpers for Legacy speakers
Monarchy Audio AC-1 Power Cord one 6 foot length
Tek Line PC-8 Signature Power Cord one 6 foot length
Mr-Cable Musician Power Cord 9 foot length (2)
Cherry Synergy Twin S30 Salamander audio rack

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