

by Jonathan Scull

TARA Labs The One interconnect, loudspeaker cable, and digital datalink

The sound ...

... of a full The One system is not a sound at all. It's more a feeling - a sense of quiet between the notes; a sense of the air, size, volume, and reverberant quality of the original recorded venue; a sense of true-to-life harmonics that bloom from a naturally hushed yet vibrant soundstage. Depth perception was available both in the soundstage and in the music itself, you might say. The soundstage was also utterly transparent out to its farthest corners.

In its naturalness, music was somehow more fully available to me. Pace and timing were enhanced by this clean, natural clarity of presentation. There wasn't a trace of zippiness or astringency, but the sound was wonderfully "free of dirt," as Kathleen put it. Music started and stopped quickly, yet flowed more continuously and with less effort than ever before. Imaging was gee-whiz palpable, but it wasn't just that -- in many ways it transcended the "picture" to embody the essence of the music. And with no effort on my part, I might add; Golden Ears not required. With The One, we're beyond "tight bass, great midrange, and soaring highs." We're into the realm of the senses.

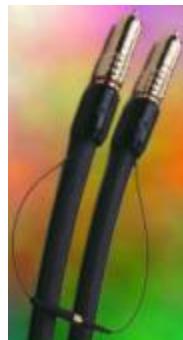


Let me bring you a few memorable moments from the Ribbon Chair to illustrate these cables' total virtuosity. Of all contemporary French singers, I hold Leo Ferre the most dear. "La vie d'artiste," the opening track from *Avec le temps* (2 CDs, Barclay 841 919-2, AAD), can be particularly shattering. His wonderfully expressive voice was so fully developed by The One that I closed my eyes and easily fell into the music and his

charismatic performance. The ambience and sense of realism were total. At 3:06 into the first track, after lulling the audience with dulcet tones, he mutters "Je m'en fiche" (I don't care) and whangs the piano! I nearly tumbled out of my chair. The emotion poured from the Utopia/Wotan/Nagra combo driven by the Ensemble Dichronos. I was transfixed by the music, by the very moment itself. Like never before, you understand? Precisely why it was so touching is hard to quantify. But somewhere deep in my analytical self, I recognized that The One was helping to make the magic.

Or take Dave's True Story's *Sex Without Bodies* (CheskyJDI64). I predict this'll be Chesky's first million-seller. Listening to "Spasm," "Sex Without Bodies," or "I'll Never Read Trollope Again," I found myself transported a few blocks to St. Peter's Church, where this wonderful CD had been recorded. K-10 and I were there, and damn me if it didn't sound exactly as it was recorded. Lyricist David Cantor (guitar/vocals) and his crew were out front on stage, while vocalist Kelly Flint sat in a small recording booth to the rear. Truth to tell, The One never editorialized in any way that I could tell on the music I played through it.

The dynamic, super-ambient, and airy soundstage The One developed on Bill Holman's *Brilliant Corners* (JVCXR-002 8-2) was hugely impressive yet totally effortless. Look, that's a big orchestra taking a crack at Monk's "Round Midnight" and other favorites, yet the presentation hung together beautifully in terms of



separate musical lines and the critical relationships of timing and rhythm between the players. The One got me in deep; only the music mattered. And at this task The One never faltered. ...In my view, The One is one of only a handful of cables that sit at the very top of the heap....I crave the nuance, the quiet, detailed, and airy soundscapes that The One set up....I'm mad for The One's utter refinement and deft hand with the low-level cues and microdynamics that make the music live. Fear not, The One also does high-level dynamics like nobody's business.