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TEST

Power strip + AC power cable
**Acoustic Revive RTP-4eu ULTIMATE +
POWER REFERENCE**

Price: 4300 € + 885 (2 m) €

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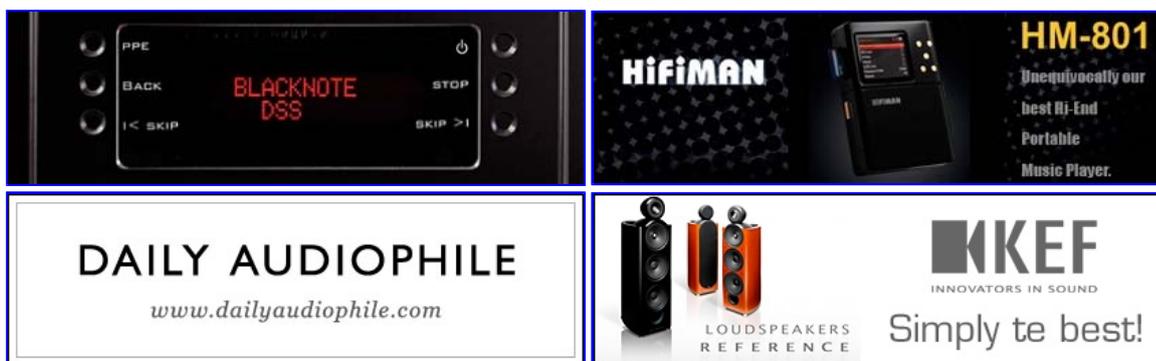
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r e k l a m a



There is some kind of agreement between Japanese manufacturers related to supplying power to audio gear – it is very clear. It seems, that there is a common consensus about this element of audio being very important. Or is it otherwise? Maybe the cable manufacturers coming from THERE are so strong, that they dictate the rhythm to the rest of the world? I am not sure what is closer to the truth – more important is, that the one does not exclude the other. [Furukawa Electric](#), [Furutech](#), [Acrolink](#) (a brand from AcroJapan Corporation), [Oyaide Elec.](#), and the tested [Acoustic Revive](#) are names known not only in the audio world. Those are among the most important players on the market, although we have to confess, that looking at the pages of “[Stereo Sounda](#)” we can find other companies, completely unknown here. From the companies mentioned by me the biggest ones are Furukawa and Furutech, then Oyaide and Acrolink. Compared to them Acoustic Revive is tiny. This is one of the manufacturers, that found a niche in extreme hi-end – in a place where they can improve, modify and better things, adding their technical knowledge, to things manufactured by the “big ones”. Probably I a bit unfair, because AR has its own input in the basic, but it seems to be an artist, and not an artisan, if you know what I mean.

ACOUSTIC REVIVE

Power Reference and Gigawatt dis not follow that rule. The AR cable smoothened everything, quieted everything slightly, and brought the gravity point a bit higher than before. Bass was not as prominent as with the Gigawatt cable. But we will see in a moment, that it was not its fault. This is very important, because knowing this rule will allow us to avoid surprises, save us money and – most of all – get the best sound for the given money.



Acoustic Revive is a company founded by Ken Ishiguro – the owner, constructor and chairman in one person – in 1997. The company’s first product was Disc Demagnetizer RD-1, now in the version RD-3. So we had an untypical product from the very beginning. AR is a small company, having its seat in a small town Isezaki in the Gunma prefecture, a dozen or so minutes drive from Tokyo. Its parent company is Sekiguchi Machine Selling. This is a company designing, and some time ago, in their previous incarnation, manufacturing big machines used for crafting concrete blocks used for road construction works. But at some moment in time the Japanese minister of contracts decided to introduce new law, which eliminated companies like Sekiguchi Machine from the market. Ken Ishiguro was the president of the factory at that time – only he and the vice president of the company remained employed, all other workers lost their jobs. Unfortunately the vice-president died shortly afterwards for cancer, and Mr. Ishiguro remained alone, not knowing what to do. I did not mention yet, that he was an audiophile from his early years. Having lots of free time and the need to do something, he started experimenting, related to audio: he constructed a prototype of the demagnetizer, which he started to sell under the name

I wrote about that already when testing the power cable Acrolink Mexcel 7N-PC9300, comparing it with its older version Mexcel 7N-PC9100 ([HERE](#)): sometimes ‘better’ is not really better. The more advanced a product is, the more attention needs to be devoted to what we connect it to. And so – the model ‘9100’ played with a wide range of products, always good, always nice. ‘9300’ is better, more resolved, more precise, but it sounds worse with cheaper products than the ‘9100’, emphasizing their flaws, which were covered by the ‘9100’. With the budget NAD an inexpensive power cable will sound better than a very expensive one. We will make an error trying to connect inexpensive electronics with an expensive component. The only exception I know is the usage of expensive electronics with cheap loudspeakers – the effects can be overwhelming. But it would be enough to use a cheap CD player in such a system to break everything apart. And to some extent that happened with the Power Reference plugged into the Gigawatt strip. This is a splendid strip, but in its price range, and the Acoustic Revive cable is a completely different league. This is why it sounded worse together, than when a computer type cable connected the strip to the Furutech socket.

Acoustic Revive RTP-4eu ULTIMATE

Connecting the RTP-4eu Ultimate strip to the Power Reference cable, plugged into the Furutech socket confused me a bit. This does not happen often, but when it does, it is usually in the context of my own system, which I know very well. I mean, that listening to recordings, which played a moment earlier with the old power strip, and/or the old power cable, I knew everything had changed, starting from the timbre, through dynamics, holography, presentation of the attack and reverb, impact of the sound and the perception of volume. Everything was different. With such a dramatic change of paradigm, with such a deep reorganization I get lost for a while – I know exactly what happened, at least at the level of analysis, but on the level of synthesis, by normal listening, and decision about the what and when, I would be helpless. If the reference point for the recorded and reproduced sound would be a

Acoustic Revive. So Ken Ishiguro became the head of a new company, and Sekiguchi Machine started a new chapter of existence as a company manufacturing cables, accessories, etc, for audio.

It is not the first time that we meet their products. Please have a look at the test of the digital cable DSIX/1.0 [HERE](#) and the demagnetizer RD-3 with the “Grounding Conditioner” RGC-24 [HERE](#). Looking at this sample of products you can see, that Acoustic Revive is something else, something more than just another cable manufacturer. I will make it even stronger – cables are not the most important part of their offering, emphasis lies on products that are hard to qualify to any area, and are quite controversial. As if cables wouldn’t be... Like I wrote in the November editorial ([HERE](#)) it was hard to accept even for Mr. Yoshi Hontai, the representative of AR outside of Japan. Like he writes himself, he needed a visit from Mr. Ishiguro and having all the accessories in his system, to see what this all is about. It means, that we have to put some effort in getting acquainted with the ideas, take care of every possible detail and make the changes slowly, one after another, because only together they create an added value we count on from the very beginning.

This is why I decided to create special conditions for the Acoustic Revive power strip and cable. As you probably remember, since two years I use a power strip from Gigawatt, the [PF-2](#) in my system. This is a very solid product, mechanically and electrically, which brings small changes to the sound. And it does not cost much. I compared many strips, conditioners, filters, etc, to it. And although there were many better products, I return to the Gigawatt without problems, knowing, that it is a good base for the comparison, even if it sometimes loses the comparison. I did not feel any discomfort. But sometimes I knew, and it is about this awareness, and not the feeling, that it would be good to provide some of the tested products, especially the ultra hi-end ones, even better conditions to work. In the end it is about showing the products loosened from its context, with possibly minimal influence of the environment on its function. This is of course a daydream, an idea, but one worth following. And the power is one of the basic elements in audio. This is why I took on the work I should have done – yes, I see it now – long, long ago.

SOUND

Discs used for testing:

- *Stereo Sound Reference Record. Jazz&Vocal*, Stereo Sound, SSRR4, SACD/CD.
- Charlie Haden & Antonio Forcione, *Heartplay*, Naim, naimcd098, CD; review [HERE](#).
- Chris Connor, *Chris Connor*, Atlantic/Warner Music Japan, WPCR-25163, CD.
- Depeche Mode, *Abroken Frame*, Mute, DMCD2, SACD/CD+DVD-A; review [HERE](#).
- Derek And The Dominos, *The Layla Sessions. 20th Anniversary Edition*, Polydot/Universal Music Japan, UICY-93958/60, 3 x SHM-CD.
- George Michael, *Patience*, Sony Music UK, 515402 2, CD.
- Jim Hall, *Live!*, Horizon/A&M Records/Universal Music Japan, UCCM-9225, CD.
- Lars Danielsson, *Mélangé Bleu*, ACT Music+Vision, ACT 9604-2, CD; review [HERE](#).
- Madaleine Peyroux, *Bare Bones*, Rounder/Universal Music LLC (Japan), UCCU-1188, CD.
- Milt Jackson Quartet, *Statements*, Impulse!/Universal Classic&Jazz/Victor Entertainment, UCCI-9088, CD.
- Patricia Barber, *Companion*, Premonition/Mobile Fidelity, UDSACD 2023, SACD/CD.
- Savage, *Tonight*, Extravaganza Publishing Srl/Klub80, CD001, 25th Anniversary Limited Edition, CD; review [HERE](#).
- Thom Yorke, *The Eraser*, XL/Warner Music Japan, WPCB-10001, CD.

Japanese versions of the discs available on [CD Japan](#).

Furutech FT-SWS(R)

live event, then it would be easier. But because playing at home is only a certain way of approaching it, crippled in every way, and at the same time having its own assets, which are not there at a concert, there is the need to redefine our “reference” sound anew. I think, that I managed to do that, but I know that it is a process, which needs constant adjustments, something like an approximation. Fortunately the most important elements of that change are visible, they have the lead, “supporting” each other.

The most important change that came with the power strip (please remember – this is not about the change of the strip alone, but how it cooperates with the new cable and power socket) was the addition of incredible saturation and volume to all recordings. I write that in one sentence, not splitting it in ‘saturation’ and ‘volume’, because those elements give something more together, and are inseparable here. The recordings “grew”. This was caused by the saturation of the midrange and bass, the latter being stronger, and slightly stronger lower midrange. This was “serious” sound. I did not hear before the change, that sound of my system hadn’t such a big volume as I thought. Now I had a new perspective. This is still not the volume as shown by [Avantgarde Acoustic Duo Mezzo](#), which you could hear on this year’s Audio Show, but truly, at the distance I was listening, the *momentum*, a certain organic “whole”, the music arrived in, were incredible.

I think, that this intensity was the first obstacle for me to evaluate the sound quickly. I will not exaggerate saying, that the change of these three power elements brought more changes to my system, than changing any other element of it. This might seem heretic, but I cannot help it. This is how I hear it. Now I also see, that the recordings were a bit shallow before, a bit “small”. Although they did impress, and not only me, changing to something better, something so MUCH better, showed the direction I should follow with the next changes. Much higher resolution is related to that. Not circumstantialities, because this category does not apply at this level, it is absorbed by resolution, holography and differentiation; but it is the resolution that gives a better performance than before. I cannot think of a better name – it is a spectacle. This is a change in looking at the music, at recordings, but in combination: the recording and the music are now a unity. We can hear different ways of sound engineering, but only by hearing how something was sung and realized, how it was recorded and mastered, etc, but not on their own.

Like I said, the bass is much stronger than before. It is clearer, deeper and more dynamic. It is palpable and intensive. It is easier to catch its irregularities introduced by the loudspeakers. [Chario Academy Sonnet](#), I use for some time, exchanging them sometimes for some big floor standing speakers from other companies, are splendid loudspeakers, but they have their own character, and for the first time they showed so clearly, that the lower bass can be so “pumped” by the bass-reflex port. I am sure, that in other systems, with cheaper electronics, without such a phenomenal saturation, this will not be that audible – I did not hear that like this two weeks ago. But now it was unambiguous. Also the midrange was much stronger. Sometimes, like with the new re-edition of the Savage disc *Ten Years Ago*, fantastically prepared by the team Rafał Lisiecki/Damian Lipiński, responsible earlier for the disc *Tonight*, I had the idea, that most of all, the “analog”, deep midrange was playing. Until I got accustomed, until I “switched the button” in my head. It took a while, but now everything else sounds dry and thin to me. But at first, I had the impression of having too much midrange – this is a thing people kill to get, spend fortunes on it, and still do not have it, and I had too much of it!

And this is where I will end. I am just starting, please note, that I only mentioned two discs, although I always try to talk about sound using examples. But the power strip and cable from Acoustic Revive change perspective in such a way, they give such a jump into another place, that the basics seemed most important to me, the starting point. I will try to give you more details when testing other power related devices. I would also like to listen to the Power Reference cable alone, but I already see a problem – the listening system is a ‘system’ and not a ‘set’. And in case of power it can be heard even stronger, than when connecting loudspeakers to an amplifier – and that surprised me. The changes are structural, deeper, not as superficial as when changing loudspeakers. We do

First the power socket was changed. When I am writing this line, I see my wife in front of my eyes, who showed to our friends, who came to visit us, the socket I was so proud of, and told what it should DO. The conversation always went in the direction of discussing eccentricities, quoting stories about weird uncles, etc. Even if I tried to explain why and how it could work, I noticed that was talking quieter and quieter, so that I hardly heard myself in the end. Nobody stopped me, our friends are very polite, but also nobody tried to discuss the topic. Yes: a socket sounds – ha, ha! And I even cannot blame them. This is hard to understand. This is why such a colossal role is played by presentations, listening sessions, meetings, etc. Having the ability to hear for ourselves is the only way to understand. Because this is not about belief – belief has nothing to do with that. But once you hear what I am talking about, then we will look at people that negate things, they do not “believe in”, with a little compassion.

Changing the power socket from a nicely looking (at least according to my wife), classic, double socket with brass, nickel plated contacts, with a light, plastic cover to a specialist, very expensive Furutech FT-SWS(R) with copper connectors, prepared in the α (Alpha) process, rhodium plated and a stiff cover from carbon fiber, brought shocking changes. Even for me, though I heard differences between sockets many times (please have a look at Janusz’s system [HERE](#)), the change heard in my own, very well known system was incredible. Each further step – a different power cable and strip, gave more refined changes, but this socket made structural changes, deeper and probably most important. I’ll just add, that before bolting the socket tight, I covered the connection places of the socket and the power wiring with Mr McKenic, a fantastic product, which I described some time ago [HERE](#).



After the change the sound became incredibly intensive. Palpable. The instruments had bigger volume and were “denser”, more visible. It was OK before, I did not complain, I listened with joy, but this is how it works – when we hear something better, that what we deemed perfect, turns out to have shortcomings. The guitar of Jim Hall from the disc *Live!* jumped almost out of the loudspeakers. But not by bringing the instrument closer to the listener, but by adding weight to everything, by making every instrument more “real”. The treble became more noble and there was more bass. It was even a bit too much of the latter. I mean, maybe not too much, but in one place it got prolonged a bit too much. The top range was nobler, stronger, but also more real, closer to a strong beat, which I know from reality. The biggest changes did not happen to the upper and lower octaves or space (although it got bigger, especially in depth and height – now we could hear, how big the instrument is), but to the organization of the whole. Because the tonal balance, resolution, etc. were already very good, they became less important. This was a coherent, well performing mechanism. Everything was there in its place, every element was in line with others. This is of course not the maximum we can get, but for here and now it is just brilliant.

Acoustic Revive Power Reference

Due to the new power socket I suddenly heard a lot of sounds. They came from everywhere, were internally differentiated, seemingly together, but each one of them separate, having a separate mission. This was a fantastic change. But was a bit

not talk about bass, treble, etc, although we also need to address that, there is something above that, something that connects all those little elements. I cannot explain that, it shouldn’t be that way. But it is, what shows, that companies creating good power products, like Gigawatt, Furukawa, Acrolink, Oyaide, Furutech and Acoustic Revive make good jobs, looking ahead, before that, what can be measured at the moment. And it is about WHAT to measure, not even about HOW. Measurement techniques are mature enough, to measure most of the processes. But we do not know what to measure, how to correlate that with other measurements, and most of all, how to interpret that and transform it to what we hear. Currently there is no one who could do that. This is why I give a deep bow to the owner of Acoustic Revive and others, mentioned and not mentioned (I cannot name them all, so I only mentioned the few I know well) engineers and companies, which explore new grounds, and show us new directions.

DESCRIPTION

Power Reference is a power cable with solid core conductors, with oval shape. Standard power cables are made from cords, here not – this is why Power Reference is stiffer. And it cannot be sold in Germany or Japan, where law regulations prohibit solid core cables to be used as power cables. For those market another cable was designed, using cords, which are a bit worse. Like I say, the cable is quite stiff, but it can be placed quite easily, it can be bent to shape. The PR is made from three oval leads made from PCOCC-A copper, made especially for AR by Furukawa Electric. The wires are isolated with polyolefin, a material used by Oyaide and Acrolink. The shielding is provided by a copper tube, isolated with Teflon. On the outside the whole is covered with a layer of material called CSF – this is a braid from polyurethane with addition of carbon. Those braids are made for AR by another Japanese specialist, the company Shinagawa Shoko Co., Ltd. Both plugs are based on Oyaide constructions. This means, that we have the contacts covered by polished layers of silver and rhodium. They were submitted to a cryogenic process, similar to Furutech plugs.



RTP-4eu Ultimate is a four socket power strip, similar, at least in approach to the topic, to the Furutech e-TP309. But the similarities end on the looks. The AR strip was done from one block of duralumin, with the bottom coated with a special material blocking EMI radiation and damping vibration. The sockets come from Oyaide – those are the top versions. The top cover is also from duralumin.

This does not seem much, so the price asked for the strip looks extremely high. Yoshi Hontai San, representing AR probably sensed that in my emails, so he sent this explanation: “I think, that you deem the price of the RTP-4eu being very high. One of the reasons that you have to pay so much for it, is that the chassis is made from a single block of noble duralumin of the 2017 type, as used in aviation. The photographs I attached show the process of preparing it for the strip RTP-2 Ultimate. The model RTP-4eu is three times as big. Internal cabling is made from oval PCOCC-A cables, 1.8 mm x 1.4 mm solid-core, used also in the loudspeaker cables SPC-PA. The inside is filled with a mix of “Green carborundum” (Silicon carbide), Lithia Tourmaline (Elbaite) and powdered natural quartz, soaked in epoxy resin. All metal

“overdone”. I liked it a lot, but connecting the cable Power Reference in place of the Gigawatt LC-2 MkII (I just remind that we are still using the Gigawatt strip) showed what we could improve. It brought also another change – it worsened one thing – and this is the place I want to start this part of the test. There is a rule in art, called *decorum*. This is a “principle of classical rhetoric, poetry and theatrical theory that was about the fitness or otherwise of a style to a theatrical subject” (according to Wikipedia). We could say, that this is a rule of “correctness” or “proportion”. This category corresponds well with another rule in audio, which could be called “the rule of adequacy of components”.

elements were treated with a “super cryogenic” (-196°C) process.

g a l l e r y



r e k l a m a



ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT

- CD player: Ancient Audio Lektor Air (previous it was Prime, tested [HERE](#))
- Phono preamplifier: RCM Audio Sensor Prelude IC (tested [HERE](#))
- Cartridges: Air Tight Supreme, tested [HERE](#), Miyajima Laboratory Waza, tested [HERE](#).
- Preamplifier: Ayon Audio Polaris III with Re-generator Power Supply; version II tested [HERE](#))
- Power amplifier: Tenor Audio 175S, tested [HERE](#) and Soullution 710
- Integrated amplifier/headphone amplifier: Leben CS300 XS Custom version (reviewed [HERE](#))
- Loudspeakers: Harpia Acoustics Dobermann (tested [HERE](#))
- Headphones: Sennheiser HD800, AKG K701, Ultrason PROLine 2500, Beyerdynamic DT-990 Pro, 600 Ω version (reviewed [HERE](#), [HERE](#), and [HERE](#))
- Interconnect: CD-preamp: Acrolink Mexcel 7N-DA6300, article [HERE](#)), preamp-power amp: Wireworld Platinum Eclipse
- Speaker cable: Tara Labs Omega Onyx, tested [HERE](#)
- Power cables AC (all equipment): Acrolink Mexcel 7N-PC9300
- Power conditioning: Gigawatt PF-2 Filtering Power Strip (reviewed [HERE](#))
- Audio stand Base – under all components
- Resonance control: Finite Elemente Ceraball under the CD (article [HERE](#))

- Pro Audio Bono platform under CD

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