

# the Stereo Times

The Complete Audiophile Magazine

THE AWARD WINNING D100



Neko Audio



The D100



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## Acoustic Revive's RAS-14 A/C Stabilizer

But should I doubt my ears?



Associated  
Equipment:

November, 2010

### Digital Front End

Aurum Acoustics  
Integrus CDP (CD  
Player / Preamp)

### Amplification

NuForce Reference 18  
mono amplifiers

### Loudspeakers

Wilson Audio Sasha  
W/P loudspeakers

### Cabling

Acoustic Revive SPC-  
PA Speaker Cables,  
NuForce SC-700  
Speaker Cables,  
Acoustic Revive SPC  
Balanced  
Interconnects,  
Nordost Valhalla  
Balanced  
Interconnects  
NuForce Power Max  
Power Cables  
Nordost Vishnu and  
Brahma Power Cables

### AC Conditioners

Oyaide dedicated  
duplex outlets

BlackNoise Extreme  
and 2500 Line  
Conditioners

### Accessories

Nordost Quasar Points  
for the amplifiers  
Integrus Steel Points for  
the CDP  
Acoustic Revive Quartz  
Under-Platforms for the  
amplifiers and CDP  
AudioPrism Ground  
Controls for the amps  
and CDP

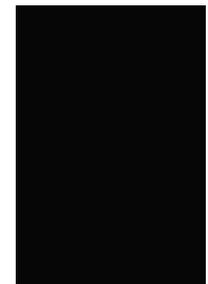


### You can't pee in the same river twice

Fact: the audiophile is a fickle creature. This is especially true if he – it's almost always a he – has replacement toys to fuss with. True to type, I've removed some Acoustic Revive items in and around my sound system and retained others. In the matter of retention, I'm reasonably certain that the two RAS-14 A/C Stabilizers sticking out of my amps' butts are likely to remain. After a pleasantly brief burn-in, they made a difference I'd hate to relinquish. I intend to put the impression to the test.

### Received information

Acoustic Revive's promotional statement describes the RAS-14 as a non-contact, filter-free device. So it would seem that the power to my amps runs a gamut of materials without coming into contact



Acoustic Revive RR-77  
Schumann Resonance  
Generator  
Acoustic Revive RD-3  
Compact Disc  
Demagnetizer  
Acoustic Revive RIO-5  
II Negative Ion  
Generator

Four Acoustic Revive  
RWL-III Room  
Treatment Panels,  
wall-mounted  
Acoustic Revive plugs  
for vacant duplex  
outlets and component  
inputs and outputs

with it. To be non-specific, the RAS-14's carbon-fiber cylinder contains a mineral mix the recipe for which AR's Ken Ishiguro chooses not to divulge. I can tell you that he uses green carborundum, tourmaline and quartz-crystal granules in other audio products. I'm not suggesting that the RAS-14's formulation repeats or resembles any of this. In fact, I don't know.



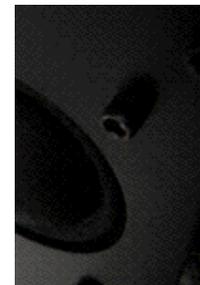
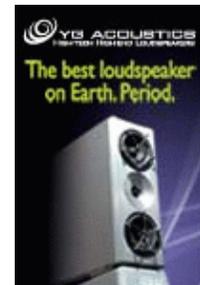
To continue with features, we're told that one of the IEC connectors is rhodium-plated, the other double-plated silver-rhodium, cryogenically treated, in a top-quality Oyaide fitting. The carbon-fiber cylinder is capped, both ends, with hickory pucks. (Suppressing vibration figures large in Ishiguro's designs. Thus the use of an inert hardwood.) The RAS-14's 13-inch length reveals six inches of AR's top power cord.

Continuing with the promotional statement, the RAS-14 is said to absorb a/c and ground noise by way of its "magnetic-wave absorption material," which I take to be the cylinder's mystery mix. (If you shake the thing you'll hear it. Sounds like coarse sand.) The ground-noise claim prompted me to remove AudioPrism's diminutive Ground Controls occupying the amps' RCA inputs. (I use balanced interconnects.) In keeping with what I hear every time I do this, the Ground Controls' removal affected the image's lifelike qualities. The RAS-14 does not make redundant the Ground Controls' contributions, which are far more valuable than the GCs' size would lead one to believe possible.

Other peripherals relevant to this report include AR's RR-77 Schumann Resonance Generator atop a book tower in another part of the room and a pair of NuForce Magic Cubes on my speaker cables. The Integris CDP and stacked mono amps sit on two AR underboards consisting of a wood base and lid sandwiching a layer of quartz-crystal granules. I routinely treat CDs to AR's RD-3 demagnetizer and RIO-5 II's negative-ion bath. This is a CD-only system. I've developed into an avid tweakster who may never catch up with Clement Perry. And I say so with no little bitterness.

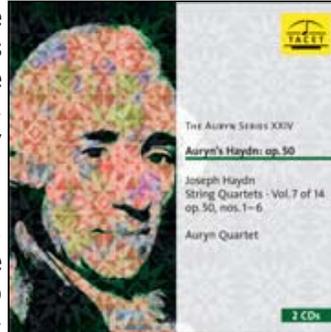
### The test

It's not feasible to pull these devices, listen to the system without



them, and reinstate them for another listen, no less do it "blind," in as short a time as a valid a/b comparison requires. We plow ahead in typically subjective fashion, which, I admit, is how I prefer to do these things.

I limited myself to one test track: The fourth movement, Vivace, of Haydn's String Quartet, Op. 50, No. 1 (The Aurum Series XXIV, Tacet 185, two CDs, a German label distributed in the US by Spinning Dog Records, email address: [here](#)). The six Op. 50 quartets, a.k.a. King of Prussia Quartets, are a delight, but more to our purpose, the productions are first-rate. Nothing is so revealing of subtleties as a well-recorded string quartet.



With the RAS-14 pair removed, the sonic image lost depth, dimension, textural and harmonic largesse. This is not to say that listening to the track absent the Stabilizers proved a disappointment. Had I never heard of these things nor had a chance to use them, I'd have called the sound good. It's ever a question of experiencing a marked improvement you perhaps had thought unlikely until you hear it.

For my part, the test was conclusive. I followed the Haydn with a blood-on-the-floor performance, volume set high, of Alfred Schnittke's *Concerto for Piano and Strings*, with pianist Viktoria Postnikova, Guennadi Rojdestvenski conducting the London Sinfonietta (Erato CD 2292 47542-2, released in 1992). Arkivmusic.com has copies. Surname notwithstanding, Schnittke was a Russian composer with a temperament easily as dark and ironic as that of Shostakovich. It takes Russians to do this wrenching music justice. I didn't feel the need to remove the RAS-14 pair just to make sure. I knew that I was hearing a fine recording significantly enhanced by – it must be admitted – a very expensive tweak.



For the big number, see below. I've given up commenting on what things cost. Not my place. We're all grownups. We make our own decisions. The RAS-14 is a well-made piece of equipment that does a bang-up job. That much I can report with confidence.

#### But should I doubt my ears?

I write this in a state of elation. I'll come back tomorrow to confirm my opinion in the cold light of day.

#### OK, it's tomorrow. Did I exaggerate?

No.



*Mike Silverton*



**Acoustic Revive RAS-14 A/C Stabilizer, \$1095.**

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**US Distributor:** The Lotus Group.

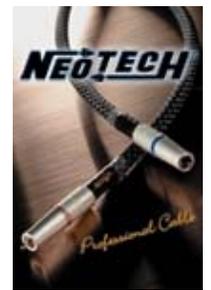
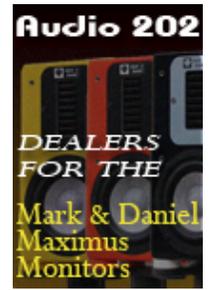
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