



The Glanz Tonearm

Making the Familiar New Again

By Richard H. Mak

Though the Glanz brand is perhaps new to some, the company dates back to 1953, when it was owned by Mitachi Acoustics. In 2008, Masataka Hamada San—who was designing moving-magnet cartridges for Mitachi (as well as JVC)—acquired a special license from the Mitachi family to put his newly designed tonearm under the Glanz name, as a tribute to the brand that nurtured his early career in audio.



PrimaLuna®

Our Name Is Sound. You Know It.

DiaLogue Premium HP Integrated Amplifier.
The finest tube integrated at any price. Any.



\$4399

Take what you consider to be the best tube integrated out there, do a web search, then look at "images." Compare their interior pictures to ours, and you'll see what everybody else sees. Look for parts quality, build quality, and engineering. Compare the weight, and learn for yourself why our designs can give you tube life that can go *ten years or more*. **And the sound?**



"PrimaLuna's DiaLogue Premium HP is an integrated amplifier whose sound quality approaches that of pairings of reference Class A preamps and power amps. PrimaLuna has another winner" — Robert Deutsch, *Stereophile*, December 2014

When you have the best integrated amp, it isn't tough to make it the best headphone amp. The DiaLogue Premium HP will best purpose-built headphone amps, and we can show you why.

Go to primaluna-usa.com for our upcoming videos
and we will show you *exactly* what you get for your hard earned money.
info@primaluna-usa.com 909.931.0219

The Glanz tonearm follows the design tradition of the famous S-shaped arms prevalent in the 1970s, such as those from Fidelity Research, SME and Ortofon. Weighing more than 2.2 pounds, the Glanz arm feels a lot like Fidelity Research's vintage FR-66S. It is made entirely out of polished stainless steel and has almost no plastic parts, other than the lift. And it comes with a nearly 4-foot-long DIN-to-RCA oxygen-free-copper cable.

The Glanz tonearm comes in three versions: the 230 mm MH-94S, 245 mm MH-104SX, and 305mm MH-124SX—all of which retail at \$8,495, regardless of length. (The MH-123SX is tested during this review.)

Philosophically Speaking

The design philosophy of the Glanz tonearm begins with an effort to minimize mechanical loss, wherein mechanical vibrations absorbed by the tonearm prohibit the stylus from fully transducing the electrical signal, causing distortion and signal degradation. Hamada San's tonearm eliminates unnecessary components and uses heavy, non-elastic materials (such as stainless steel) chosen for their resonant properties. Direct contact between various metal surfaces and no rubber or plastic parts maximize energy transference, an approach that calls for an extremely high level of machining precision to ensure components fit together perfectly.

Finally, applying the right damping material for the arm tube, the top of the headshell and the counterweight mechanism helps control the resonant frequency.

The tonearm looks and feels elegant. The quality of its construction is rivaled only by that of the DaVinci Master Reference Virtu and the FR-66S; the former costs nearly twice as much and the latter is no longer in production but commands a price similar to the Glanz on the secondary market.

The bearing assembly is what sets the Glanz apart from other S-shaped tonearms on the market today. A two-plane gimbal pivot utilizing stainless-steel ball bearings at each end governs the movement of the arm wand. The bearings, which are precision mounted and have no impact on the sound whatsoever, are reminiscent of the high-quality, chatter-free bearings of tonearms from Breuer Dynamic and DaVinci.
(continued)



Setup

Setting up the Glanz tonearm is relatively simple and straightforward, with only a couple minor nuisances. Mounting the tonearm requires a 1.18-inch (30 mm) hole to be drilled into an arm board or plinth; a paper template is provided to identify the exact location. Unfortunately, the threads of the mounting base are not particularly deep, so through my 1-inch-thick arm board, I'm barely able to secure enough threads on the mounting nut, even with the washer removed. Without any bushing or washers, a large plumbing wrench is necessary to achieve proper torque and secure the mounting base—which requires a high degree of care to avoid scraping anything with the wrench.

Loosening the setscrews with hex keys adjusts the height of the tonearm (VTA) and the counterweight (VTF). The counterweight is first fastened onto a sleeve, which in turn gets inserted into the arm tube. However, tightening this setscrew only secures the counterweight onto the outer sleeve, which leaves the inner sleeve unsecured and subject to accidental rotation. If a slip of the hand accidentally rotates the counterweight, VTF will have to be readjusted again. (The company has made changes to current models so that the counterweight can be fastened securely.)

Hamada San is a loyal devotee of the Ortofon SPU line of cartridges, and is proud to admit that

he has designed the Glanz with SPU cartridges in mind, though he does provide a detachable headshell for use with non-SPU cartridges. He also takes azimuth adjustment out of the equation, believing that the added mechanical structure ultimately degrades the sound quality. He also recommends disabling the anti-skating adjustment found on the Glanz tonearm, feeling that this also brings more hindrances than benefits.

My experience leads me to differ with Hamada San on the importance of azimuth adjustment. The venerable DaVinci Grandezza tonearm once relied on similar arguments, only to later include them to its Master Reference Virtu. The horizontal balance of a cartridge will affect the angle in which the stylus sits on the record groove, thus affecting crosstalk and channel separation—both measurable parameters that cannot simply be dismissed. It will have a dramatic effect on the sound, causing sonic images to lose focus and appear blurry.

Fortunately, aftermarket headshells, such as the Yamamoto HS-1A and the Jelco HS-25BR, have an adjustment screw that allows you to rotate the cartridge on its axis to provide azimuth adjustments. So while I may disagree with Hamada San on the relative merits of azimuth adjustment, changing to a headshell with this feature can easily solve the problem.

**So How Does It Sound?**

During the 10-month review period, I try six different cartridges with the tonearm to get a firm handle on its sonic characteristics. The Glanz is unmistakably neutral, allowing each cartridge's personality to come through, rather than injecting sonic colorations of its own.

Just as Hamada San has intended, SPU cartridges perform remarkably well with his tonearm. SPUs are typically low compliance and, in theory, best mated with a higher-mass tonearm to bring the resonant frequency into the ideal zone. Although the effective mass of the Glanz is unspecified, the literature describes it as an arm of "very high mass."

The SPU Synergy and the shorter-than-normal SPU-A (which requires an extension adapter) project a more tube-like sound, with an emphasis on the mid band, which is sweet, natural and more laid back. I can appreciate why Hamada San is a fan of the SPU sound; it makes you focus more on the music as a whole rather than the individual hi-fi qualities that audiophiles are often guilty of pursuing.

My favorite cartridges with the arm, however, are not SPUs, but the Phasemation PP-1000 and the Goldfinger Statement, which both project much higher definition and frequency extension than any SPU cartridge. The lively and vivid character of the Phasemation PP-1000 cartridge (see *TONEAudio*, issue 59) is displayed with unmitigated realism. (continued)

REVIEW

On Agnes Obel's album *Philharmonics*, the Glanz allows the dark, unsettling and deeply melancholic feeling to come through the seemingly innocent melodies. Every nuance of the piano is delivered to the listener, as are the changing characters of Obel's soft, velvety voice. On many occasions the piano notes sound cracked and fragmented, prompting me to repeat the music segments on a different

arm/table combination to see where the issue is. The crackling is simply the Glanz/Phase-mation combination retrieving every imperfection embedded in the record grooves. Should your cartridge be up to snuff, the neutral and transparent characterizes of the Glanz arm will accurately portray recorded signals, delivering the good and the bad. *(continued)*



*Listen up...
The Cable Library is huge!*

The Hi-End Headphone Library is just the latest expansion of our 25 year old Cable Library. Add this to other try-at-home Powerline Conditioners, Resonance Control Footers, Isolation Platforms, Acoustic Treatments, Components, Accessories, and thousands of Cables. There has never been a better time to visit the Library!

**The Cable Company.
The Cable Library.
Record amounts of great stuff.**



**Components /
Accessories / Essentials!**

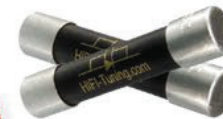


Ask about the award-winning, fully automatic, ultrasonic Vinyl Cleaner

Cables, yes, and so much more!

**Power Line Products
& AC Cables**

Dozens of Line Filters, Legions of AC Cables available for in-home audition!



Supreme Fuse from HiFi-Tuning:
99% Silver + 1% Gold =
100% State of the Art

**Room Acoustics
and
Resonance Control**

HFT ECT



"HFT" and "ECT" treatments can seriously upgrade both your room and electronics. Money back satisfaction guaranteed!

**Hi End
Headphone Library**



Compare top headphones at home in your own system for performance and comfort



Good people. Good advice. Great systems, one customer at a time.
125 Union Square • New Hope, PA 18938 • 1.800.FATWYRE • 215.862.4870
Email: cable@thecableco.com • www.thecableco.com
All major credit cards • Free consultation • Most orders ship free!

REVIEW

On Arthur Grumiaux's *To My Friends* violin encore album, the Glanz/Goldfinger combo allows Grumiaux's aristocratic style to touch listeners with radiance and mellow subtleties. While the Glanz may not be the most detailed tonearm with the utmost frequency extension, it renders string instruments with enough transient response and harmonic decay to keep most finicky audiophiles happy. When paired with the same cartridges, the Glanz delivers more detail, ambience and speed than both the SME 3012 MK2 and Ortofon RS-309D.

The Glanz excels at symphonic and grand orchestral presentations. From Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* to Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, the Glanz always meets the challenge, portraying a limitless soundstage in all dimensions. It projects a three-dimensional image with solidity, weight, and high dynamic contrast, rather than with the faint haze of many lesser tonearms. *Romeo and Juliet* fully demonstrates the ability of the Glanz to render low frequencies, such that the bass drum has startling pressure and solidity, with fast transient response and rise times and well-defined texture. Few tonearms on the market rival the Glanz in terms of sheer bass quality.

Don't let the old school shape fool you; the Glanz MH-123SX is a modern tonearm housed in a vintage-looking body, with workmanship and quality that instantly set it apart from its vintage lookalikes.



Where Have all the Good Stereos Gone?



We know. Sorting through the jungle that is pre-owned hi-fi gear can be tough. Myriad Internet forums and online shopping sites just don't offer the expertise required to make sound decisions.

That's where Echo Audio comes in. We have more than 20 years of retail experience in selling hi-fi equipment the way it should be sold: In a brick-and-mortar environment that provides you with personalized attention.

While we will certainly ship any of our gently used classics directly to your door, we invite you to stop by our shop in beautiful downtown Portland, Oregon to browse our inventory in person. Thanks to an in-house service department, we not only service everything we sell, but every piece of used gear is thoroughly checked before being put on display. Consider our white-gloves treatment your guarantee against potential problems.

So, when you are looking for high-quality, lightly used hi-fi gear, look no further than Echo Audio. Be sure to check out our Web site for current products and new arrivals.

echo)))
audio

www.echohifi.com 888.248.echo

Audio by Van Alstine

American made luxury sound SM

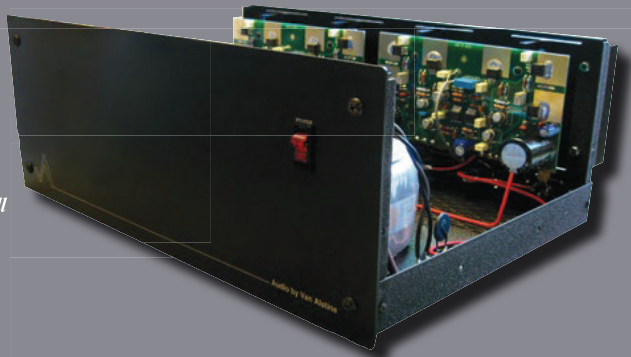


Synergy
Control Amplifier

Introducing the new Synergy Amplifiers

Our new Synergy amplifiers bring you tube-like sound with solid-state reliability. We added an all new power supply to the amplifiers that include regulators for every active section, including the output transistors. Next, we improved our highly acclaimed Insight circuits to make use of the improved power supply. The result is an extremely smooth and dynamic power amplifier that presents incredible life-like sound.

We offer a Synergy amplifier for all budgets... from our 100 watt per channel Synergy Control Amplifier all the way up to our super powerful Synergy 450 amplifier.



Synergy
Solid State Amplifier



www.avahifi.com

Audio by Van Alstine 2665 Brittany Lane Woodbury, MN 55125 (651)-330-9871 avahifi@comcast.net

184 TONEAUDIO NO.70

REVIEW

The Glanz Tonearm
MSRP: \$8,495

MANUFACTURER
Hamada Electric

CONTACT
www.sibatech.co.jp
(global exporter)
www.sorasound.com
(North American distributor)

PERIPHERALS

Turntables

Kuzma Stabi XL 2,
TW Raven AC, J.C
Verdier La Platine

Phonostages

AMR PH77, Burmester
PH-100, FM Acoustics
FM-122 Mk II

Preamps Passlabs
XP30,
McIntosh MC1000

Power amps Passlabs
XA200.5, McIntosh
MC2KW

Speakers Dynaudio
Sapphires, Dynaudio
Temptations

