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The One Interconnect and Isolated Shield Matrix

I wanted to listen to the important new products from TARA Labs called 'The One' because Mr. Yang, the chief writer for the Audio Journal had written excellent comments about it in the previous issue. Mr. Yang had referred to 'The One' Interconnects with the 'Isolated Shield Matrix' system as the "greatest audio innovation of the century".

Prior to this, I have listened to the high-end cable products at different stages from TARA Labs. I have always admired the innovations and spirit of Matthew Bond, the designer. Since he introduced the "Rectangular Solid Core®" conductor design, the high frequency reproduction of the TARA Labs has been superior than the competitor products in the market. In reproducing the air, feeling and the high frequency tone of the individual musical instrument, there is no cable product in the market that can be compared to TARA Labs. However, there always seems to be a trade-off in the high frequency response: although the overall upper treble is very airy and natural, it is softer at times, perhaps less metallic than some other cables (this is also true for the superb Decade cable). I have always believed that TARA Labs will remain at the top and at a level beyond the best if it can overcome this paradox. If the sound were to be more metallic, then perhaps the beautiful natural air and ambient information would be gone. Is it possible that 'The One' can make the sound closer to something called perfection?

'The One' uses a brand new grounding system call the 'Isolated Shield Matrix' in its cable shield design. The purpose of this is to isolate the noise interference in the shield so as to obtain perfect signal transmission in the signal conductors. "Grounding" is a complicated issue. Mr. Yang has described the design process and related scientific data of 'The One' in details so I will only focus on its audio sound in this article.

In my system, I listened to 'The One' Interconnect cable using a 1.5 mtr length. 'The One' Interconnect cable comes with a tiny ground box called a "Chassis Ground Station." The ground station has a wire for connecting to the chassis on the preamplifier ground terminal. The interconnect cable I used for monitoring is the "Aural Symphonics AS-One Gen V", which is currently regarded as one of the

best audio interconnects available in the market today. But, its overall performance still cannot dominate the high-end audio market. After listening to AS-One for a few months, I have a good understanding of its qualities and characteristics. Of course, there have been other interconnect cables that have tried to compete in the market, but AS-One maintains its stable market position as the dominating interconnect for performance and price.

When, The One from TARA Labs was introduced, I did not expect it to provide any significant breakthrough in performance. However, after listening to my system with 'The One', I found that this is the best Interconnect cable I have ever listened to in my life or at least since I have been involved with the audio evaluation business. Every aspect of the music reproduction and tonality maintains the highest standard in sound reproduction. It is surprising that this is cable system called 'Isolated Shield Matrix' using 'Floating Shields' and 'Floating Ground Stations' has never been used before. The factory recommendation is that the cables should be used for 150 hours before optimum performance can be obtained. In order to confirm this, I took it home and listened to it more carefully using the Westlake Tower SM-1; a large loudspeaker system.

In connecting the Westlake electronics system to other audio equipment, I used a total of 6 pairs of Audioquest Diamond interconnects. It is not that I like these cables in particular, but based on past experiences, the Diamond from AQ created a locked-in focus in the system; and changing any of the wires will cause the sound to deviate, therefore, I did not want to remove the wires. But, let's see if 'The One' can surpass the performance of the Diamond. I selected the most critical [Diamond] connection - from the preamplifier to the electronic-crossover, and I replaced the connection with 'The One'. The Carnegie Hall recording of Rachmaninoff "The Third Piano Concerto", was played. As I listened to Horowitz piano piece, I had mixed feelings. I was thrilled to hear that 'The One' was the best interconnect cable that I have ever listened to. It clears the way for the high fidelity system to perform at the most optimum performance level imaginable. On the other hand, I was sad because 'The One' is expensive; if I would have to replace all the interconnect cables with 'The One', then I'd have to admit that I don't have enough money to be able to do it!

According to the hook-up and grounding instructions from the factory, the Chassis Ground Station provided with the cable is good for grounding the cable shield RFI/EMI, but that is really not the best set-up. An optional 'big black box' called a "Floating Ground Station" should be purchased in order to optimize the performance of 'The One'. The big box is about ten times bigger than the small box. It is carefully built and it is simple to set up, because the connections are similar to the small box. The materials and contents of the 'big black box' Floating Ground Station can actually serve as a reliable ground in that it reduces RF/EMI

in the cable shield. With this 'black box', the RF interference is also isolated from signal ground.

What is the improvement from absorption of RF interference with the 'big black box', the Floating Ground Station? The audio field transparency is significantly improved! Articulation is greatly enhanced! Dynamic contrast is enhanced dramatically! The width and depth in the soundstage is fully dimensional. I can confirm that the Floating Ground Station does provide a real breakthrough, reducing background noise and the noise floor. Matthew Bond's invention really benefits the public. It is absolutely amazing.

In the audio industry, breakthrough products have come along which capture the attention of knowledgeable consumers. The Marantz 9 and Audio Research SP-11 are examples of this level of equipment. So far in the audio-cable category, only TARA Labs 'The One' can be grouped in this remarkable category as it provides this same level of legendary performance and appeal. If 'The One' digital interconnect and 'The One' speaker cable designed by TARA Labs based on the same design principle have the same level of audio performance, I will definitely report them in another article.