PLAYBACK
D E S I G N S

PRESS RELEASE FROM PLAYBACK DESIGNS

We had a Dream...

Playback Designs has announced their new Dream Series Audio DAC and Transport - SACD/CD/Server system incorporating the latest Ultra High Performance technology. Early prototypes will be shown at the Axpona show in Chicago and the High End show in Munich.

According to Andreas Koch, president and designer of Playback Designs, this system could have been called "Reference" system, but the design goal was actually much higher than that: the lofty and seemingly unattainable performance level that hardly anybody even dares dreaming about. It is the culmination of more than 30 years of experience in audio design. The Dream Series consists of the MPD-8 standalone DAC and MPT-8 transport with CD/SACD drive and optional music server built in.

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

The from-ground-up new architecture is the result of multiple prototype generations over the last 2 years where the experience of digital and analog algorithms and circuit designs from Andreas Koch's and Bert Gerlach's expertise refined over many decades has been combined and perfected to create a truly no-compromise, flexible and programmable product platform that can deliver ultimate performance and can grow for many years as technology keeps evolving.

MPD-8 D/A CONVERTER

is a new DAC architecture and is based on Playback Designs' well proven discrete converter design but incorporates significant improvements and new technologies. Its digital inputs, AES/SPDIF/USB/ST-fi ber-optic, TOS support any sample rate and format up to QUAD DSD. In addition to balanced and unbalanced line level analog outputs, an analog volume control is provided that can be bypassed. Included will be recording software, allowing the creation of PCM or DSD music files on a computer from all digital sources connected to the MPD-8.

The digital side is fully programmable, as always at Playback Designs, but we have added significantly more computing power to be able to extend our digital algorithms for audio processing and clock control. The analog side is double differential for each channel and uniquely separated and isolated from the digital side. In fact, Playback Designs products were always designed to rigorously separate digital from analog circuits in order to preserve the analog nature of the music signal, but the new MPD-8 pushes this purist concept even further. For this, completely separate linear power supplies are provided for the analog circuitry for each channel that are mounted on ceramic circuit boards. A third separate power supply is for the digital section.

The same purist concept was applied to the choice of display. While many other manufacturers use fancy graphic displays, all of which use asynchronous clocks and therefore influence the audio performance, our choice of display was less for visual impact, but for ultimate audio performance.

The user has a choice if he wants the USB interface inside the same chassis or keep it outside in a separate box (optional USB-XIII interface) for better isolation via optical connection (PLink). This keeps the MPD-8 free from any direct connection to computers or any asynchronous clock that is not synchronized with the audio sample rate.

MPT-8 DIGITAL MUSIC TRANSPORT

is a no-compromise companion product for the MPD-8 DAC. It incorporates a newly developed CD/SACD drive mechanism that is not based on any mass produced components, but was rather designed from ground up for audiophile applications. Optionally, the Syrah music server can be added into the same chassis making the MPT-8 a unique and complete digital source center. The music server can be controlled via iPad/Android tablets and provides internal storage (SSD) as well as external storage and networks, DLNA and NAS. CDs are automatically ripped from an external optical drive providing extensive meta-data capabilities.

A future option for the MPT-8 that is already in development is a streaming interface for the currently most popular streaming services.

The MPT-8 connects to the MPD-8 via the proprietary optical interface PLink for native playback of any file format and sample rate including quad DSD. This interface is designed to provide a galvanic separation between all digital sources with its many asynchronous clocks from the very sensitive DAC components in the MPD-8.