

# Power Up!

It's power cables a go-go, this month, as Paul Rigby reviews three from Mains Cables R Us: No.11, Asylum and Ultimate.

**P**ower cables often sneak under the radar when users are looking to improve the sound quality of their system. They are, however, capable of lifting a hi-fi component to the next sonic level. Here are three from Mains Cables R Us, for your delectation.

First up, and sounding like a top restaurant, is the curiously named No.11, which is terminated with a



**MCRU Ultimate power cord**

cryo-treated, Furutech FI-11 (Cu) IEC plug. The cable is an oxygen-free copper affair, 2.5mm diameter with a built in ground loop filter to trap mains noise at the plug end.

In sound tests, playing the vinyl version of Yehudi Menuhin's 'Bruch's 'Violin Concerto No.1 in G minor Op.26', one of the principle aspects of the of the No.11 cable is the apparent reduction in 'distortion' which improved the clarity of the overall performance when compared to the standard cable. Bass was more confident as a result, while Menuhin's upper mid crescendos had a sense of purity that no longer battled with ground noise.

On King Crimson's 'Three Of A Perfect Pair', the cable failed to improve the compressive effects of the upper midrange but it did change how those frequencies were presented. Hence, the vocals featured more space and air while the instruments benefitted from enhanced separation.

Moving to the Asylum, made with Belden 19364 audiophile cable and fitted with a cryo-treated and silver plated Wattgate 320i IEC and MK 655 Toughplug, there are two ferrite rings included to combat radio frequency interference.

The entire presentation on the King Crimson track was now more complex, the instrumentation arranged in an array of layers that made my ear pay far more attention to what was going on. The rhythm guitar became dominant in the mix while bass percussion offered its own informative, multi-faceted, presentation.

Moving to classical and Menuhin's violin solo now sounded like he was integrated into the musical assembly and not stuck on as an afterthought. The extra space between instruments also provided atmosphere and emotion to the piece.

Finally, the rather pricy Ultimate Power Cord cable was tested, terminated with a Furutech FI-50 carbon fibre rhodium IEC plug. The outer sleeving is also customisable in grey, black or blue. Made from ultra pure copper with extensive shielding and a ground loop built in.

In sound tests, and comparing it to the Tellurium Q Blue, the Ultimate displayed a suite of smooth midrange frequencies which, although not quite as incisive as the TQ cable, the classical track provided a sweet presentation that would be ideal for brighter systems that require a little calming. Despite this area of the sonic spectrum verging on a



**MCRU Asylum power cord**

midrange recess, the cable was very easy on the ear, with no nasty sonic surprises and a decent bass performance.

This was backed up when spinning the King Crimson LP. The bass may not have had the slam of the TQ Blue; the Ultimate rounded off its lower frequencies, but bass did provide a sense of rhythm while midrange, although not quite as informative as the Blue, still performed well, with the lead guitar excelling via its rich midrange output.

## CONCLUSION

Power cables are an essential part of building a quality audiophile system because they allow you to truly hear your major components in their full glory. Like any CD player, turntable or amp, cables should be heard at your local dealer – and these examples should all be added to your demo list.



**MCRU No.11 power cord**

### VERDICT MAINS CABLES R US ULTIMATE POWER CORD

**£775 PER 1.2 METRE**

An ideal cable for the more raucous hi-fi systems out there, the Ultimate Power Cord will tame and smooth.

#### FOR

- sweet tones
- smooth midrange
- no sonic spikes

#### AGAINST

- rounded bass
- midrange recess
- price

### VERDICT MAINS CABLES R US ASYLUM £65 PER METRE

Offering superb value for money, this cable not only provides sonic balance but also excellent instrumental separation.

#### FOR

- incisive detail
- midrange smoothness
- low distortion
- value

#### AGAINST

- nothing

### VERDICT MAINS CABLES R US NO.11 POWER LEAD £55 PER MTR

Improve your system's clarity with this cable, it promotes a richer performance from your system.

#### FOR

- musicality
- low distortion
- bass

#### AGAINST

- recessed mids

**MAINS CABLES R US**  
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