



Tellurium Q Silver Diamond Speaker Cable And Interconnects

By Stuart and Linette Smith

Tellurium Q make a wide range of speaker cables, interconnects and other audio cables at prices to suit most pockets. Here Stuart and Linette Smith take a listen to their range topping Silver Diamond speaker cables and interconnects.

TELLURIUM Q SILVER DIAMOND SPEAKER CABLES & INTERCONNECTS

That's about all I can tell you about what goes into making up these cables as, as with all their cables, Tellurium Q aren't particularly forthcoming with specifics



We don't do many cable reviews here at Hifi Pig Towers because we tend to find what we like, place it in the main system and leave it there. The last such cable to find a permanent spot in our main system was the Ultra Blacks from Tellurium Q. We've a hundred and one different cables we could have in the system, and which we do use when we put together and review more modest systems, but time and time again we always found ourselves going back to the Ultra Blacks in our reference system...until recently.

I say recently, but truth be known we had the Silver Diamond cables probably before anyone else, but I like to get a proper feel for a product before spouting lyrically, or otherwise, about it and so these cables have sat in the main system for months and months and I've no desire to take them out and substitute them for anything else. I'm going to speak about the cables as a whole; that is speaker cables and interconnects as a loom, simply because that is how I've used them.

Construction

The interconnects are pretty straightforward affairs with a relatively modest thickness cable in black sheathing connected to very nice quality XLRs. There's little to say other than that; they look straightforward and nothing particularly flash. If you are one of those people who are looking for glitz and glam over what comes out of the speakers then move along, there's nothing to see here. That said, the presentation box the interconnects arrive in is rather nice in a "I've clearly bought something that's quite lovely" kind of way, but again it's nothing overly flash or "look at me".

Likewise the speaker cables. They're a similar construction to the Ultra Blacks in that there are two, it has to be said pretty thick cables (much thicker than the Ultra Blacks), separated from each other by about an inch or so and then hidden in a black braid. Tellurium Q have added a metal block where the sheath ends which adds to the overall quality feel of these cables and they are terminated with good quality spades



There's a feeling of more of everything. More involvement, more toe tapping...more musical enjoyment.

with what looks to be a silver coating. The speaker cables are pretty heavy beasts but once locked in place they don't go anywhere.

That's about all I can tell you about what goes into making up these cables as, as with all their cables, Tellurium Q aren't particularly forthcoming with specifics...understandable given the number of copy cats out there ready to pounce and make a fast buck on the work of others.

Sound

There's always that moment of anticlimax with cables in my experience. Truth is cables don't really excite me in the same way that a new preamplifier or pair of speakers do. What I'm trying to get across is that my expectation is that cables are much of a muchness...or this was my thinking up until a few years ago when I actually bothered to experiment and listen closely to the differences cables could have on a system...though they still don't enthuse me overly. I'm still very wary however, and treat much of what is said about the magic properties of some cables with a rather large pinch of salt and I'm well aware that when a cable rep' starts talking about their cables that I'm being

sold to. Geoff Merrigan arrived chez nous with no such bluster and little more than a "plug them in and tell me what you think in a few weeks" attitude. I've read the Tellurium Q website and all their chatter about phase distortion and what not and to be honest that all goes over my head; it doesn't interest me, something either does its job or it doesn't...end of story!

I've had conversations with Mr Merrigan over the last few years and he has a theory that all cables act as some kind of filter and the job of the cable manufacturer is to make that filtering as unobtrusive/negligible as possible. I have issues with the whole filtering concept but that's a different story and for another time.

Our system has been put together very carefully over the years and it is there to do two things: First of all it has to play music in a way that we enjoy and secondly it has to be resolving enough to be used as a review tool. Nothing gets in the system if it doesn't meet these two criteria.

Plugging the Silver Diamond loom into the system was greeted with an immediate, and somewhat surprising "Oh, this is actually better in many



TELLURIUM Q SILVER DIAMOND SPEAKER CABLES & INTERCONNECTS

ways". Actually it was more of a "F%3k, where did that come from?"

There's a feeling of more of everything. More involvement, more toe tapping...more musical enjoyment. OK, let's back off for a while and just leave the system to play for a bit without listening too much as I don't want to get into that whole "well it's certainly different, but is it better" situation...but it is better and there is no doubt about it! There's better separation of instruments, better and bigger soundstage, more fine detail in the mix and just an overall picture that you are getting closer to the music in a very real sense. This is not subtle either! There's speed, slam and everything that makes music exciting in spades and it's quite something. Daft Punk sum this cable loom up pretty much spot on in their tune "Faster, Better, Stronger". Veils lifted, inky black backgrounds...insert audiophile reviewer babble of choice! They really are that good in this system!

OK, perhaps it's a synergy thing and so a more modest system was thrown together...and you know what, you get the same effect; more of everything. Fine detail is the thing that really comes to the fore; little clues in the mix that you knew were there but took little

notice of suddenly become more apparent. Fleetwood Mac's Songbird is a case in point; there's a real palpable feeling that you are sat about ten rows back in an empty concert hall with all the atmospherics that that conjures...the same track on the main system is a real close your eyes and you're there moment.

OK, popping the Silver Diamonds into a crap system isn't going to elevate it to the level of the upper echelons of audio nirvana, but it is like you're playing with much better kit throughout.

Conclusion

These are the best cables I have used in my system... period... and I do not say that lightly! They have been in and out and compared with other cables we have to hand and every time they are taken out there's an immediate "nope, get them back in" comment from Linette or myself. What they do is difficult to put your finger on exactly; there's a feeling of rightness and a sense that you are getting closer to the feeling of the music in an emotional sense. There's more detail, more space...and they just sound right.

These are the best cables I have used in my system... period... and I do not say that lightly!



TELLURIUM Q SILVER DIAMOND SPEAKER CABLES & INTERCONNECTS



There's an elephant in the room that I've not mentioned as yet. Yep, these cables cost as much and for some more than a serious electronics upgrade. The speaker cables are £895.80 a metre and the interconnects are £2292 for a 1 metre pair (XLR). That's serious money of course and I'm not going to make light of the fact that this review is going to upset a lot of people who will moan about the price of a bit of wire.

I also won't make light of the fact that these cables are a game changer in terms of what they allow our system to achieve. Yes, they are relatively expensive... there are MUCH more expensive cables out there should you care to look... but they do offer a considerable and tangible upgrade and as such could be seen as being good value for money in the context of a high-end system. In a less high-end system then you would need to be the judge, but do not dismiss these cables as being out of your league before hearing them in your own system. Mine are going nowhere and I have no hesitation in giving these cables an outstanding product award of which we have only awarded six in the last year!

And Now Linette's Thoughts

It was Tellurium Q that first really opened my eye's to the fact that cables could make a difference to the sound of a system, with their Ultra Black speaker cable which we have had in the our hifi since we tried it back in 2013. Since then I've definitely become a 'cable

believer' (I know, in some folks eyes it's like being in a loony religious cult) and I can hear differences, not just with speaker cable but with interconnects and other cables (I'm going to stick with speaker cables and interconnects for now rather than get into a USB-cable-based-brawl with someone). I've discovered that 'different' is not always better. Some cables go into the system and then out again because I don't like the sound. I've also discovered that the cables that I like best seem to strip back rather than add anything to the sound, if that makes sense.

As I said, we have been 'Ultra Black' in the speaker cable and interconnect department for some time, they have seen off many contenders, but since then Tellurium Q have developed their cables further and their 'Top of the Pops' speaker cable is now the Silver Diamond. At just under £900 a metre it isn't cheap, but in a high end system, where thousands have been spent on the electronics and loudspeakers, it certainly isn't out of place...in fact, compared to some brands, it is quite modestly priced. The cable looks the business, not some over stuffed python of a cable (yes, we've all seen 'those' kind of cables at shows, lurking behind the gear like they swallowed a baby goat) it's very nicely finished, purposeful looking and very well made.

So, to the sound. Is there a noticeable difference? Very much so. Sometimes it is very difficult to put your finger on just what it is about what a new system

component or cable does to the music. It's like a name on the tip of your tongue that evades your brain the more you try to remember it. I could get into 'veil-lifting' type Hifi Reviewer clichés here but there really is no need. What the Silver Diamonds do is strip everything right back to the music. They don't add anything, they just seem to focus the sound so that what you hear is clarity. I'm not suggesting for one moment that you should go out and get some of these for a low or mid end system and expect angels to start singing to you, these are cables, not magic beans! (To be fair if you are in the market for something more affordable you should try out some of the TQ ranges priced below the Silver Diamond). They work their magic when you put them where they should be, with quality electronics into a quality pair of loudspeakers.

If a stealth-crew of Hifi Ninjas came and put the Silver Diamonds into your system while you were out, you would come back and listen to music and try for ages to put your finger on just what exactly had made things improve. In my mind, that's an outstanding cable.

AT A GLANCE

Build Quality: Nicely put together cables but they're not going to impress those looking for glitz and glamour

Sound Quality: These cables bring you a sense of reality and excitement I've previously not experienced in our already fantastic system

Value For Money: In the context of a high-end system these cables offer very good value for money.

Pros:

More of everything in the mix, particularly fine detail. What these cables do is difficult to put your finger on but you will know it when you hear it

Cons:

I'm genuinely struggling here but they are quite pricey when looked at out of context

Price:

Speaker cables: £895.80/metre

Interconnects: £2292