



DISC PLAYER/TRANSPORT OF THE YEAR

Synthesis ROMA 14DC+

As if to quieten the shrill 'CD is dead' voice, the ROMA 14DC+ from the Italian company Synthesis shows just how much good sound can be extracted from those classic polycarbonate discs. Resolutely CD only (although the built-in converter can be used as a DAC in its own right), the distinctive wood-fronted player combines a TEAC CD transport with an Ashai Kasei AK4497 chip, allowing effortless replay of 16-bit, 44.1kHz CD files and up to 32bit, 384kHz and DSD to 5.6MHz. It only features single-ended RCA output.

In our test, Jimmy Hughes was incredibly impressed by the ROMA 14DC+. "I was immediately struck by an overall presentation," he said, "which seemed clean, clear and focused, with good detail and definition. I noted almost instantly the ROMA's extra focus and precision. There was nothing coarse, loose, or wayward about the sound. Rather, it seemed focussed and controlled, with excellent clarity and detail. A truthful neutral presentation that sounded natural and real, with no hint of exaggeration or excess."

He concluded by saying, "It literally did not put a foot wrong, and could play all kinds of music with great authority and fidelity.' +

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