

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER OWN A BRAND NEW \$15,000 SPEAKER FOR ONLY \$4,500 THE AWARD WINNING VR-33 Von Schweikert Audio

ShareThis



April 2013

# Enjoy the Music.com

Audio Art Statement I Power Cable

New cable provides blacker background and subtly increased dynamic range.

Review By Tom Lyle

Included in my December 2012 review of Audio Art's Interconnect, speaker, and power cables was a segment devoted to their Statement II, one model below their Statement I, Audio Art's top-of-the-line power cable, and the subject of this review. In my review of the Audio Art products I stressed the importance of substituting the cabling of one's entire audio system with a single brand of a different cable to provide the best overall results in attaining a clear representation of what a particular brand's effect on the audio system, be that positive, negative, or somewhere in between. It will also reveal the particular "sound" of a brand of cable, that is, if it has one, and how far these cables veer from perfectly transparent, that is, performing as if no cable at all exists between the components, and in the case with power cables, the wall receptacle. And since no cable that you or I know of fits this paradigm of a perfect cable, the characteristics of the cables will reveal themselves to a much greater extent than simply replacing one cable in the system with a different brand or model of cable.



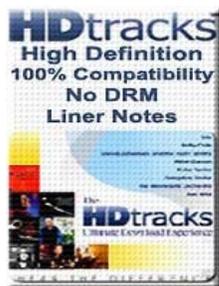
## Shades

In the review of the Audio Art cables, I compared some of the best Audio Art has to offer, with my reference cables. The Audio Art cables did not embarrass themselves. My more expensive reference cables sounded better, but not hugely so. The shades of nuance between the two will be of more significance to some than others, and of course one's findings will also be determined by the quality of the components in which they are used. In my relatively revealing system my reference cables were more detailed and "quicker", along with some other favorable audiophile traits. Although most of the differences between the Audio Art cables and my references were small, they were significant. Yet the Audio Art cables should be considered a bargain when considering their price to performance ratio. Although not inexpensive (especially when compared to Audio Arts lowest price offerings), the Audio Art cables will still save an audiophile an appreciable amount of money, especially when purchasing an entire system's worth of cabling.

In this review of Audio Art's Statement I, I did not replace all the power cables in my system with this new cable as I would have liked, but agreed to merely switch out one of the power cables for the Audio Art Statement I. I feel confident that the combination of not only having been familiar with the character of Audio Art cable, but also auditioning this cable with as many components as I could, I could discover the cable's affects to the sound of the system, especially when used to connect the power amplifier directly to the wall receptacle. I also auditioned the cable between a PS Audio Power Plant P600 and the wall receptacle that feed the digital front end, either a M2Tech Vaughn, Wadia 121, or Benchmark DAC1USB digital-to-analog converter, and the phono preamplifier, a Pass Labs XP-15. I also used the Statement I to power a Basis Debut V turntable connected to a PS Audio Power Plant P300. Lastly, I used it to connect various components to the PS Audio or the directly to the wall. Conclusions are based on comparisons to both my MIT and Virtual Dynamics references, and the power cable that is the subject of my last Audio Art review, the less costly Statement II (but not by that much, really, \$650 a meter for the Statement II, vs. \$890 a meter for the Statement I, both cables cost \$100 for each additional meter). The power amplifier is the Pass Laboratories X350.5, the wall receptacles are manufactured by Virtual Dynamics, the AC arrives via one of two dedicated 20 amp lines, and I usually have some granola with fresh fruit for breakfast.

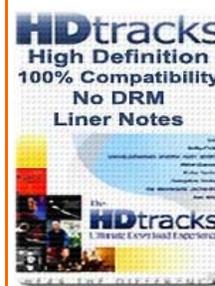
Audio Art states that this new Statement power cord "is more than just another new power cord...that was designed exclusively for maximizing the performance potential of the finest audio components and video displays available today". Fine words, but I'm sure I've read that before. They go on to say that this power cable is manufactured from three 10-gauge conductors, 1,386 individual strands of exceptionally pure, silver-coated oxygen-free copper. These "ultra-





high performance" conductors are arrayed in a "super low" inductance, double-shielded construction, and Audio Art says they provide "total immunity to noise, both low and high frequency alike".

Audio Art encases the cable's conductors with a co-polymer dielectric that is said to reduce incoming differential-mode noise, which is noise that is usually present in the higher frequencies. This differential-mode noise enters power cords through the power line, usually originating from the electric company's power station, or even a neighbor's air-conditioner, microwave, or other household appliances. Over the dielectric are two shields that reduce external noise such as airborne interference radio frequency (RFI) which may be radiated into power cords from adjacent cables. These shields are made from a dense braid of tin and copper, and the other a layer of conductive foil and a drain wire. What Audio Art calls TechFlex makes up the outer coating of the cable, which surrounds the binder wrap and a PVC layer. The TechFlex coating is not only used to enhance the cosmetics, but as a protective layer. Additionally, the Statement I power cable is said to be built "to deliver instantaneous current on demand, with absolutely no time domain hesitation". The Statement I is terminated with Furutech's top-of-the-line FI-50(R), which is a Piezo Ceramic Series IEC Connector, featuring nonmagnetic Rhodium-Plated Conductors. Nice stuff. This is a relatively pricey cable; Audio Art definitely seems to give it their all to justify its asking price in as far as its construction, that's for sure.



## Business

Describing the sound of a power cable can be difficult. On one hand, a reviewer can go about his or her business and describe the cable as it is a component. I've read plenty of cable reviews that read like this. I get a bit queasy when I read these reviews. Cables are not components. When it comes to interconnect and speaker cables, I feel that the only way to review a cable is to describe their variance from one that is perfectly transparent, as if no cable at all was used between the component and next component to which it is connected. Power cables are a different matter, though, considering that their intention is not to be a direct connection between the component and the crummy AC coming out of the wall. And although a comparison to a water filter might not be a perfect one, because even the best power cables might let noise through to the component – garbage in, garbage out, as they say – a well-designed power cable should deliver the best signal possible without changing the inherent sound of the component to which it is connected. And more importantly, its job is also to bring out the best possible sound the component is capable of to which it is connected. So, as well as a power cable not being a component, it is also, or at least it should not be, a filter. A cable that is designed and built to somehow accomplish the feat of coming as close to a direct connection to the wall without any of the nasties that come from the power company, household appliances, airborne vibration, noise from other components, etc. and bring out the best in a component are difficult (and sometimes expensive) to build and design, and I suppose that is why some (including me) are willing to shell out good money for a good power cable.

My comments regarding the sound of the Audio Art Statement I power cable are pretty much a combination of all the experimenting I did with the cable connected to different components in the system. I did not read any of the literature available online before receiving this power cable or before hooking it up to my system. I hooked it up the day it arrived, the cable already burned-in by Audio Art. Audio Art provides this service for a mere \$12.50 per cable. I really wish all cable companies, heck, I wish all audio manufacturers regardless of what type of equipment they make, burn-in their equipment beforehand. Though I understand, with the larger companies, this just might not be possible given the scale of their enterprise.

## Difference

The greatest difference I heard compared to my references was when the Statement I was connected to the very current hungry Pass Laboratories X350.5 350 watt per channel power amplifier. Yes, I heard the characteristics of this cable when used simply connecting it to, for example, between a DAC and a preamplifier. But again, the character of the Statement I cable was still the same, just not to the same degree. I have to agree with Audio Art's promotional literature – when connected to the Pass Lab amp the first thing I noticed was the decrease in background noise. As usual when hearing a blacker background I did not notice any background noise before I switched to using this cable. I think my system does a very good job of rejecting noise as a whole, plus, I do not live in a particularly RFI rich area, although it is a busy suburb with a train station nearby. Still, I like to think that the gear I use is of a high enough quality to reject any noise that gets through to the dedicated line. The front end of the system is "protected" from noise by the PS Audio Power Plants, which create clean current from the house power by transforming it to DC, then back to AC again, but with a minuscule amount of deviance from the what would be considered a perfect sine wave. The power amp, on the other hand, can be connected to the larger of the two PS Audio units but because it draws so much line current it has to be the only component connected. But I've never had good results using power amps with the Power Plant. Straight into the wall is the way to go with any amp I've used in this much larger of my two systems. But as far as the background noise goes, it is incredible what one can notice only when it is gone.

The positive effects of this newly blacker than black background on the sound of the entire system cannot be understated. This background silence increased the perceived dynamic range of the material. But not only those sounds that arose from this blackness were effected, but all the material was now laid upon this cushion of nothingness that was below it. I have a habit of listening to an artist's earlier albums when awaiting a newly announced release, and this was the case when first connecting the Audio Art Statement I to my system. Nick Cave And The Bad Seed's newest *Push The Sky Away* was about to be delivered on vinyl, so I went into the vaults (my record shelves) and pulled out the Japanese pressing of his second solo album, *The Firstborn Is Dead*, from 1985. My goal wasn't to compare this all-analog pressing with the new album, but more of a celebration, really.

*The Firstborn* has been called the most blues influenced of his early solo work. As far as I'm concerned he can quote John Lee Hooker and Lead Belly all he wants, but when filtered through Nick Cave and his cohorts very fertile musical and poetic imagination, it sounds closer to post-punk than any blues I've ever heard. Influenced by the blues, yes. *The blues*, no. Nevertheless, the sound quality of this album recorded

in Berlin's Hansa Studios just about matches the excellent song-craft and musicianship. Immediately upon hearing the beginning of the opener "Tupelo", with its storm sound effects, Barry Adamson's muted bass, and toms below Cave's voice it was evident that the new Audio Art cable was having a rather profound influence on the dynamic distance between the instruments. Even at its best this album doesn't possess demonstration disc qualities, and this applies to its separation of instruments. But the newly acquired silent background led to not only an increase in the this quality, but the separation of the instruments that were mixed at nearly the same volume and now somehow occupied distinct sonic fields within the same portion of the soundstage.

I admit that the pressing quality of this record certainly helps things, Japanese pressings have notoriously quite surfaces, but I've heard this record probably a hundred times and never have the instruments vaulted into the soundfield with such a natural presence. The black background that the Audio Art cable provided seem to influence so many other audiophile traits it was actually quite surprising. How can a black background influence frequency response? A crystal clear midrange, a grain-free lower treble, or extended, sparkly highs? Were these all subjective impressions caused by the quiet background? Or just other traits caused by the claimed benefits of the cable's construction? The second cut, *Say Goodbye To The Little Girl Tree*, was even more striking with the high-hat, twang and slide guitar, and Mr. Caves voice rising out of the silence and entering the room with his swampy, twisted tale. Later into the tune, the bass guitar and snare drum enter, yet the spare instrumentation was still totally captivating. Instead of concentrating on the Statement I's contribution to the best quality sound I've ever heard from this album, I was more impressed by the contents of the record. High praise indeed. The new Nick Cave album I await will be likely be digitally recorded and mastered, pressed onto vinyl so record-geeks (me) can live their vinyl-experience, but at least I have these older albums to revel in when it comes to enjoying this type of sound quality and tuneage.

## Personal

Am I supposed to go into comparisons, and speak of the Audio Art Statement I's shortcomings? This is where system matching and personal preference would most likely be more helpful than anything else. And one should also look at the rest of the system and consider upgrades to equipment before spending this type of money on a power cord. I like to think of any top-flight cabling as icing on the cake. Of course if one has very high-priced and/or otherwise exotic equipment one would be foolish to skimp on cable, and by skimp on cable I mean anything less than the quality of the Statement I. Cable will not "fix" a system, so again, a cable like the Statement I should be in like company. It was much less useful when I used the Statement I with, for example, a \$1500 DAC versus a \$12,000 power amp. The DAC used with a much less expensive cable sounded not quite as good, but compared to the Statement I the differences were quite small. The power amp when used with this same cable was not at its best when using the inexpensive cable, and sounded as if it were a different (and a much, much better) component when used with the Statement I. My Pass Labs power amp deserves a cable such as the Audio Arts Statement I, and as far as I could tell, is a perfect match. Would have I like to use the Statement I for every IEC power outlet on every component? You bet I would.



If one is about to purchase an Audio Art Statement I power cable, one should make sure all of their ducks are in order, then match the high-quality system's components with a high-quality cable. Personally, if one has enough money to spend on a power cable such as the one featured in this review, one should think about those people less fortunate than those in the audiophile community and give what one can to one or more reputable organizations that will help provide for the well-being of others. After this is taken care of, the Audio Art Statement I power cable is worthy of consideration when shopping for a cable of this caliber. It's no secret there are even better, and much more expensive, cables being marketed. The sky's the limit. But as far as high-performance power cable goes, the Statement I fits the bill.

## Specifications

Type: Power cable

Conductors: a (Alpha) pure-copper rhodium-plated conductors

Jumper System: Earth/Ground (US Patent No.: 6,669,491)

Connector Body Construction: Piezo Ceramic series with ceramic particles, carbon powder, nylon and fiberglass.

Housing: Multilayered nonmagnetic stainless steel and carbon acetyl copolymer insulation.

Dimensions: Body length 44mm x 40.5mm diameter x 80.3mm overall length

Furutech FI-28(R) plug: a (Alpha) pure-copper rhodium-plated conductors

Floating Field Damper System

Nylon/fiberglass body

Dimensions (FI-28M(R)): 39.6mm diameter x 71.6mm overall length

Metal cable clamp

Price: \$890 for 1.0 meter, additional meter is \$100

## Contact Information

Audio Art Cable  
4665 Altadena Ave.  
San Diego, CA 92115

Voice: (619) 255-6451  
E-mail: [rob@audioartcable.com](mailto:rob@audioartcable.com)  
Website: [www.AudioArtCable.com](http://www.AudioArtCable.com)



[Add Us To Your Favorites](#)   [Link Your Website To Us](#)   [Make Us Your Homepage](#)

[Get Our Audiophile Internet Browser V12](#)

Our free content is greatly helped with your kind support.



## Quick Links

[Audiophile Review Magazine](#)  
[This Month's Reviews](#)

[Equipment Review Archives](#)  
[Turntables, Cartridges, Etc](#)  
[Digital Source](#)  
[Do It Yourself \(DIY\)](#)  
[Preamplifiers](#)  
[Amplifiers](#)  
[Cables, Wires, Etc](#)  
[Loudspeakers/ Monitors](#)  
[Headphones, IEMs, Tweaks, Etc](#)

[Superior Audio Archives](#)  
[Ultra High-End Audio Reviews](#)

[Music Reviews](#)  
[Classical Music](#)  
[Jazz, Bluegrass, Blues, Etc.](#)  
[Rock, Pop, Techno, Metal, Etc.](#)

[Columns](#)  
[Editorials By Steven R. Rochlin](#)  
[Audiolics Anonymous](#)  
[Nearfield By Steven Stone](#)  
[Various Think Pieces](#)  
[Manufacturer Articles](#)

## Partnered Magazines

[The Absolute Sound](#)  
[hi-fi+ Magazine](#)  
[HIFICRITIC](#)  
[Hi-Fi World](#)  
[Sound Practices](#)  
[VALVE Magazine](#)

## Show Reports

[T.H.E. Show Newport Beach 2013](#)  
[Lone Star Audio Fest 2013](#)  
[High End Show Munich 2013](#)  
[New York Audio & AV Show 2013](#)  
[Salon Son & Image Report 2013](#)  
[ALMA Winter Symposium 2013](#)  
[Sound Of The Valve 2013 Milan](#)  
[APONA 2013 Chicago](#)  
[CES 2013 Show Coverage](#)  
[T.H.E. Show 2013 Report](#)  
[RMAF Show 2012](#)  
[Paris HiFi & Cinema 2012](#)  
[TAVES 2012 Audiophile Show](#)  
[California Audio Show 2012](#)  
[Capital Audiofest Show](#)  
[Click here for previous shows.](#)

## Other

[Audiophile Contests](#)  
[Cool Free Stuff For You](#)  
[Tweaks For Your System](#)  
[Vinyl Logos For LP Lovers](#)  
[Lust Pages Visual Beauty](#)  
[300B Tube Comparison](#)



[Twitter](#)



[Facebook](#)



[Pinterest](#)



[RSS](#)



[Newsletter](#)

## Daily Industry News

[High-End Audio News And Information](#)

## Internet Browser

[Audiophile Internet Browser V12](#)

## Mobile Phone Apps

[Android Audiophile App](#)  
[Windows 8 And Phone 7/8 App](#)

## Resources And Information

[Music Definitions](#)  
[Hi-Fi Definitions](#)  
[High-End Audio Manufacturer Links](#)

## For The Press & Industry

[About Us](#)  
[Press Releases](#)  
[Official Site Graphics](#)

All contents copyright© 1995 - 2013 *Enjoy the Music.com*®  
May not be copied or reproduced without permission. All rights reserved.

[Sitemap](#) | [Industry News](#) | [Press Releases](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Manufacturer Links](#) | [Android APP](#) | [WP 7 & 8 APP](#) | [About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#)