

Boomerang Cables!!!

by Igor Zamberlan



Strange, how things turn out sometimes. For a certain reason, which I'm not about to go into, but which you can trace (in Italian) on our forum, this, which might appear as the nth test of the nth cable of the nth manufacturer, has become one of the most long-awaited of recent times, at least for those who assiduously frequent this forum. And to think, that all this began with an innocent offer on the part of the distributor, Dimitri Toniolo of Mad for Music, to have me test these new cables. My first reaction was that it concerned another of my friend Dimitri's American, Chinese or Japanese discoveries. However, having given the OK to the cable test, I was contacted by another of the characters of the Italian audiophile network, Roberto de Filippo *alias* Plastic *alias* Audiolesox (his latest incarnation).

Boomerang!!! Cables (and from now on "goodbye" to the exclamation marks, at least for this article, thanks) represent, in fact, the evolution of years of tweaking and experiments on Roberto's part; as so often happens in the world of HiFi one of us crazies constructs something for himself or a friend, then someone else hears it and wants one, then a binary chain reaction takes off, until the first crazy (not that the rest are sane, of course) finds himself having to quit his normal person's work to devote himself to constructing this item that everyone wants now. Something like this has happened to Roberto, who up until a few months ago had a proper job, but who has now become a cable manufacturer.

Bold claims

Going by the series of declarations sent me by Roberto (I would not speak of published material, it seems to me that up until now the marketing strategy – so to

speaking, apparently not having been orchestrated by anyone – for these cables is based on word of mouth and mailing lists on the Net) these cables have been designed for maximum neutrality. Their purpose is to disappear and to leave space for the sonic character of the components connected to them. They should not need any “burning-in”, just a series of sweeps with the Densen DeMagic, after which they should be able to sound (and disappear) to their maximum. They would not be cables for tweakers or for those who change components often, given that they are made to stay in place. The connectors do not have the massive or luxurious look of other “audiophile” connectors, they are selected for their effectiveness and to minimise contacts between dissimilar metals; they are in copper and have not been gold or rhodium plated, given that the contact of copper with copper maximises sonic quality.

So then, I don't have any particular technical descriptions to give about these mysterious objects, I don't know what material is used in their construction – even if I suppose it would be pure copper, not silver plated or alloyed with other materials. I can only tell you that the plugs of the power leads are Gewiss industrial-grade 16 Ampere rated, and that the banana plugs and spade connectors seem to be truly top class. The RCA connectors on the interconnect cables have an frugal look, but as with the Bullet Plug we have become used to not considering this as an index of the quality of the connectors themselves. The appearance of the cables is, how shall we say, a little utilitarian, sheathed as they are in a plain grey jacket. The only complaint I have at the level of functionality, the only reason to take note, is the lack of flexibility of the terminal sections; and the fact that, because of the chosen geometry, the RCA connectors of the interconnects are close together and do not allow use with monoblock amps or those pre and power amps on which the sockets are particularly widely spaced. The manufacture assures me, however, that there are other versions of the cables with connector spaced further apart; whether they sound the same as the ones I heard, I cannot tell you.

All together now

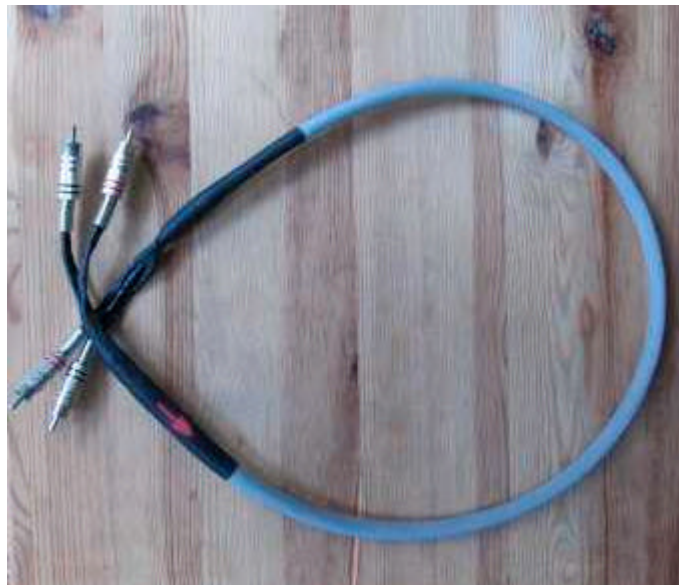
As I wrote in the interconnect test in this current issue of the magazine, the usual caveat applies that as regards tests of cables: I can tell you how they sounded with my set-up, with the components I used, I cannot in any way assure you that my observations are representative of how these cables would sound in your system. Certainly the manufacturer or distributor would say that these cables have revealed to my ears for the first time how my components really sound; personally, I believe that interfacing is a minor art in itself, and that there does not exist, nor can there exist, the perfect cable or component, perfectly neutral in every situation...

Let's go to the common characteristics, to the characteristic traits of this family of cables: it seems to me, that more or less, they share a notable transparency and a capacity to render detail, an excellent openness to the higher frequencies, a wonderful capacity to delineate the soundstage and the performers within it.

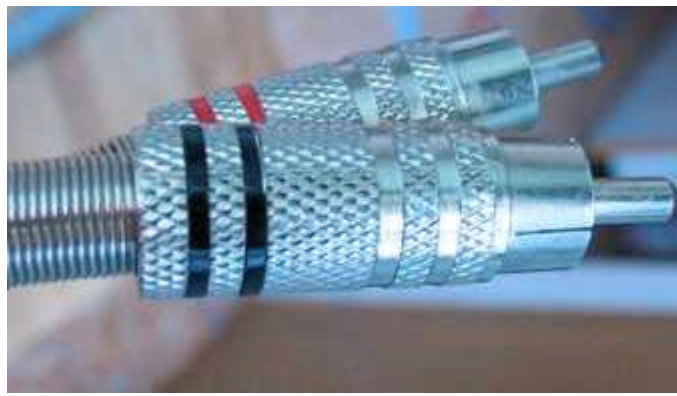
An extremely appealing characteristic that they have is to make the performers materialise, to communicate not only their contours in the left-right direction but also forward-backward, i.e. to give body to instruments and voices.

Defects? Well, with the context of my set-up (the components are the same as described in the test of the BAT VK75SE, with the exception of the GamuT and the Audio Synthesis, unfortunately unusable on account of the problem with the separation of the connectors), it seems to me that there is a hint of harshness in the high frequency output, a slight harmonic simplification, a certain homogenization of the timbre, a tendency to make the soundstage smaller and more distant. Now let's go to see what characterises the cables one by one.

The Interconnect Cable



The interconnect seems to me to be the most interesting item. With this I do not appear to hear that tendency to shrink the soundstage, nor the tendency to homogenize timbres, nor to harmonic simplification, except in the most negligible way and only then when compared to the absolute champions in this parameter which are the White Gold Sublimis. Top cables, therefore – I can't think of any comparably priced cable, known to me, that I would prefer to these. The limiting factors seem to me to be, apart from the aforementioned slight simplification, a tendency to make sibilants stand out (more than with the Wire World and White Gold) and a lesser comprehensive fluidity/liquidity with respect to the other cables have circulated round my room during these months, all costing about ten times as much.



The Speaker Cable



This is undoubtedly the one that pleased me the least. It is the principal cause of the tendency to shrink and distance the soundstage, it is subjectively slower compared to my Van den Hul and is also the major factor in the flattening of the timbre. It makes the music less interesting to listen too, less surprising, less engaging. I don't find them neutral, but subtractive. Moreover, with respect to the Van den Hul, it seems to have a lesser capacity to maintain the coherence between the different ranges of my Wilsons, not the simplest thing in itself however, given my choice of amplification.

I have to say, though, that it is in the speaker cable that we find the maximum capacity to make the soundstage materialise, it is chiefly responsible for the "in front of and behind the instruments" effect and is, it seems, the most detailed of the Boomerangs.

Dynamically, the first impression that I have carried away of them was one of a certain compression. The cable is not compressed in reality, it is that in respect of the performance of my Revelation, it seems as though contemporaneously both the minimum and maximum levels are reduced, in a way totally coherent with the shrinking and distancing of the scene.



I can understand someone's finding this cable excellent if they have a preference for stillness, purity and detail. For me, the harmonic simplification, which imparts its subtractive character to the music, is excessive; once again however, by and large I can't think of a single comparably priced speaker cable that I would prefer to this one; and it's also true that, while I have a good idea of the current situation in the interconnect market, my experience of current speaker cables is limited because of many years my reference has been the B&W Silver Signature, which include dedicated speaker cables.

The Power Cable



Optimal, from my experience of power chords near its price point. Very clean, quiet, dynamic and open. Just a little less fluid than an Eupen of comparable price and less full-bodied when used with a digital source. If it has a defect it is that of tending, especially if used with digital equipment, towards a certain lack of body and foundation, compensating with excellent transparency and the capacity to reproduce contrast. But I would say that these are venial sins, which could be merits in a different context from mine. In fact, I'm becoming convinced that power chords don't follow the rule of using identical cables throughout the whole installation, which is, more or less, valid for all other cables. The choice of a power lead is an operation

that proceeds one component at a time (a clear example, the Eupen that I am using with the Sony SACD borders on unlistenability for dynamic compression and incoherence between the frequency bands if used with any power amp I have come across) and, while I have better chords for SACD and preamps in my basket of cables (ahem...) I could probably live with the Boomerang feeding the BAT. The price, therefore: just right if the cable is used with equipment that is not optimal, a bargain if used with the right gear.



Concluding, Concluding...

Cables which present a set of common characteristics, which I have not found to be as absolutely neutral as the manufacturer claims, but which appear to me to be well-developed and coherent products, with a precise discernment of the market and with a certain number of systems in which they could perform beautifully, even far beyond the “logical” combinations to which their price category might restrict them. Some advice: consider the sale “on approval” offered by the manufacturer and distributor, who knows, you might resolve your interface problems. The fact of being thrown into the test at the very moment that I had a series of references in the house, probably, has not been particularly useful to the Boomerangs; but it’s opportune to consider that the various reference cables, White Gold, Wire World Gold Eclipse, Monster SRG, VdH Revelation Hybrid, probably, don’t make any economic sense whatsoever in the majority of systems, while the Boomerangs don’t suffer from this problem.

Ah, so you don’t believe in burning-in: one or two weeks of use are needed before they reach their best; anyway, the DeMagic would seem to be efficacious with these cables...