

Test: Hard-Disk-Recorder-Server Purist Music Machine Mini



Peripherie:

- Endstufen: Trigon Monolog
- Lautsprecher: KEF XQ50

The lean mean black machine



One year ago we tested a Harddisk Recorder that sounded absolutely overwhelming and made possible to stream its complete contents via iPod: the purist HDR of AMI-HiFi. Meanwhile some things happened, the HDR has got siblings.

The purist Music Machine Mini is a similar product, but more favorably priced than the up to 20,000 Euros costing Top-model. A lot of things can change within one year on the software-market, which gives us another reason to put the latest addition to the Purist product line on the agenda.

The most obvious characteristic: the casing is smaller and the display has been omitted with. A music server does not necessarily need a display, because to operate it one has a iPod or iPad at hand, that exactly explains, what is happening at the time. Just one of the highlights is the improved control surface of the Purist-Application for iPod Touch, iPad or iPhone. This is by the way no longer web-based, but a true App, downloadable from Apples AppStore. In my eyes this App is a major improvement compared to the former version. Equally capable regarding the list of functionalities the operability of the App became even more intuitive.

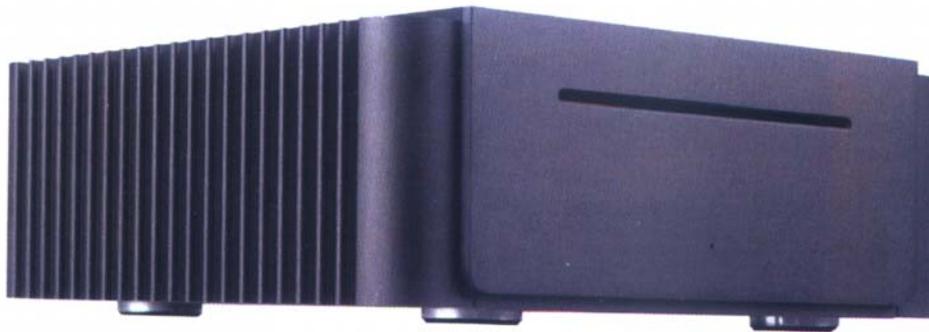
Purists CEO Andreas Milkovits does not relent until a Purist product does exactly what it is required to: thought out to the finest detail and developed up to the end.

The result is a piece of software that is unbelievably intelligent and that copes with all eventualities which may trouble other music servers. With all this functionality fear may arise that the HD-Recorder could become too complex and difficult to operate. Can a human possibly handle such an abundance of possibilities?

In reality one steers all functions so intuitively that operating instructions are completely redundant. Certain options always emerge just where and when they are needed. It takes only two fingertips to get where You want.



While the musicMachine rips the iPad-Application displays the actual status. While reading a CD the Music Machine remains fully functional.



The Purist works fan-less. In operation it works dead quiet. Power consumption is pleasingly low.

Even editing meta-data is so easy done by hand that it is a true joy. I dare to claim that it takes only five seconds from the consideration, which song one would like to hear to the first notes actually playing from the loudspeakers. The Purist navigates with incredible speed and graphical interface surface is structured so logical.

The unbelievably high operating speed does not diminish even with archives filled to a considerable size -1000 albums plus and the purist still does not hang up or comes to an halt whilst scrollen the lists, the purist never stutterd, it simply delivers and delivers. One must not neglect that point. Everyone knowing the difference between interpreter and album can operate this HD-Recorder. However there are not only many smart solutions, but certain singular features, which make the purist outstanding. It is for example the first and only device that allows for genuine gapless playback.

Continuously performed albums, for example Life concerts, are played therefore also in one piece, without the annoying

breaks between the individual tracks and Bit-exact. Not a single Bit is lost!

To cherish Pink Floyds "The Wall" from Harddisc is finally possible listening to the Purist. Of course a 48-bit range spanning digital audio volume control is also implemented. It provides for sufficient headroom, so that no resolution is lost at low volume levels.

You only need a power amplifier and a pair of passive loudspeakers, or a set of fully active loudspeakers, in order to realize a small, high-endish and extremely capable setup without sacrificing on sonics, but low on components number count.

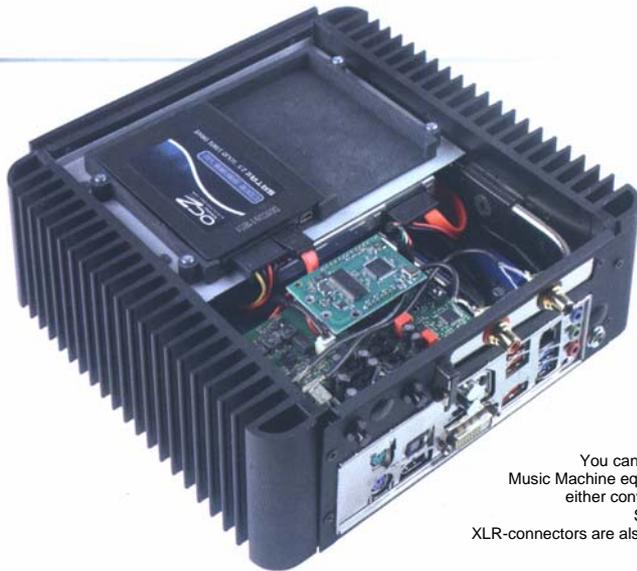
In case You already own a dream-Preamplifier and You don't want to use the excellently functioning volume control You can of course turn it off or set it to maximum.

Multiroom

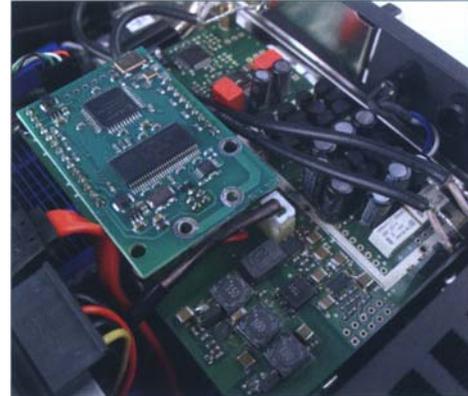
Each album, which is stored on the internal harddiscdrives, is made available also by servers within the local network. UPnP capable Streaming Clients and Logitech Squeezeboxes can stream the music files. Even this detail is further thought out here than one would assume at first: Not only is the ingenious search function available for the UPnP Clients, but in addition the music material is streamed at exactly the maximal resolution the Client is capable of. If your Client is capable of 96 kHz, it will receive a 96kHz stream. Now I have told You much, though by far not everything, about the software side of the Purist but hardly anything about the hardware. The music files experience a particular conscientious treatment, in order to be processed in the best possible way. Each music file is copied into a cache memory of 1GB size ahead of playback. Then follows decoding, upsampling to a resolution of 192 kHz and 24 bits



Music downloads can be imported simple and fast via USB connector. The files are automatically tagged and archived.



You can order Your Music Machine equipped with either conventional or SSD-drives, XLR-connectors are also an option



The genuine, AMI developed, non feedback Class-A-DAC is close to the measurable limits

and finally the D-A-conversion. The D-A-converter is a special delicacy! It builds around a Burr Brown 1792 DAC-chip as core component and forms a fully differential (symmetrical), no feedback, pure Class-A circuit generating the analog output signal. Our measurements showed a perfect analog signal quality with distortion and noise figures at the limits of our instruments. Great balls of fire.

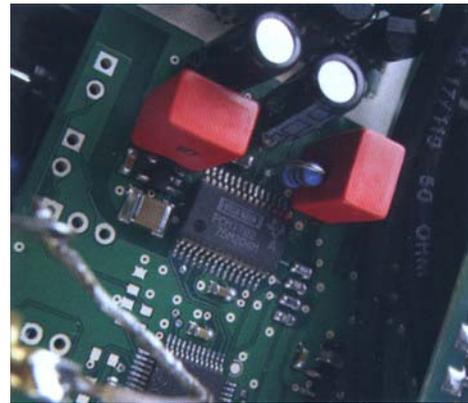
The unbalanced output signal at the RCA connectors, is taken from the "hot" leads. Thus there is no additional balanced-to-unbalanced-conversion process taking place. No operational amplifier has a chance to mess with the sound. On request You can order the purist equipped with XLR-connectors. This D/A-converter is an genuine development of AMI and is in this form, or in further improved forms, part of all AMI HiFi digital products labelled Purist"

Lots, loads of music

What remains to be talked about, is the most important: The sound. And believe me that really is something to talk about.

I hooked up the Purist directly with the power amplifiers and took a long, very long listening session. In order to anticipate it - I listened the long time voluntarily. I had plenty of music tracks available to my selection, because the Purists Harddisc was already plentifully equipped and I had imported several albums during the preceding test phase.

And no matter, what came from the loudspeakers, it was an experience!

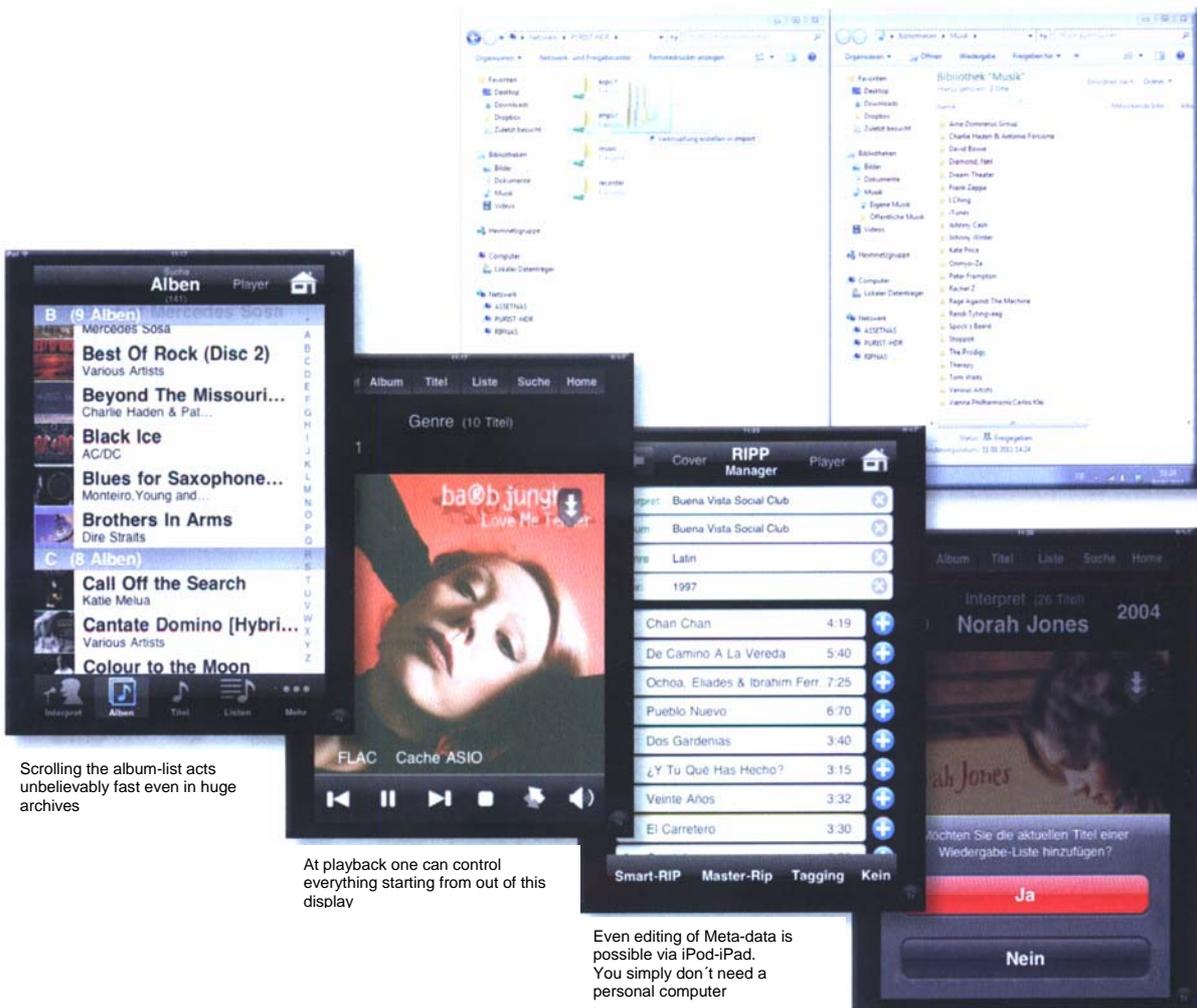


The BurrBrown-Chip is among the best DAC-chips on the market



After insertion of the CD You can choose between playback or ripping to Harddisc

Airy bass, a supple midrange and the generally fresh play keeps You sticking to the sofa. I could even listen repeatedly to music pieces, which are not really after my taste; the way how they were presented kept my attention. That frightening sturdy sound stage, the tonal neutrality right on the point and the high of detail resolution strongly recommend the Purist Music Machine as source for a classical music program- fans of the category treasure such attributes.

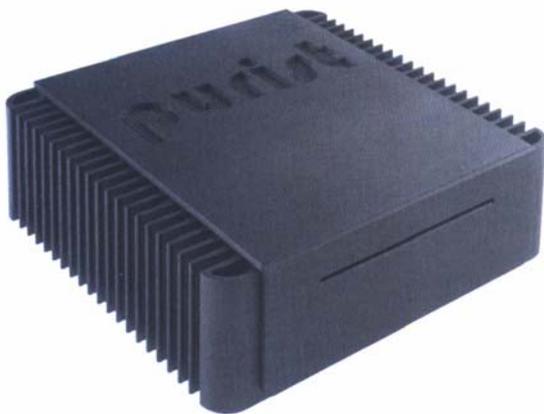


Scrolling the album-list acts unbelievably fast even in huge archives

At playback one can control everything starting from out of this display

Even editing of Meta-data is possible via iPod-iPad. You simply don't need a personal computer

From a certain size of the archives on the comfortable playlist-management becomes essential



This little case houses a complete Music server, ripping functionality, D/A-conversion and volume setting included. Connected to a pair of really good active loudspeakers – that's all what is needed for a small, but fantastic sounding setup

Of course do music connoisseurs with a different taste profit as well-rather rare are the occasions when technical perfection meets musicality so well as in this case. One can hardly believe what this little HiFi-component is capable of. The Purist Music machine easily out-performs even extremely priced CD-players, no doubt about it. This is probably the most sophisticated music server, I had the pleasure to hold in my hands – congratulations .

Purist Music Machine Mini	
Preis:	um 3.000 Euro
Vertrieb:	AMI HiFi, Regen
Telefon:	09922 802316
Internet:	www.ami-hifi.de
Eingänge:	3 x USB 2.0 (Dateneingang) 1 x Ethernet
Ausgänge:	1 x analog RCA 1 x S/PDIF Toslink

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Hard words: The Music Machine is the reference music server that applies the standards.

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