

## Statement II XLR

The Moonriver amplifier does not offer any balanced inputs so for the next phase of this audition I replaced it with the very different all-digital Lyngdorf TDAI3400, it is fitted with optional high performance analogue module which includes both XLR and RCA inputs. For comparison I used a pair of Ultra Black II XLRs, which I have been using extensively for several years and with which I have found no fault whatsoever.

The Gold Note PH10 offers balanced XLR outputs so I connected it to the Lyngdorf and played the first side of *Eleven Eleven* again. The Lyngdorf gives the listener an impeccable account of whatever music is being played through it, with crystal clarity and excellent timing too. I really think it may be witchcraft, but analogue played through this digital wonder still sounds analogue when it pours forth from the loudspeakers. Having set that baseline I then swapped in the Statement Mark II XLR interconnects. Oh-my-goodness! The leap from a very good mid-range interconnect was not subtle at all. Not only did the music seem to have gained volume, I was hearing deeper into the mix, getting a stronger impression of each band member's contribution without any loss of coherence or musical drive. It was extraordinary. However, I was using a pair of cables that are not far off the cost of the amplifier, which in the real world may not be very realistic.

## Final thoughts on Statement II

What Geoff Merrigan has achieved with this new version of Statement II is little short of remarkable. He took an already class-leading product and made it even better. We for whom audio is somewhere between a hobby and an obsession need engineers like him (actually he is a materials scientist by training, which I suspect is very relevant to what he does now) to keep pushing the performance envelope, and risking spousal wrath by postponing that trip of a lifetime. I have huge respect for his unending pursuit of excellence. For those with pockets of insufficient depth, or less than ultra high-end systems, (that would be me for one) that perfectionism is a pretty solid guarantee that the rest of the Tellurium Q range will be equally class-leading. And for the cable-sceptics, while I totally respect your point of view, I will say this; cables do make a difference, and the better your system the greater the difference that they make.