

Erzetich Phobos Technical

Impedance: 80 ohm
Driver: Dynamic 50 mm, titanium
Cup system: Semi open
Weight: 460 g

ERZETICH
PHOBOS

Sonic
symmetry

\$2,300
www.erzetich-audio.com

Inspired by Greek Gods, a tribute to Slovenia and created by a sound designer who in an earlier avatar, opened for Marilyn Manson. There is much in the Erzetich Phobos planar magnetic headphones that jostle for your attention.

When I unboxed and first laid eyes on the Phobos, there was a sense of childlike excitement. For the promise was not only a headphone that promised auditory highlights like few else, there was an immediately arresting visual impression, a sense of taking its place. Blending the classic with the

contemporary, the mix of wood and metal radiates a timeless art-deco aura. Of course, the aged octagonally shaped block of Linden wood for the cups, complete with scrapes, pockmarks, grooves and defined grain add to the aura manifold.

In terms of structure, the outer grey industrial hue of these faceplates provides a visually striking contrast to the rather darker almost smoky grain of the Linden wood surrounding it. Boasting a semi spider's web design, the front grill faceplates are made of anodized aluminum. For such a seemingly large headphones, it was very comfy fit, probably due to the wide twin pivot screw aluminum gimbal system. Interestingly, reflecting CEO Blaz Erzetich's electronics engineering background, there are no trace-wire connections and both cups are





THE PHOBOS DELIVERS LARGE AND SMALL-SCALE SHIFTS WITH JUST THE RIGHT TONALITY AND BALANCE



electrically independent of each other.

Now on to the setup. I combined the Phobos with the Erzetich Bacillus headphone amp, and the supplied RCA cable [which comes with the box], with the Astell & Kern Kann music player as the source, and I was all set!

My first option was a personal favorite, Stevie Wonders Master Blaster (24bit, 96khz) from the Hotter than July record. In an album that largely pays tribute to Dr. King, Stevie's distinctive blend of Nashville and Kingston influences comes through beautifully textured with tons of dynamic nuance. On to Ronnie Spector's version of 'Don't Worry Baby' (16/44.1 kHz), and you realize how much justice the singer has done to The Beach Boys track in her immaculate style, the net effect being a voice that feels very personal and intimate. Brilliant.

Now totally immersed, I switched genres to rock, and a classic live one at that. And what qualifies more than Hendrix's Machine Gun (DSD). The sheer transcendent quality of this 1970 New Year's Eve 12-minute piece comes shining through. At Fillmore East, after a funky rendition of Izabella, Hendrix unleashes a bluesy jazz-metal version that pays tribute to Dr. King. You got a feeling of being in the front row, a mere spectacle to a master in full control of his craft.

At \$2,300, the Erzetich Phobos planar magnetic headphones are in the upper scale of an already resurgent category. That said, it's a personal device for a variety of reasons. For one, each and every Phobos device is individual, hand-crafted out of lindel wood bearing distinct pockmarks and grooves. And there is the sound:

warm and detailed, delivering both large and small-scale shifts with grace and just the right tonality and balance, this is one headphone any audiophile should be proud to own!

T3



VERDICT

LOVE Bespoke design, Great balance, Adaptability to genres, Linden Effect.

HATE Slightly expensive.

T3 MIDDLE EAST SAYS: Brilliantly adaptive set of cans that you will treasure for long!

