

## EQUIPMENT REVIEW

# My Audio Design Royal Salute power cable

by Jimmy Hughes

**A** mains cable (power cord) retailing for £1,999? Yes – I know – £1,999 for a mains cable. Even if it's silver, it's time to call the men in white coats... To make things even more 'interesting', I used this item to power the PS Audio Premier Power Plant conditioner that my system runs off. Now this is supposed to clean up the mains and take out all the noise.

That being the case, you'd assume it wouldn't be sensitive to 'mains cable differences' – even accepting such things existed. Yet (and I was surprised too) with the Royal Salute power cord connecting the PS Audio Premier to the mains, there was a noticeable and unexpected difference to the sound – bigger, clearer, sharper, more transparent.

Indeed, after installing the Royal Salute mains cable, I was actually able to reduce volume levels on my amplifier a tad, and still experience (what seemed for all the world like) the same subjective loudness. Explain it? I can't! Something else I noticed were increased degrees of 'difference' between nominally similar tracks. Why? No idea!

For example, while sampling the six CD edition of Schumann's complete male songs on DG with Dietrich Fischer Dieskau, I found myself hearing all sort of subtle changes of timbre and balance between piano and voice. The set contains several hundred songs, recorded over a four year period – between 1974 and 1977.

Before, the sound seemed to have a fairly consistent quality - good, but perhaps a little generalised. Now, all of a sudden, I could hear things like subtle changes in microphone placement and room acoustics. I'm not sure exactly WHY a silver mains cable should make a difference, but - all I can say is – it does!

With all comparisons – but perhaps especially with cables – much depends on what you've already got, and what you're used to. My general impression was that the sound grew purer and more effortlessly transparent as more MAD silver cable was used. The more you have, the greater the effect.

Naturally, the expensive ultra-purity MAD cables gave a heightened sense of the qualities mentioned – extra refinement, purity, naturalness, effortless ease. But you could sense the same qualities in the cheaper cables – it was definitely there, albeit less pronounced.

But, if the sound gets more and more natural and refined with these cables, is this a wholly good thing? Speaking as a listener to classical music who prizes clarity and naturalness very highly, I'd say unequivocally –

yes. The more MAD silver cable I used, the less 'hi-fi' my system sounded.

Playing Barenboim's Mozart concerto recordings, cemented an earlier good impression that had slowly been forming over a week or so – specifically, that things were now sounding truer and more effortless; more natural and real; clearer and more detailed, yet at the same time smoother and more refined.

While I also liked the effect on rock and pop, might (perhaps) MAD's silver cables rob the sound of its aggression slightly? Well, yes and no. A rough fuzzy-sounding guitar still sounds rough and fuzzy with MAD silver cables, only now you can differentiate fuzz from the guitar from the fuzz added by the system reproducing it.

These cables can sound a little bright and 'sharp' when first installed, but once burnt-in the sound is very smooth and open, while remaining tactile and detailed. With MAD's 30 day trial offer, it's possible to sample these cables at home before making up your mind – thereby giving you time to discover the difference at your own pace. +

### PRODUCT INFORMATION

#### MAD Royal Salute mains cable

**Construction:** 99.997% purity 'Diamond Die' silver conductors in braided form

**Price:** £1,999/m

**Manufacturer:** My Audio Design

**URL:** [www.madengland.com](http://www.madengland.com)

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