

## MUSIC MAESTRO

### Audio Note

ASK AUDIO NOTE UK Ltd's founder Peter Qvortrup (yes, that's a Danish surname) why it is that he's dedicated nearly 40 years of his life to perfecting audio equipment and his answer is unequivocal. "This is my life's project," he says. "I want to do justice to the best music ever created and recorded. I'm 66 now, and the legacy I intend to leave behind is that I've created the finest audio products and playback systems with no possible practical improvements."

This ambition was ignited way back in 1978 when Peter opened his very first hi-fi shop, Audio Consult in Copenhagen, which is still trading to this day. In the UK, his company, which is based in West Sussex, employs 36 craftspeople and an additional six individuals worldwide. It specialises in producing – and revolutionising – almost every component within an audio system.

Take the humble output transformer, for instance. Audio Note goes to extreme lengths designing and making what is arguably the most critical component of any valve amplifier. The list of exotic parts for these high-quality transformers includes silver wire, high-nickel-content cores, non-magnetic stainless steel fixings and copper frames. Terminated with Audio Note silver cables, the transformers are themselves small works of art, as indeed are the additional components used in the finished products. Bespoke handmade Audio Note capacitors, Tantalum silver non-magnetic resistors and silver solder all contribute to the finest possible sound.

So what of the sound? What is hard to put into words is the sheer emotion and sense of "being" that

an Audio Note system conveys. Recordings, either played back via LP or CD, take on a life-like persona. The recreation of the musical message enables one to delight in the composer's composition and the conductor's reading, creating a deeply enriching listening experience: cymbals shimmer, voices trill and guitar strings squeak, growl and hum.

While Peter's bespoke systems can sell for millions, he's really in the audio business for the love of music. His collection of 100,000 albums would have been even bigger had a fire at his parents' house not sadly destroyed most of his teenage collection; and he still gets a kick out of meeting new and potential customers and audio fans, and developing new products.

This is a painstaking process that can take years, with each product built and scrutinised using the finest materials and custom-made components in a new lab measuring 1,500 sq m. Yet the final checks take place at Peter's home in Brighton, where he personally tests each development in his listening room.

"You can't measure sound quality with an instrument," he says. "Try measuring the taste of a Chateau Petrus. It's not possible. We straddle the border between science and art. You don't know where one finishes and the other begins."

As for the future of the company, Peter's daughter Emily, now the CEO, is set to continue her father's legacy. Though maybe not quite yet. "I promised my wife I would retire at 75," he says. "I'm not so sure that's going to happen."

— [www.audionote.co.uk](http://www.audionote.co.uk)



## MUSIC MAESTRO

### Audio Note

ASK AUDIO NOTE UK Ltd's founder Peter Qvortrup (yes, that's a Danish surname) why it is that he's dedicated nearly 40 years of his life to perfecting audio equipment and his answer is unequivocal. "This is my life's project," he says. "I want to do justice to the best music ever created and recorded. I'm 66 now, and the legacy I intend to leave behind is that I've created the finest audio products and playback systems with no possible practical improvements."

This ambition was ignited way back in 1978 when Peter opened his very first hi-fi shop, Audio Consult in Copenhagen, which is still trading to this day. In the UK, his company, which is based in West Sussex, employs 36 craftspeople and an additional six individuals worldwide. It specialises in producing – and revolutionising – almost every component within an audio system.

Take the humble output transformer, for instance. Audio Note goes to extreme lengths designing and making what is arguably the most critical component of any valve amplifier. The list of exotic parts for these high-quality transformers includes silver wire, high-nickel-content cores, non-magnetic stainless steel fixings and copper frames. Terminated with Audio Note silver cables, the transformers are themselves small works of art, as indeed are the additional components used in the finished products. Bespoke handmade Audio Note capacitors, Tantalum silver non-magnetic resistors and silver solder all contribute to the finest possible sound.

So what of the sound? What is hard to put into words is the sheer emotion and sense of "being" that

an Audio Note system conveys. Recordings, either played back via LP or CD, take on a life-like persona. The recreation of the musical message enables one to delight in the composer's composition and the conductor's reading, creating a deeply enriching listening experience: cymbals shimmer, voices trill and guitar strings squeak, growl and hum.

While Peter's bespoke systems can sell for millions, he's really in the audio business for the love of music. His collection of 100,000 albums would have been even bigger had a fire at his parents' house not sadly destroyed most of his teenage collection; and he still gets a kick out of meeting new and potential customers and audio fans, and developing new products.

This is a painstaking process that can take years, with each product built and scrutinised using the finest materials and custom-made components in a new lab measuring 1,500 sq m. Yet the final checks take place at Peter's home in Brighton, where he personally tests each development in his listening room.

"You can't measure sound quality with an instrument," he says. "Try measuring the taste of a Chateau Petrus. It's not possible. We straddle the border between science and art. You don't know where one finishes and the other begins."

As for the future of the company, Peter's daughter Emily, now the CEO, is set to continue her father's legacy. Though maybe not quite yet. "I promised my wife I would retire at 75," he says. "I'm not so sure that's going to happen."

— [www.audionote.co.uk](http://www.audionote.co.uk)

