

X Marks The Spot

Chord Company's new RumourX loudspeaker cables make a big impression on Jon Myles.

An £18 per metre price-point for loudspeaker cables is a bit of a sweet spot for many buyers. It takes you into a new area compared to cheaper connections, by using better materials and construction.

If you've got a pair of basic 'speaker cables in a lower cost bracket, upgrading to something a little more exotic has the potential to wring extra performance from your amplifier and loudspeakers.

And this is what Chord Company's new RumourX is intended to do. They replace the existing Rumour cables and use design elements trickled down from their high-end SignatureXL leads.

Chief amongst these is the use of XLPE (cross-linked Polyethylene) as the dielectric that Chord Company say has superior phase properties to the PTFE (or Teflon) material used in the original.

Internally Chord uses silver-plated high purity copper conductors, twisted together to improve interference rejection and covered in a flexible white PVC outer jacket. They are fitted with the company's new classy-looking ChordOhmic banana plugs (spades are also available), designed to extract the most electrical and sonic benefits from cables using silver in their construction.

Taking these RumourXs from the box it was immediately noticeable just how thin they look. The diameter is just 6mm with an AWG of 16 – meaning they are easy to route and

pretty unobtrusive when in situ.

The ChordOhmic plugs grip binding posts firmly for a tight connection which isn't going to work loose any time soon. Indeed it takes a firm pull to get them free when changing loudspeakers or amplifier.

The cables are also directional – with a small arrow indicating the ideal direction of travel for the signal. I know many people are sceptical about the benefits of this – but if the manufacturer recommends running cables this way I've always found it best to follow their advice.

SOUND QUALITY

While the RumourX may look rather slim its sound is anything but. In true Chord fashion this cable has a crisp, sprightly and dynamic sound to it, with good punch in the lower registers.

Nothing is over-emphasised: everything is laid out with aplomb. On David Bowie's 'Heroes' the epic sweep of the song came across loud and clear through a pair of Focal Kanta No 1 standmount loudspeakers. There was rhythmic assurance to the presentation that translated into a good sense of drive.

Gentler music, such as Barb Jung's 'Stockport To Memphis' (24/96) collection had excellent tonality, Jung's smoky jazz voice hanging in the air between the 'speakers with excellent presence.



Detail was comparable to some cables costing a good deal more.

The RumourXs are not totally neutral, erring slightly towards a lively presentation that suits upbeat tracks particularly well. But that doesn't mean they can't do delicate when needed as a spin of Arvo Part's 'Tabula Rasa' proved. Here piano and strings came over with a haunting, calm quality with plenty of space around the instruments.

CONCLUSION

The original Rumour loudspeaker cables have been a mainstay of the Chord range for many years but these RumourXs are a worthy successor. They have a lively yet well-balanced sound that will suit many a system. Add in a realistic price and they make an excellent choice.

**CHORD RUMOURX
£18 PER METRE**



OUTSTANDING - amongst the best.

VALUE - keenly priced.

VERDICT

Dynamic, punchy yet possessing great poise and detail. Chord's RumourX is a cable with the ability to improve many a system.

FOR

- dynamic
- detailed
- well-balanced
- easy to route

AGAINST

- not entirely neutral

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