

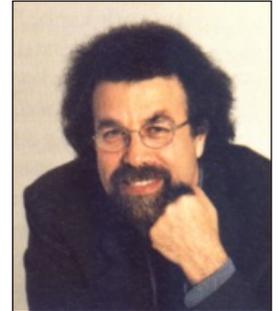
# hifi & records

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In memoriam ■

Giuseppe Sinopoli

Tuner ■

Magnum Dynalab - Resteck

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Record player ■

**Mass drive from a single mould  
Acoustic Solid "One To One"**

## PLATTENSPIELER

As did many readers, I first became aware of this turntable in hifi & records 4/2000, when it was put into service as an attractive substructure for use with twelve-inch tone arms. In response to my enquiry, I discovered that the attractive photo model was the new top model from Acoustic Solid. I had already been pleasantly surprised by the lower priced Solid Machine, and so naturally I was curious to know what the top of the line model was capable of delivering. For the price of the One To One, there are enough other manufacturers who can supply no more than their entry level model... and the whole thing is built in Swabia, in the south of Germany.

The One To One label stands in all modesty for the intention of the designers to realise an influence-free transfer of the groove information to the phono amplifier, one-to-one, or to put it more precisely, to create the right working environment for the tone arm/pickup combination to enable it to unfold its full capability. There is the provision for mounting up to two tone arms. The intention was also to hold the price within worldly realms, in other words, under 10 000 marks. And this is possible, even after adding a reasonably-priced arm/pick up combination. Karl Wirth, owner, heart, head and hand of Acoustic Solid is a mechanical engineer through and through, and this is visible from all of his products. He embodies the top priority of mechanical engineering - to keep the construction as simple as possible, which is why esoteric

Test: "One To One" turntable from Acoustic Solid

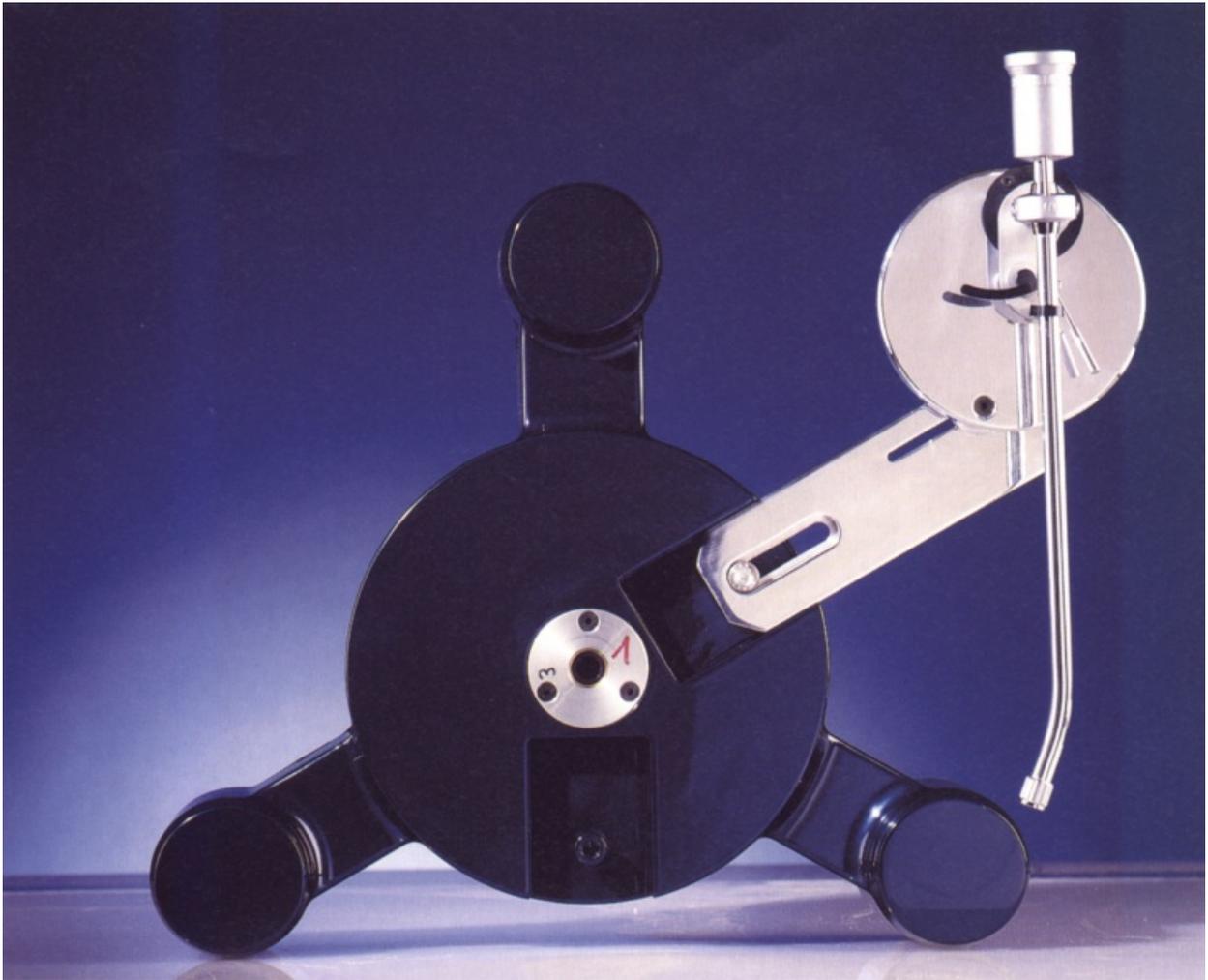
Equipped for all tone arm types and with first class sound: The "One To One", the top model from Acoustic Solid

solutions, either in terms of price and design, are against his principles.

There are two things which all the turntables made by Acoustic Solid have in common, apart from the typical plastic pouch in which all the accessories and assembly tools are supplied - the bearing and the platter. The bearing case is in two layers - the outer metal cover is generously proportioned. The inner shell is cast in a mould containing the platter spindle, and is made of a plastic which possesses extremely good anti-frictional properties. This results in a virtually negligible slackness of three thousandths of a millimetre in the bearing. The platter spindle is made of polished special steel and is supported above the teflon bearing surface by a ceramic bearing. The five centimetre thick platter is made of an aluminium alloy which contains a considerable amount of lead. The platter does not ring and displays positive resonance properties without noticeably affecting the sound production. The top and bottom have been plane turned and the circumferential surface has been polished to a gloss finish. The suede leather platter cover of the One To One is colour-coordinated with the base - an optically appealing solution.

The same drives continue to be available for all turntables - the regular synchronous motor (in my opinion the best choice because it displays the best sound properties) is supplied as standard; the analogue regulated motor and microprocessor controlled motors are available at an extra price. The height of the

# Analogue dream from a single mould



motor unit is matched to fit the respective turntable. The pulley is designed for string drive and possesses two diameters for each of the two standard turntable speeds. Various string materials are supplied, including a transparent, virtually invisible and hair-thin plastic thread, which also proved to be the best in terms of audio properties (the same thread is used to drive the Scheu turntable). The One To One can therefore be seen to present a its own particular optical appeal - the motor unit and the turntable appear completely separate from one another, but the platter rotates all the same. The precise adjustment of the rotational speed is performed by altering the string tension. First, the stroboscope disc (supplied) is laid upon the turntable and the position of the motor

is then altered until the respective markings on the disc appear to be stationary. This is a simple matter and is completed quite quickly.

But what makes the One To One stand out from its compatriots is the cast base unit of the turntable, which employs design skill to disguise its inherent heaviness. The central circular unit is easily ten centimetres high. The three protruding legs end in cylindrical feet, which are normally coupled with spikes on their underside. All the elements of the base merge elegantly and radially into each other, and the optical impression really is of a turntable which is 'not big'. There are four metallic paint finishes from which to choose: blue-black, dark blue, red, and green. If you want your own personal colour, this can be ordered for

another 375 marks and a little extra waiting time.

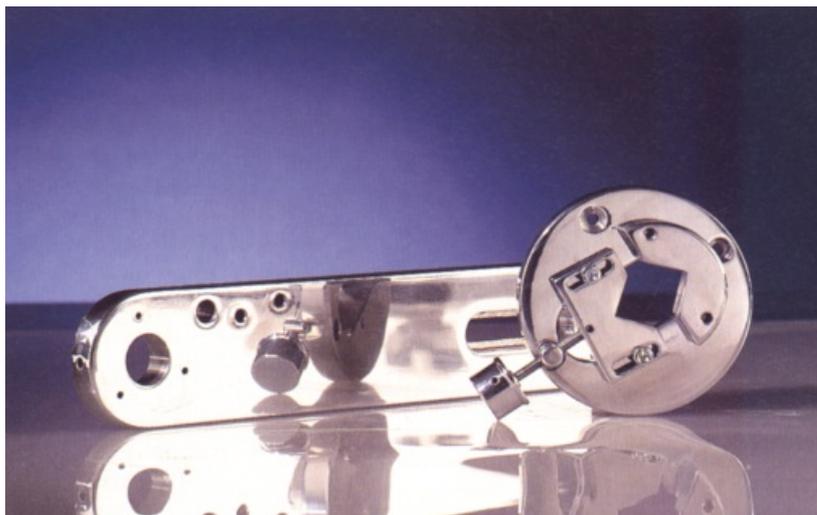
Not a great deal of information was forthcoming (understandably) regarding the mixture of the cast material. The main components are aluminium granulate and ground stone. It is clear from the outset that a binding agent is used, and everything else is 'manufacturer's know how'. The base itself remains silent during the obligatory knock test, produces no bell ring or other unseemly aural effects. This is what you call acoustically dead.

The arms for the tone arm bases are screw-fitted to two recesses on the top side of the base. Before performing any major changes, for instance when moving from a nine inch to a twelve inch tone arm, the platter must first be removed. A standard arm is supplied, in

**The One To One also accepts twelve inch tone arms (left).  
Top right: The intelligent clamp base for attaching a variety of arms  
The most convincing solution regarding the choice of motor was also the simplest: The synchronous motor with the plug-in power supply (bottom).**

base colour, which offers a means of attaching the sheaths, created by Acoustic Solid. These sheaths always have the same external diameter and are adjusted on the inside to fit the respective tone arm shaft, irrespective of whether the latter is smooth or contains a thread (however exotic).

This provides the tone arms with a simple height adjustment mechanism. It functions with no problem, as proven by the experiments conducted with Hadcock, Rega and Roksan. Furthermore, there are universal arms, also containing elongated holes, which display the appropriate shift distance for short and for long arms. At the other end there is another elongated hole, in which a connecting bolt can be screwed, which in turn bears the mounting disc for the tone arm. Depending on the construction of the tone arm and the pickup used, it may be

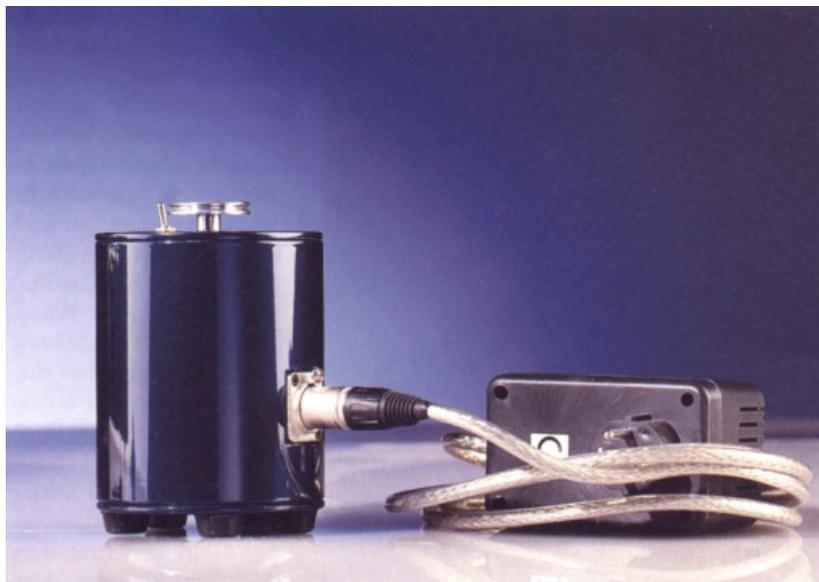


possible to dispense with this connecting bolt. The whole thing results in a good range of variation options for adjusting the height of the VTA. The mounting discs are available in various diameters, again to allow adjustments for short or long tone arms. If you have one or several exotic tone arms, you can send the assembly template to Acoustic Solid, who will then produce the appropriate discs. A special base such as this costs 110 marks and the additional arm costs 400 marks. For fans of absolute flexibility, there is the brand new universal clamp base, a kind of miniature vice atop the disc, which will cost around 400 marks.

I consider this a successful solution. Virtually any tone arm with a cylindrical shaft can be mounted reliably and the height can be easily adjusted. When all the settings have been ascertained, the jaws of the clamp are tightened up and the whole tone arm setup is now secure. Taking into consideration the sum of all the available adjustments - movable arms, rotatable mounting discs, with or without bolts to provide various basic heights - what we have here is a highly flexible system, which permits the virtually any tone arm to be fitted. A special arm is available for mounting the long Ortofon tone arms, upon which the arm base can be mounted directly without the need for any further assembly elements.

I have rarely tried out so many tone arms for a turntable report as I did with the One To One. There are two reasons for this. First of all, the stringent requirements of the One To One demand that preliminary tests are conducted, the like of which would not be possible with only a single tone arm. And secondly, the procedure of changing the tone arm is both unproblematic and quick. Curiosity also plays a role of course, and furthermore, we had two turntables at our disposal, which have been installed in two completely different systems.

A small flaw did however become apparent with all the long arm installations we tried, but this was easily corrected. The mounting discs



**A gigantic mould makes it possible to produce the One To One body from a single piece of metal (bottom). Illustration on reverse: The Acoustic Solid in all its splendour**

for the tone arms protruded beyond the arms, and aluminium is not an infinitely hard material. This means that there is a slight risk of proneness to vibration, which could possibly cause a light drop in sharpness in the soundscape. The Nottingham Analogue ANNA arm made this quite clear, with all the pickups that it was fitted with - the ZYX R 30, the Crown Jewel, Decca Garrott or Audio Technica AT180.

As a provisional solution, a bolt with two plastic nuts was fitted underneath - a little on the homemade side, but it worked. Light contact is sufficient to arrest the tendency to vibrate. A simple and functional solution would be to provide a threaded hole as far towards the outside of the aluminium disc as possible, and a plastic threaded bolt. With short tone arms there is no audible difference.

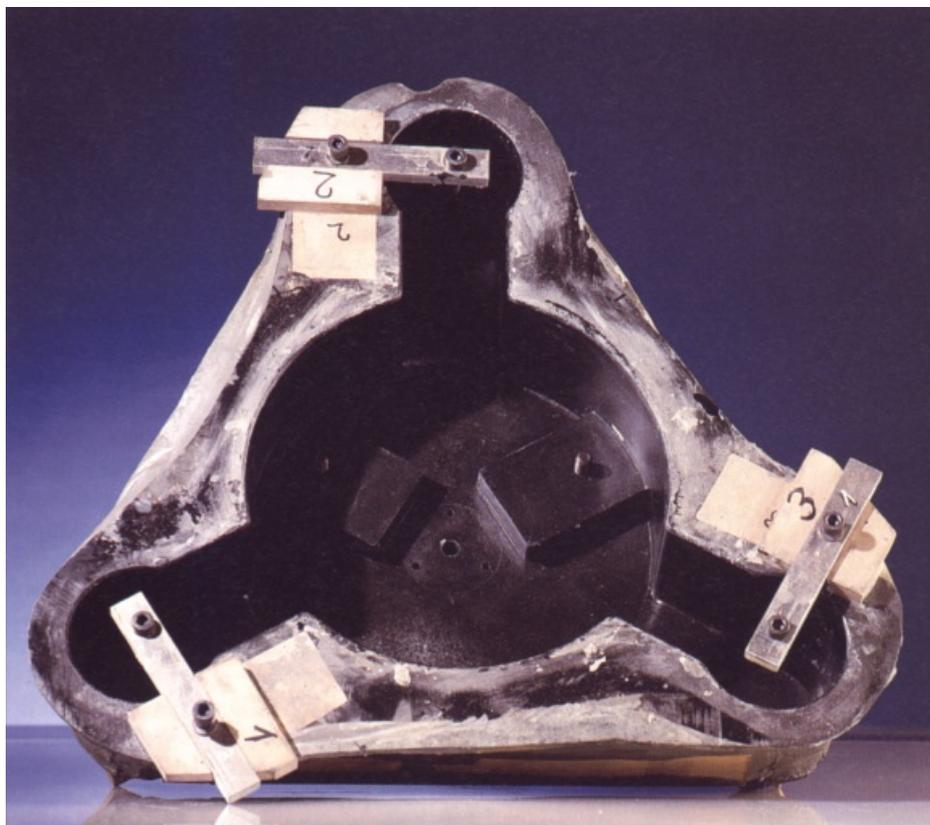
Of the long arms, the first one we tried out was the Stax UA 90 N, fitted with a Decca Garrott. It proved very coherent, had a lot of bite and conveyed a lot in the way of atmosphere.

Resolution and spatial representation left nothing to be desired. The Nottingham top level arm, ANNA, proved that this pickup was capable of even more, in all regards. Considerably more spatial expanse, a more precise arrangement of the soundscape within the room and a wonderfully terse, plastic feel confirmed without doubt the top position of this tone arm. The ZYX R 30 and the Crown Jewel showed that this was not linked to the Deccas. These pickups were driven to the limits of their capabilities. The ZYX demonstrated convincingly that can rock, while still retaining its neutrality. It coaxes great dynamism and plenty of space out of the grooves. The Crown Jewel went one better, lending the music an elegant, velvety touch, without ever losing control. This pickup really possesses the ability to crown a chain of analogue components (at that price you would also expect the performance to be extraordinary). And finally, there is the AT 180, which displayed unusual properties the moment it was fitted. It had a bone-dry,

precise latitude, with plasticity and dynamism to spare. It is a great shame that this pickup is no longer being made.

The next candidate was the SME 312, one of my favourite tone arms, fitted with the AEC Jubilee. Naturally, the bridge above the bearing is removed (permanently). And you have to hear it to believe it - elegant, even majestic soundscapes, without ever being boring. Perfectly integrated details in copious amounts. Dynamism at every level and a spatial pattern which always matches the recording. This can all be perceived by the listener without the slightest amount of strain, and it turns the listening experience into pure enjoyment, even over extended periods running into several hours.

The 'short', nine inch tone arms also got what they wanted. The Rega RB 600 with Incognito wiring, the SME V with the Ortofon 8N copper wiring, the Roksan Artemiz and Decca International were all fitted - and the results were just as enjoyable as with the longer arms. The SME V requires its own base disc and all the others were mounted using the universal clamp base. To go on about the SME V at this point would really be like preaching to the converted. The combination with the Decca Garrott was a dynamic sound festival, it produced a lively soundscape, full of juice and power. The Roksan Artemiz also played at a high level, combined with the Shiraz from the same manufacturer, as ever with a generous bass range. Nobody will deny that a Decca pickup belongs in a Decca tone arm. And this





was confirmed impressively with the oft-reported direct and lifelike soundscape. And finally, the Rega RB 600, aided considerably by the Incognito wiring. It managed to coax as much out of the Crown Jewel as the ANNA arm, offering a performance, above all with the Shure V 15 V MRx, which gives the listener good reason to brood. If you consider that this

combination costs just over 2000 marks, is happy to power an MM input (although it must be a very good quality one), and leaves nothing to be desired, with no direct comparison, there is no way round rewarding it with a round of imaginary applause.

Throughout this extensive description of the behaviour of various tone arm/pickup combinations, the One To One turntable hardly got a mention. And that is precisely what is good about it. Whatever combination is being tested, the turntable leaves it to do its work without exercising any influence of its own - it virtually denies its very existence! This view may require a slight modification, which in my opinion must be said - the spikes fitted as standard introduce a certain hardness and nervousness into the proceedings. After a short time, I decided to replace them with the antispikes from Audioplan, and it

was in this form that the turntable performed as described. And it was this that was the decisive factor in making the One To One what it is. The effect is just as apparent whether the turntable is set up on a wall-mounted shelf or on a vibraplane.

## Acoustic Solid One To One

Distributor Acoustic Solid  
Kalkofenstraße 32  
72666 Neckartailfingen  
Telephone 07127 - 32718

**Conclusion:** Acoustic Solid presents a real top quality turntable at an extremely reasonable price, which can be fitted with virtually any tone arm. The sound experience is never determined by the turntable but only by the tone arm and pickup. This wonderful analogue machine receives an unconditional recommendation.

Helmut Rohrwild ■