



# Dark star

You might not have been expecting Cyrus to join the vinyl party, but **Ed Selley** thinks it makes a convincing argument for itself

**V**inyl's ongoing second wind has resulted in some unexpected developments in the last few years; the dramatic upswing in devices fitted with phono stages being perhaps the most notable. It has also prompted a massive increase in the number of companies with at least one turntable in their inventory. Some of these new arrivals have made vinyl spinners in the past and returned to the fold, but some (and some very good ones, it has to be said) have appeared from brands with no prior experience.

The latest offering from Cyrus is a perfect case in point. As a company, it dates back to a time where vinyl was a routine source, but never produced an in-house option (although, then sister brand Mission did make a fine tonearm). More recently, as well as a strong ongoing range of amps, it has delivered many excellent CD players while the digital board in its XR products is also exceptional. Its only nod towards vinyl has been some extremely good internal phono stages

and the peerless Phono Signature MM and MC stage (*HFC 408*) which is my favourite design under £3,000.

As might be expected, Cyrus has not developed every last bolt and fitting of the TTP itself. It has worked with a German company which has assisted with the bearing, motor and platter, and yet the result doesn't 'feel' like a rebadging exercise while specific elements of the design feel very Cyrus indeed. The most immediately apparent of these is around the back. As well as the input for the 24V power supply that comes with the turntable, you can also power it via Cyrus' own PSX-R2 (and like other devices that can do this, you will need to keep the original power supply connected as it acts as a speed regulator). Speed selection is via buttons on the front. Press the speed you want to start and the power button to stop again.

All internal power arrangements are Cyrus' own work and sit inside a dense plinth made from high grade aluminium. When combined with the

aluminium platter, the TTP weighs over 20kg unboxed. This mass-driven approach means the motor doesn't spin up terribly quickly, but it is impressively pitch stable once you do. Three small feet don't offer much in the way of additional isolation, but the density of the TTP makes it fairly impervious to the outside world.

For the tonearm, a Rega RB330 has been selected. You might argue that, compared with some similarly priced rivals, the Cyrus is under armed, but the RB330 does a fine job on other turntables at this price point. Our

## ▶ DETAILS

**PRODUCT**  
Cyrus TTP Turntable

**ORIGIN**  
UK

**TYPE**  
Belt-drive turntable

**WEIGHT**  
26kg

**DIMENSIONS**  
(WxHxD)  
430 x 98 x 376mm

**FEATURES**  
● 33 and 45rpm  
● Rega RB330 tonearm  
● Works with external Cyrus PSU

**DISTRIBUTOR**

Cyrus Audio

**WEBSITE**  
cyrusaudio.com

**It latches onto time signatures with the same precision as its stablemates**

review sample comes supplied with an Ortofon Quintet Black cartridge, but you'll have free choice over what you partner it with.

Not only does the TTP feel like a Cyrus product, it really looks like one too; no mean feat considering there are no predecessors to draw on and the turntable is by necessity, twice the width of the electronics. The TTP uses the company's 'phantom' black finish and details like the angled front panels have a strong visual identity. The only minor gripe is the absence of a dust cover, although it is possible to purchase one separately from your local Cyrus retailer.

## Sound quality

Whenever I try a turntable from a new arrival, there is a degree of trepidation as to whether it will embody the qualities of the more traditional products from the range. This applies with bells on for the Cyrus as the high-mass approach is often at odds with the speed and fluency of its electronics. It doesn't take very long to determine that the mass in use here doesn't really slow the performance down. This isn't an urgent-sounding device in that it never sounds relentless or wearing, but it is impressively fleet of foot.

Listen to the title track of Public Service Broadcasting's *This New Noise* and the TTP demonstrates this perfectly well. The staccato strings and high tempo percussion are delivered with a real sensation of drive and agility. It latches onto rhythms and time signatures with the same unerring precision as its more conventional stablemates regardless of the fact it weighs as much as the rest of a Cyrus system put together. There's perhaps more of feeling of flow than out-and-out urgency, but you'd certainly never call it slow.

This is helped by truly excellent low end. My standard test for this is the opening of *Act I* on Dead Can Dance's *Dionysus* and here the turntable excels. There is no given correlation between mass and bass – ask any Rega owner – but the TTP is a very potent performer. It's not a blunt instrument either. There's a useful level of fine detail to be had in the bass and this extends all the way up the frequency response. Even with smaller speakers, you can sense an impressive degree of low-end heft at work.

Where the Cyrus is slightly less proficient is the amount of space it creates around recordings. With larger scale material in particular, it never achieves quite the feeling of three dimensionality that some similarly priced rivals can. This is not always to



Sans cartridge the Cyrus is priced slightly higher than Rega's Planar 10, and in some key respects the latter has some advantages. The inclusion of a lid, the choice of factory-fitted carts and the fact its RB3000 arm is more serious than the RB330 on the Cyrus are all hard to ignore. And yet, the Cyrus still holds its own. The superb bass response and engaging energy to the presentation are able to match the Planar 10 and on a more practical level, it is far more resistant to external interference. This isn't as much of a one-sided fight as you might imagine.



its detriment, though. The snarling rock of Sheaf's *A Happy Medium* is delivered in a focused beam of power that's hugely enjoyable. Across a selection of rock and electronic material, I find myself enjoying this focus and punch.

With the supplied Ortofon in place, the tonality of the TTP is good, but the slightly hard edge that can define the Ortofon sound is present and it leaves records like Sheaf's effort sounding fractionally edgy, even playing through the considered neutrality of the Cyrus Phono Signature on hand. It would be wrong to describe this as a bright turntable or even a forward one, and there is a matter-of-factness to the sound that isn't necessarily the most cossetting experience – especially with less than perfect pressings. High-quality material does frequently sound extremely impressive, however. The piano in Nils Frahm's *Hammers* is a genuinely believable presence, with the scale and mechanical movements underpinning notes that have real

texture and decay. Switching the Quintet Black out for a Goldring Ethos (HFC 449) makes for a better balance for me – the Ethos sweeter sounding. This is reflected in the overall presentation, achieved with no loss of agility or impact. Some tests with a Vertere Sabre (HFC 503) moving-magnet cart also yield positive results and will allow you to connect directly to a Cyrus integrated amp.

## Conclusion

Given that you will have these options and more available when you purchased a Cyrus TTP Turntable, it's hard not to be rather impressed by this first effort from the company. While it is pragmatic about the number that will find homes outside of existing Cyrus owners, the qualities it offers are sufficient to ensure it more than competes at the asking price. This might be one of the more surprising arrivals in the field of vinyl replay, but it's a very good one ●

**The design is unmistakably from Cyrus**



## Hi-Fi Choice

### OUR VERDICT

- SOUND QUALITY**  
★★★★★ **LIKE:** Powerful, agile and engrossing sound; build; handsome looks
- VALUE FOR MONEY**  
★★★★★ **DISLIKE:** Limits to scale; care needed with cartridge matching; no lid
- BUILD QUALITY**  
★★★★★ **WE SAY:** An impressive arrival that has appeal beyond systems of the same make
- FEATURES**  
★★★★★

### OVERALL

