



Tellurium Q

Black II loudspeaker cable

SINCE IT WAS established about seven years ago, Tellurium Q has always focussed on tackling phase distortion in cables, which it considers to smear audio frequencies. The reasoning behind this, according to the company, is that all materials in the path of a signal will act as an electronic filter. This is an electrical network that alters the amplitude and/or phase characteristics of the signal with respect to frequency. Ideally, a filter will not add new frequencies to the input signal, nor will it change the component frequencies of that signal, but rather it will change the relative amplitudes of the various frequency components and/or their phase relationships. In order to address these issues, Tellurium Q employs special blends of materials for both the conductors and insulators in specific configurations to minimise phase distortion. Exactly how it does this, and what materials it uses is a closely guarded secret, but its endeavours have resulted in three families of cables, Blue, Black and Silver, offering increased performance as you progress across the family. Within each series, there are three sub-levels: Standard, Ultra and Diamond. Here, we're looking at the Standard grade of the middle cable of the range – the Black.

Black magic

The Black has been around for several years and the Black II is a newly released upgrade. I'm also supplied with a set of the older Black cables for comparison. Like its predecessor, the Black II is well made, slim and flat, fitted with Z plugs finished with coloured heatshrink sleeving. Arrows are printed on the amplifier end to indicate directionality. As the cable is only 13mm wide and flexible, it is very easy to route around the edges or indeed underneath a carpet.

I connect the original Black cable to my 300B valve Class A monoblocks



and my transmission line speakers. It offers excellent imaging with super clarity. On the down side, it can come across as a little over analytical at times, especially with jazz. This is particularly noticeable with Jacques Loussier's *Caravelle*, a fast-paced piece played by Pierre Gossez and his Jazz Quintet. When I switch to the Black II, the presentation becomes fuller and more rounded. The bass is also much fuller and yet more controlled than with the older cable.

The strings in Mozart's *Violin Concerto in G major* played by Alan Loveday and the Academy of St Martin In The Fields display excellent texture and presence with the Black II. The overall performance is sprightly, yet refined and classy.

GoGo Penguin's *Smarra* has plenty of clout and punch and a really deep bass line, which is really extended and beautifully controlled. When I temporarily switch back to the older cable, the punch seems more blurred. With the Black II reinstated, it tightens up again and the entire drum sequence appears to stand out more.

With David Bowie's *The Next Day*, vocals are really clear and not overpowered by the pounding drums or guitar accompaniments. His voice is reproduced authentically and the bass is extremely well controlled. This is quite a loud recording, yet the Black II takes it in its stride and all the elements that make up the music remain clearly defined rather than becoming a muddled wall of sound.

Baroque and roll

Finally, I turn to some baroque music and a delicate recording of harpsichord pieces by Rameau played by George Malcolm really shows off the cable's sophisticated handling of this instrument. All the pedal stops are clearly evident and the harpsichord has real presence in the room – it doesn't just come from a single point between my speakers, but has a defined breadth and depth.

For the extra £3 per metre, the Black II is a no-brainer compared with the original cable. It is really superb, whatever it is made of. **NR**

DETAILS

PRICE
£54 per metre
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OUR VERDICT

