

England's glory:
The brilliant career
of PJ Harvey

Into the groove:
Goldring's Eroica HX
moving-coil cartridge



Hi-Fi Choice

PASSION FOR SOUND

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AMP CHAMPS!

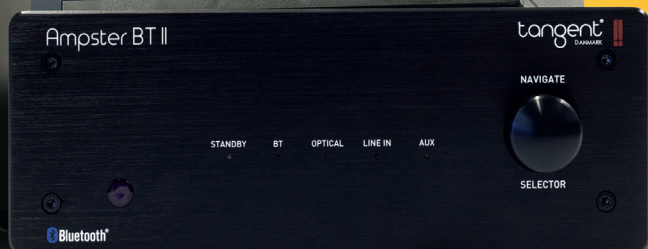
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DETAILS

PRODUCT
Goldring Eroica HX

ORIGIN
UK

TYPE
High-output moving-coil cartridge

WEIGHT
6.6g (including fixings)

FEATURES
● Gyger II stylus
● Pure iron cross shaped armature
● 2.5mV output

DISTRIBUTOR
Armour Home Electronics

WEBSITE
goldring.co.uk

The Eroica HX uses this separation to create a spacious and convincing soundstage with everything I test on it, helped by its ability to grow and shrink this perception of space to suit the scale of the music. Tonality is good; Regina Spektor's piano on *Live In London* is weighty and believable with excellent tonal richness and decay. She sounds vivid and is very much the focus of attention. Without ever coming across as 'fast', the Eroica HX unfailingly handles every time signature without sounding languid or confused. There is an overall control and flow to it that does justice to even complex music.

Not everything is so accomplished, however. Though bass is controlled and well integrated with commendable definition, it's not an especially seismic performer with some of our test phono stages. I always prefer a smaller amount of well-controlled bass than wild slabs of low end, but some may find it a little on the lean side. I also

This is not a cartridge that goes in for a shock-and-awe style presentation

find it's quite sensitive to surface noise. This improves after a few hours of running-in but a Cambridge Audio Alva MC (HFC 452) that's on hand is quieter across the same playing surfaces. Compared with the nude elliptical stylus in the Alva, though, the Goldring effortlessly finds additional information from the majority of records tested.

Conclusion

The result is a cartridge that is a little fiddly to fit and prefers clean records, but is a tremendously capable all-rounder. The Goldring does a fine job of delivering on the moving-coil listening experience into a moving-magnet phono stage, and it does so at an extremely competitive price ●

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OUR VERDICT

- SOUND QUALITY** ★★★★★ **LIKE:** Well-balanced performance; well made; easy to accommodate
- VALUE FOR MONEY** ★★★★★ **DISLIKE:** Slightly lean low end; surface noise; a little fiddly to fit
- BUILD QUALITY** ★★★★★ **WESAY:** A talented and well thought-out high-output MC cart that gets a great deal right
- FEATURES** ★★★★★

OVERALL



Hero status

Goldring augments its cartridge range with a keenly priced high-output moving coil.

Ed Selley takes it for a spin

Usefully comprehensive, Goldring's cartridge range has been fairly long lived, and new arrivals are always worthy of note. The HX replaces the H as the only high-output moving coil in Goldring's range and is part of the more affordable Eroica (Italian for hero) family below the Elite and Ethos lines.

The HX looks similar to the outgoing H and has a body made from POCAN. Goldring says this is robust and has no sonic signature. As it is fairly light, the 6.6g weight (including fixings) should be easy enough to accommodate in most arms. The body is unthreaded though, meaning that a nut and bolt needs to be used to fit it – making it more fiddly than threaded rivals. The audio and ground pins are inverted in the traditional Goldring manner, which might be an issue for very short tags.

Internally, the HX has a new pure iron armature that is cross shaped. The iron acts as a permeable path for unwanted magnetic currents and the cross shape effectively separates the left and right channels. By packing in a higher number of windings made from extremely fine copper wire, Goldring ensures the Eroica HX can work into a standard moving-magnet input. While it does well when used in this manner, it's only fair to point out that the 2.5mV output is lower than a more traditional moving-magnet type and I find a 50dB setting works better into our test system.

The HX uses a Gyger II-type diamond, which is a fairly unusual fitment at this price. This offers great potential, but is

contingent on setup – alignment in particular – being carefully set.

Sound quality

Installed on an AVID Ingenium and SME M2-9 arm (HFC 379), the first few hours using a brand new sample are a little hard-edged and prone to brightness. After ten to 15 hours, though, it begins to demonstrate more of what it can do. In the grand tradition of the company, this is not a cartridge that goes in for a shock-and-awe style presentation. Instead, it presents a balanced and well-judged take on Amadou & Mariam's *La Confusion*. The channel separation is genuinely effective, with the opening to *Mokou Mokou* happening exclusively in the left channel precisely as it should.

Fairly light at 6.6g, the Eroica HX should work with most arms

