

AVI for LP

AVI has updated its highly regarded S2000MP preamplifier (reviewed in June 1991 and again March 1993) to include an optional phono equalization and gain stage which is compatible with both moving-magnet and moving-coil pickup cartridges. The revision has also brought improvements in the existing, already highly regarded line-level stages. The phono stage has exceptional headroom and thus avoids the problems of instability and "latching-up" which apparently beset rather too many integrated circuit phono stages when handling transient pops and clicks. An additional benefit is that the subjective level of surface noise is decreased. A separately screened power supply is used whose exceptionally low

source impedance renders the circuit essentially load-independent. As before, the preamplifier offers full remote control of input and volume (via a motorized potentiometer). There are six line-level inputs one of which is converted to phono when the optional board is included. The new S2000MP can be upgraded to S2000MP+P status at a later date. As before all signal switching is handled by encapsulated reed relays under micro-processor control. Gain switching for MM/MC operation is also handled in this fashion. The S2000MP costs £799.00 including handset and the S2000MP+P £999.00. AV International Limited, Unit F3C3, Bath Road Trading Estate, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 3QF. Telephone 01453 765682.

Sugden Optima

Two new integrated amplifiers have been launched by J.E. Sugden. Optima 80 (£325.00) and 140 (£475.00) are 40 and 70 watts per channel designs respectively, each with five line-level inputs labelled CD, Aux 1 and 2, Tuner and Tape. The input section is a passive circuit and is DC coupled to the high gain power stage. Minimalist in form and function, the amplifiers have no tone or balance controls and no filters. An "R" version of each amplifier (£399.00 and £549.00 respectively) provides remote control of volume. The system handset (£29.99) is also coded for the Optima CD player, preamplifier and tuner. J.E. Sugden & Company Limited, Valley Works, Station Lane, Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire WF16 0NF. Telephone 01924 410069.

Meridian surround

Meridian Audio has added a new analogue surround sound controller to its highly regarded 500 range. The 541 is intended for use in analogue based systems and functions as a full system control preamplifier providing six analogue inputs (with an optional MM or MC phono equalization module), two analogue tape record outputs, left right, centre subwoofer and surround left and right outputs, plus three composite

video inputs, one composite video output to monitor, one composite video tape loop and three SCART connectors carrying composite and RGB video plus audio for LaserDisc, VCR and TV. The six analogue inputs have user-adjustable sensitivity and re-namable legends on the 12-character dot matrix display.

The 541 has signal processing circuitry to provide normal stereo, Meridian's own *Music* surround mode, *Trifield* (the effective method of integrating a centre channel for wide listening area stereo), *Mono* (for old movies), *Pro*

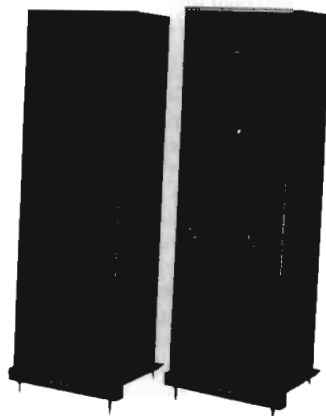
Logic (using the latest Dolby Pro Logic integrated circuit) and *Cinema*, Meridian's enhanced version of Pro Logic. The unit offers 16 user preset combinations and offers an on-screen

display of control, set-up and calibration settings. The 541 costs £950.00. Meridian Audio Limited at its new premises at Stonehill, Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE18 7ED. Telephone 01480 52144.

Heybrook Heylo

New from Heybrook Hi-Fi is the Heylo loudspeaker. Described as a mini floor-stander this is a two-way design using a 165mm bass/midrange drive unit in conjunction with a 25mm soft dome tweeter. The bass/midrange unit employs a non-resonant polymer chassis and has a high linearity low-loss suspension system, with a double magnet arrangement to provide partial shielding enabling its use near to television or monitor screens. Reflex loading is used via twin ports on the baffle and the cabinet is finished in a rosewood coloured wood veneer. The cabinet edges are rounded to minimize diffraction and internal damping is provided by a judicious mixture of bitumen pads, acoustic fibre and long-haired wool. The crossover is hardwired and is bi-wireable. Nominal impedance is 8 ohms and the sensitivity 89dB for one watt at one

metre. The Heylo is 710mm tall and is intended for positioning close to the rear wall but away from the side walls. It costs £389.00 per pair. Heybrook Hi-Fi Limited, Estover Industrial Estate, Plymouth PL6 7PL. Telephone 01752 731313.



Arnold Sugden

Arnold Sugden, founder and managing director of A.R. Sugden and Company (Engineers) Limited has died at the age of 83. Perhaps most famous for its Connoisseur BD1 and BD2 belt-driven turntables, many of which remain in regular use today, A.R. Sugden also made amplifiers and disc cutting equipment (most notably the Connoisseur Varigroove Recording Unit) and Arnold Sugden himself was involved in a wide range of development work from ceramic cartridges and pickup arms to stereo amplifiers, microphones and loudspeakers.

Older readers may remember the occasion at the annual exhibition of the British Sound Recording Association at the Waldorf Hotel, London in May 1956, when Sugden demonstrated stereo reproduction from a single groove disc (the same exhibition also saw the introduction of the original Quad electrostatic loudspeaker). Three years earlier Sugden had made his first moving-coil disc cutting head and had decided on a vertical/lateral groove arrange-

ment whereby one channel was represented by horizontal modulation and the other by vertical. In the event the industry soon adopted Alan Blumlein's 1931 proposal for the 45/45° system but at the time Sugden's set-up provoked keen interest from record companies and manufacturers alike.

Sugden was a practical, down-to-earth engineer with a passion for music. He helped and influenced a good many figures in the audio industry in the 1950s and '60s and was widely admired for the gentlemanly good manners that he brought to all of his dealings. He sold his company upon his retirement and today Connoisseur products are manufactured and serviced by Technical & General, PO Box 53, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2BY. Telephone 01892 654534. There is, by the way, no connection between A.R. Sugden and the other Yorkshire based hi-fi manufacturer, J.E. Sugden & Company Limited of Heckmondwike, which of course is still very much in business.

Audio diary

The Hi-Fi Show September 7th-10th Ramada Hotel, Heathrow (Thursday 7th and Friday 8th trade only)

Live '95 September 19th-24th Earl's Court, London

Sound & Vision London September 21st-24th Cumberland Hotel, Marble Arch, London