

# Voodoo... the exotic art of resonance control

SanJ.

**V**oodoo Board is the brainchild of Thomas Chua, a sound engineer who designs consoles and equipment for recording studios. Equipment isolation for studio consoles has an effect on their performance. He and a friend thought of it over a beer to solve that nagging problem of how to isolate equipment from the surroundings, primarily for professional use. It dawned to them on the use of small lead shots. The device has to be effective over a wide frequency spectrum.

What turned out was a relatively simple but heavy platform weighing in some 18kgs. it is sized to fit standard sized studio equipment like a Technics SL1200 turntable (measures at 48.5 cm (W) x 5.1 cm (H) x 40.3cm (D)) and not to be obtrusive. And finally, it looks pleasant enough not to be shunned (hence, the wooden wrap-around sandwiched by matt-black boards). They decided upon the name since Black Magic may turn some people off, so Voodoo was it - a bit exotic and to allow a sense of mystery to surround it (and no, no vestal virgins were sacrificed each full moon for every board made).

The layman would still think it a kind of magic.

There are roughly 4.5 million tiny steel ball bearings in the tiny compartments throughout the board that can be heard if you are strong enough to shake it (I did out of curiosity, ouch!). According to their literature, if you are able to count all of it

## Quote....

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and they total less than that, give or take 10,000, you will get a free board and a free membership to a dating agency. Hmm, nice offer (duh!). There are a myriad of compartments in various shapes and sizes all filled to exacting specifications with ball bearings. What these little buggers do is to vibrate and hit each other when excited by and external source like vibrations from the speakers or the floor when you walk. They will hit each other and transfer energy and at the same time be converted from kinetic energy to heat. The

seemingly random movements (like electrons when excited) will continue dissipating the vibrations to other ball bearings and infinitum, effectively "damping out" the vibrations. At the same time, it would also play on the equipment's resonance by absorbing and sort of "cancel" it out, giving a cleaner and more detailed presentation. However, all these occur at the molecular level and don't expect to hear any wave-like sound coming from the board. True or not, it is in the hearing. If you still don't get it, think of it as a huge heat-sink, like the ones your amplifiers, instead of heat, it draws vibration.

I set it up under my KR52B single ended amplifier first as I could not fit both my SV811-10 SE monoblocks onto it, and it was the easiest. My turntable was under upgrading, so scratch that. My trusty Sony CDP-X3000 (relatively untouched electronically). The voodoo board should work well given that tubes are known to be microphonic. Speakers were Loth-X's Ion 2s. I punched in "Jazz at the Pawnshop"....

On the first note, my jaw dropped! It was impressive. Let me just say this, I got more background information from that album. The crowd had more

presence. The alto saxophone was more focused and image was tighter. The hi-hats had more shimmer and the decay was slightly longer. It was as if a thin veil of noise was lifted in front of me. Next up was Buena Vista Social Club's track 5. The imaging was still good but this time it was tighter, and the space around each instrument was more defined. Next up was something with bass. I used Narada's Bernardo Rubaja's "New Land" album. Track 5 (seems to be my favourite number) had a steel guitar playing the bass lines and it was fast and transients were good. I was supposed to pick up

on the bass but the spatial presentation drew me away. Spacious. It was as if I had an additional octave of bass boost coming from somewhere. But the bottom line is in the rich and expansive musical information never experienced prior to Voodoo.

Yes, I have nothing but praise for this Voodoo board because it lives up to its promise. If your setup have better transparency than mine do, the results may be even more obvious. You should have a well-designed and finished piece of equipment support. It's good value for money because there are ways to spend more money

and get less results. When the upgrade bug bites, the Voodoo board will serve the next component just as faithfully. The Voodoo board is highly praised among the notoriously fickle Japanese. It won a "No. 1 Accessory" by the Japanese High-End magazine. It even created a niche market all by itself via only word of mouth. So you see, this thing has got street-cred. Now I will need one for my CD player, one for my forthcoming DAC, one for my 300B preamp.....

