

Van den Hul D - 102 III HYBRID



Like SonicLink (and Audio Note, Isoda and a few others), van den Hul has been instrumental in investigating conductors apart from the usual copper and silver. The whole subject of conductor material is still wide open to debate, but van den Hul felt that there was a common and undesirable signature to all metal-conductor cables, so set about constructing cables with carbon-fibre conductors instead.

A cable with everything:
good bass, treble, imaging
and naturalness.

The D - 102 III HYBRID is one of these; although it is, in fact, a hybrid, mixing carbon fibre with more conventional silver-plated copper. Construction is pseudo-balanced, with Teflon insulation, and collet-clamp phono plugs that are fitted with a rubber sleeve under the collet, to ensure secure cable clamping. Capacitance, dielectric loss and microphony are all low.

This was, by a small but decisive margin, the best cable in the test - a result all the more creditable given this wire's relatively modest cost. Whether due to the carbon fibre or not, its sound was solid, clear and effortless at all times, with basically nothing to criticise. Bass was extended as far as any and fully resonant, but at the same time under control. Midrange was uncoloured and natural, helping voices sound live and unprocessed, while treble was sweet and detailed, conveying alike the delicate tinkle of small percussion instruments and the rasp of muted trumpet. In fact, this is pretty much as good as cable gets, and is therefore a Best Buy.

RB

Hifi Choice, issue 176

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