

# Mighty Atlas

**HI-FI WORLD**

**A high-end system deserves a high-end interconnect – and the new Mavros Ultra from Atlas Cables certainly fits the bill, says Jon Myles.**

**T**here are still a number of people who are serial sceptics when it comes to the difference interconnects can make to a system. Suffice to say, I'm not one of them.

After all, the greatest distance any audio signal generally has to travel in a system is between source/amplifier and amplifier/loudspeaker.

So if you're spending many hundreds or thousands of pounds on electronics and transducers you owe it to yourself to ensure the wires connecting them are up to the job. Construction, materials and even the design of the plugs all play crucial parts.

In the case of the new Mavros Ultra interconnect from Scottish-based Atlas Cables this means technology trickled down from its flagship Asimi Ultra – which costs a not inconsiderable £2750 for a 1 metre pair. By comparison the Mavros Ultra comes in at £875 for an equivalent length.

For that price you get a beautifully constructed and finished cable that is both sturdy yet flexible enough to fit round awkward corners.

Internally the copper conductor wires are drawn using the Ohno Continuous Casting (OCC) process which is said to minimise grain boundaries within the metal. Identical signal and return cores are made up of six bundles of 12 OCC strands surrounding a thicker central wire. After application of the dielectric insulation the conductors are covered by a continuous Copper-Mylar electrostatic screen and a copper close weave shielding braid to minimise RF interference, while the outer sheath is made from hard-wearing PVC clad in black woven Polyester.

The new Ultra solder-free phono plugs (XLR are also available) offer a 57 per cent mass reduction over

their predecessors and employ an internal Teflon non-conductive sleeve matched to the dielectric properties of the cable. They are exquisitely machined and polished, offering a firm grip on the terminals.

Like other Atlas cables the Mavros Ultra is directional – indicated by small arrows on the outer sheath.

## SOUND QUALITY

Doing duties between an Oppo BDP-105D Blu-ray/CD player and a Sugden Sapphire FBA-800 Class A amplifier the Mavros Ultras immediately came over as neutral, detailed and smooth.

They do a great job of lifting the grain and smear that some cheaper interconnects can bring to a system – as though they are allowing extra air and space into the presentation.

On Miles Davis' classic 'Kind Of Blue' instruments took on an added sense of realism and the music seemed to flow a little more naturally. Percussion was firm and detailed, but most impressive was the way Miles' trumpet floated in front of me, but when John Coltrane's saxophone cut in it not only sounded sweet, but soared just a little bit higher in the soundstage.

Vocals were a particular delight through the Mavros interconnects. On London Afrobeat Collective's new 'Food Chain' CD, Funke Adeleke sounded suitably soulful, helped by the fact that the complex backing tracks were so clearly delineated I could follow each instrument with ease.

The Mavros was remarkably speedy sounding, subjectively faster than other cables of a similar price. The searing guitar line on The Pixies'



'Debaser' simply rocketed along, leading edges of notes have dazzling transient attack.

It did feel as though these interconnects were throwing an open window onto the system, allowing characteristics of partnering equipment to shine through. For example, swapping the Sugden for a Naim Supernait 2 the icy clarity of the former was lost but the Ultras highlighted the slightly darker but more propulsive properties of the latter.

Consequently, be careful of the Ultras if you have doubts about any element of your system as they won't flatter below-par components. Instead they'll more than likely let you know exactly what's wrong – although that really is what you'd expect from an interconnect costing more than £800.

So if you have a high-end system that you're looking to take to the next level, the Atlas Mavros Ultra could just be the thing for you.

## CONCLUSION

The Mavros Ultra has an extremely natural and organic sound that brings zest to all forms of music without adding excess brightness. Transparent enough to let you hear right into the densest mixes without ever losing the rhythm or tempo of the music.

### ATLAS MAVROS ULTRA £875 1 METRE LENGTH



**OUTSTANDING - amongst the best**

#### VERDICT

A fabulously built interconnect that is clean, smooth and detailed, with exceptional bass grip. Capable of bringing new levels of resolution to even the most expensive systems.

#### FOR

- bass grip
- detail
- smooth mid and treble construction

#### AGAINST

- not cheap
- needs a good system

Atlas Cables  
+44 (0) 1563 572666  
www.atlascables.com