

Tellurium Q Statement II cables

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wish I could tell you what has changed between Tellurium Q's Mk I and Mk II versions of its Statement cable. They have audibly changed and changed for the better and the reasons for the change are... a complete mystery. What made Statement so good, and the agent of change between new and old are a closely guarded secret. I've been told it's because the company made a pact with the Dwarf Lords of Somerton and you don't want to mess with them.

What I can tell you is Geoff Merrigan of Tellurium Q won't say anything about the materials or construction of any Tellurium Q cable as he feels those aspects of design get in the way of the discussion about the cable's sonic performance. He's got a point... we're using cables on the basis of their sonic properties, not because they use the right grade of prefabricated aluminite (those who don't know about 'prefabricated aluminite' are recommended to look up the 'turbo encabulator' on Wikipedia... it's a spoof

engineering concept that has been running since the mid 1940s... and it's proof that audio reviewers aren't the only experts in technobabble).

Not a filter

The other thing Merrigan will say about Tellurium Q is that the whole line has been consciously developed to not act as a filter. While this sounds obvious, in fact the reverse is more often the case. We almost unconsciously try to compensate for peaks and troughs in the performance of a system by using >>



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» the least circuitous route; the cable. Choosing a cable that is 'a bit warm' and bass heavy can help balance out a stark and bass-light system. In theory. In reality, it's not so simple; you choose a loudspeaker cable that filters one set of frequencies, and the other become more noticeable. It's like balancing a recipe. Perhaps you used too much salt, so you compensate by adding sugar, then adding something bitter to mask the sweetness, then you cut it with acidic food to tame the bitterness and that ends up being amplified by the salt, like the lime in a margarita.

If Tellurium Q makes cables that are designed not to act as filters, the problem then becomes letting in too much information relative to the cost of the other products in the chain. You want to bring out the musical

information without exposing the weaknesses of the equipment. So, although all Tellurium Q cables are not designed as filters, some are more 'filter-y' than others. Of course, when you get to Statement II, the implication is the cable is going into a system of such poise and resolving power that you need the least filter-y, non-filter, unfiltering cable it's possible to make. This happens only because Geoff Merrigan spends thousands of hours listening to different conductor materials, different dielectrics, and even different solders. And he has produced what many have found to be extremely good cables as a result.

With all this listening under his belt, perhaps it's no surprise that he has little time for those who haven't done that listening but still think silver cable

sounds shiny just because it's silver... and red cars go faster!

Old v New

To test Statement II we asked for both original Statement and Statement II in as many different cable formats as we could muster. In essence, we got two looms of top Tellurium Q.

The first thing to note about both of them is they are phenomenally well made, in a 'belt and braces' approach. They are nicely packaged too, but in a functional manner, rather than something that looks like it should be in a pale blue Tiffany box. As to the cables, the black braid, the well made connectors... everything screams 'understated elegance'. There's also a reassuring chunkiness about the cables; but not anacondas of sound. »



That insight alone is worth its weight in whatever metal is inside Tellurium Q Statement II.

» It was time for listening, and in the case of OG Statement, also time for a spot of cross-referencing against the original review in Issue 166. In that review, we praised the Tellurium Q Statement for having no sound of its own, but the problem now is Statement has even less of a sound of its own.

Merrigan might be doing his brand no favours in saying this but he seems to consider each cable up the Tellurium Q line to be 'less worst' than the last. And Statement II is the least worst of all of them.

In truth, a big part of the problem with describing just how good TQ is (aside from the whole 'no tech talk' bit) comes down to the plasticity of English. The same terms can be read in a positive or negative light (for example, 'tasteless' has different connotations depending on whether you are discussing a medicine, a curry, or a television programme). So, when describing Statement II as saying that it has a complete absence of tonality, timbre or coloration, that should be read as intensely positive things, and not as describing something ultimately bland and insipid.

I encountered the problem trying to frame Statement in context of other cables. I now have the problem of trying to frame Statement II in the context of Statement. But this highlights the great difference about Tellurium Q Statement II; when you put it up against other cables – including its predecessor – the other cables sound like they are imposing their own characteristics on the sound.

All of which means, if I were to sum up Statement II in a word, it would be 'colourless'. And that hits the problem of dual meanings in English. People ascribe 'colourless' to mean 'pale' or 'insipid', but in the case of cables, we

should be thinking 'colourless' in the same positive way we would if we were ascribing the term to potable water. Let's face it, you want the water you drink to be colourless.

I could torture that analogy and start comparing Statement II to mountain springs and crisp, clear air, and in some ways that analogy holds. The absence of character that Statement II has is like a breath of fresh air. But it ends there; there's none of the coolness and coldness to Tellurium Q's sound. Just honesty.

To thine own amp be true

If the great benefit to Statement II is its absence of character imposed on the audio system, then that does come with a fairly obvious caveat; your system needs to be able to cope with that level of clarity in its cables. Tellurium Q Statement II can expose weaknesses in your system. It's like putting your kit under a microscope; that slight soundstage foreshortening that comes from not the best mix of preamp and power amplifier is easy to hear. But when you do have all your audio ducks in a row, that's when Statement II shows you why a cable this transparent is so useful.

Everything that is good about your system is left alone to shine. A system that resolves excellent inner detail gives even greater insight. It's not simply about vocal articulation, Statement II lets you drill down to the microphone choices made by the engineer. With Statement II – and a system designed to be suitably neutral – in a matter of seconds, you'll hear which of the current crop of singers is talented, and which ones have been subtly tweaked by a bit of judicious compression in the high frequencies. And that's a real shock!

The worry with a cable this revealing is it sows FUD ('fear, uncertainty, doubt') in the listener, but curiously that doesn't seem to be the case. The revealing quality of the cable doesn't come with a harsh edge. It shows what your system does, but it doesn't push you to change that system. To invite Statement II into your system isn't the start of a complete system re-design.

Having both old and new Statement in your system invites a final question; should you change. If you have Statement, should you buy Statement II. Normally, this is time for some fence-sitting, but here it's an emphatic 'yes!' Tellurium Q Statement was a revelation, prising open the sound of your music in a way you might not have thought possible before. And if you liked what Statement did, Statement II does it better. There's even less of the cable on show, and even more deep insight into the goings on inside your system and the studio! That insight alone is worth its weight in whatever metal is inside Tellurium Q Statement II. +

Prices and contact details

Type RCA Interconnect

Price £4,320, \$5,200/1m pair

Type XLR Interconnect

Price £4,740, \$5,750/1m pair

Type Power cord

Price £4,740, \$5,750/1.5m cable

Type Loudspeaker with silver plated
4mm locking terminations

Length 5m pair

Price £1,740, \$2,110 /mono metre

Manufacturer Tellurium Q

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UK distributor Kog Audio

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