

Then came the Stealth Varidig Sextet! XLR

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For years I have been searching for a digital cable that produces music and emotion instead of "High-End/HiFi" sound. This search led to many disappointments and sometimes the feeling "yes, I've found that needle in the digital haystack". Unfortunately, this feeling did not last very long. It always ended with the, hard to describe, state of mind telling you that there's something fundamentally missing, usually emotion.

I've tried/tested a lot of digilinks, from cheap (custom made) to very expensive and exotic. To name a few:

- MIT Proline Reference
- Siltech Golden Ridge G5 and G6
- Audio Note An-Vx and AN-Vz
- Cardas
- Elco-Audio UDC-A
- Z-Squared
- Siltech HF9
- Apogee Wide Eye
- Nordost Valhalla
- Purist Audio Design Venustas
- Harmonic Technology Cyberlink Platinum
- Harmonic Technology Cyberlight Datalink, etc, etc

Of all the above mentioned cables the PAD Venustas was, in my setup, the musically most involving cable, but it was too laid-back.

Then came the opportunity to test the Stealth Varidig Sextet and this cable eventually turned out too to be that "wanted needle in the digital haystack"!!

Why and what's the difference with all the above mentioned cables??

Let me start with mentioning the negative aspects of the Sextet:

- Very, very expensive – certainly in the XLR version, which I need. In the country where I live 1 meter XLR goes for €3680, e.g. \$4465!!!
- The, at least in my setup, extreme long breaking-in period (more than 250 hours)
- The system has to be ready for this cable, e.g. when something is wrong in the system, the Sextet will let you hear that immediately
- Last but not least: The listener has to be ready for this cable, because the musical achievements are totally different from what you're used to!!

What actually happened after inserting the Sextet into my system? (For a description of my system, have a look at: Audiogon – Virtual Systems – Category All out Assault – Kuzibri's Reference System)

The entrance of the Sextet was overwhelming: huge, deep, wide and high soundstage. Thundering bass, sizzling highs, etc, etc. Alas, this disappeared after a day or two. The Sextet then sounded thin, edgy, bass was undefined and the soundstage was small. I was confused and upset by this sudden change and wondered why this cable had to cost that much, but decided to "stick by the rules of Serguei", e.g. let the cable get accustomed to your system and do not judge within, at least, 14 days. I pestered my Forsell transport by letting him play 10 hours a day (which he doesn't like!), so I would, IMHO, be able to give a fair judgement after these 14 days about the Sextet.

Were the results after 14 days, e.g. 140 hours, of playing satisfying? Partially!! The soundstage became a tiny bit deeper and wider, the highs were still a bit edgy and the bass was still undefined and "boomy"!! But, there was also a slight, but not to be denied, change in the musicality of the system that made me decide to give this cable another 100 hours to break in. After 250 hours the Sextet began to show what it is capable of. Slowly, but decisively, it sounded better and better. Bass became more defined, fast and dynamic, without being boomy – highs were of an absolute clarity without being edgy and amidst were engaging with emotion.

One might ask/wonder what the real value of this Sextet is, because you can find these "raving" statements everywhere on the Internet about virtually all digital cables!

Yet, there are several musical achievements of this Sextet that no other digital cable possesses!

These are:

- Absolute realism: a trumpet sounds as a trumpet; you cannot swap a clarinet for a soprano sax, etc
- Absolute neutral sound: all frequency regions are equally presented. No emphasis on the bass, midrange or highs.

This is the perfect example of the, earlier made, statement - Is the listener ready for the Sextet?. Sometimes you think that the Sextet has less emotion in comparison to whatever other cable, but then suddenly you realize that the other cable "over-emphasises" the mid-region, leading to a more "emotional" sound. The Sextet does not add anything and does not hide anything!

• The most impressive thing about the Sextet is that it is able to let your system completely disappear from your listening room. I've had the frightening experience of "seeing my system wandering out of my listening room piece by piece and not being present anymore in this room". The only thing that was left in the room was the musicians. I could trace them, touch them and even could judge their heights!! I really had Diana Krall playing the piano in my room.

Conclusion:

Serguei, you have built the best digital cable on earth at this moment, at least IMO!! Congrats!!

Best regards,

Kuzibri, the Netherlands