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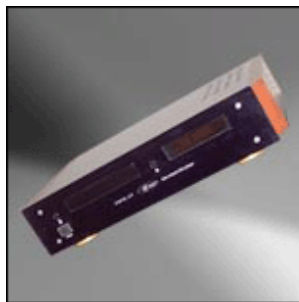
AUDIO REVIEWS

sixmoons.com

SEPTEMBER 2005

LECTOR

CDP 0.6T



Reviewer: David Abramson

Digital source: Rega Jupiter 2000

Preamplifiers: n/a

Integrated amplifiers: Unison Research Unico; Unison Research Unico SE PartsconneXion Level 2 modified [on review]

Amplifiers: n/a

Speakers: Audio Physic Virgo, Totem Model One, Totem Arro

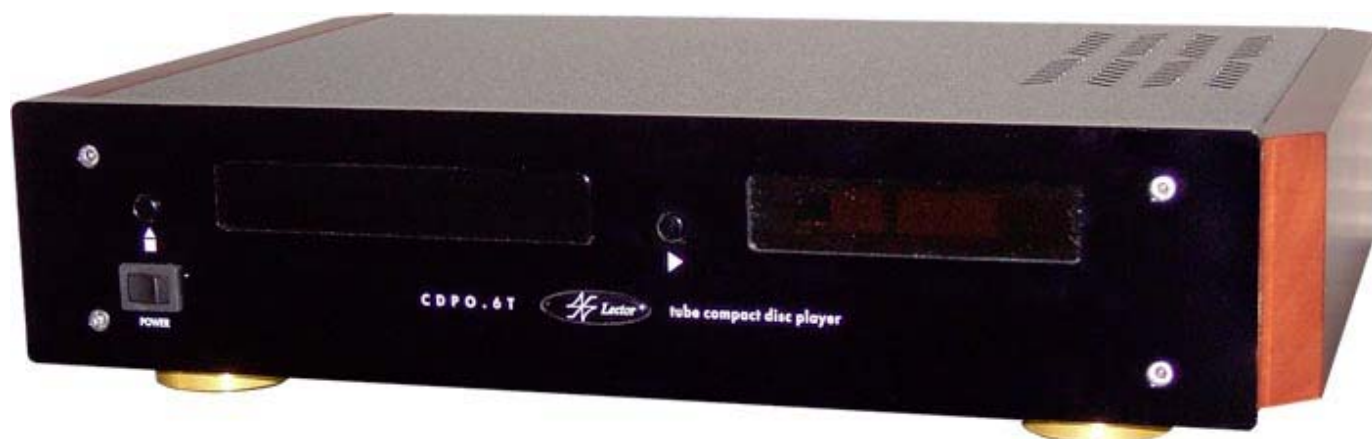
Cables: Argent Audio Pursang; Ensemble Megaflex FSF; TG Audio HSR; Home Depot 6-gauge speaker cable

Stands: Sound Organization

Room Treatment: Eighth Nerve

Room size: 16.5' L x 14.5' W x 9' H

Review component retail: \$1,950



Redneck Realization

Every now and again, audiophiles have a chance encounter with the tooth and claw of cold steel reality. Take today for instance. I was minding my own business down at the UPS store. Some guy behind me in line, eyeing the garden-hose speaker cables coiled around my right hand, had the audacity to ask me, "hey - what do *those* go to?" The man had a deep Southern drawl. Had this been the sixties (the *eighteen* sixties, that is), this die-hard Northerner would have up and shot him dead for asking a question like that.

"They're speaker cables," I said instead and lamely added, "pricey ones". Well, this uncalled-for justification was a mistake and promptly countered by a deeply drawled "how much are they?" Not wanting to show fear (non-audiophiles can smell it), I deadpanned back "1400 dollars the pair" in my own opposing Northern drawl. "What's so special about 'em?" he needed to know. Now I was stuck. Should I tell him about the effortless musicality? The fast and pitch-accurate bass they conveyed? The huge soundstage? No. I'd tell 'im about the veils that were lifted. And PraT. He'd never live through it to ask another God-fearing Yank a dumb question like that!

Well, I was going to say all that stuff but what actually came out of my mouth was simply "they're from Switzerland". Damn. He shot me a scornful look and walked off with a quizzical, cockeyed grimace into the blessedly temperate 99-degree noonday sun.



And then it hit me. *Realization*. It had hit me before but not hard enough. This time it struck me to the core. Nobody knows or gives an earthly shit about this hobby except us. And much like the *classical* music section (read: Celine Dione and Josh Groban) in Sam Goody, we are a small and dwindling segment.

And then it hit me again. We don't need real-people reality - we've got our own. Let the non-audiophile *muggles* have their Aiwas and Panasonics and Technics. Meanwhile, we wizards and wizettes know a land beyond theirs, one with pricey Swiss wiring touched by the radiant warmth of a KT-88 on a chill winter's day. One with the Lector CDP 0.6T CD player...

HP's Golden Ear Awards

THE SUPER MAGGIE MULTICHANNEL SYSTEM
\$17,365 (w/10 subwoofers)
www.magnepan.com (See review)

THE AIR BASIS EXCLUSIVE PHONO STAGE
\$5950
www.airstudio.com/ast.html
(See review)

THE VII SUPER SCOUTMASTER PLAYBACK DECK
\$5000
www.xpindustries.com (See review)

THE NORDOST VALHALLA AC CABLES
\$2745/two meters
www.nordost.com

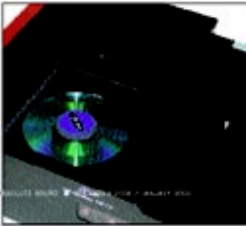


THE LECTOR CDP-715 COMPACT DISC PLAYER
\$3950
www.docet-lector.com

I know of no other regular compact disc player that exceeds the perform-

Nordost recently introduced its own line of power line connecting cables, which were much awaited by the cognoscenti, its hushed expectation. These are three models, the Shiva and the Valhalla and the all-out statement attempt, the Valhalla (aka: the model name of the best Nordost interconnect and speaker cables, and expensive enough to pay for a "pre-owned" Mercedes). I didn't find the Shiva much out of the ordinary, and the Valhalla (what's with the Indian names here?) on a happy par with the outstanding Kimber Ballad. It's the Valhalla that has the magic (though you don't need too many of these) in reducing AC line garbage almost to the level achieved by battery-operated electronics, but without dynamic compression or frequency-limiting side effects.

ance of this two-piece (and quite way-looking) input unit from India. It's the first that provides an analog-like sound for CDs. Whether or not this is achieved with some egg-crypsid of the frequency and dynamic spectra (as I suspect, the real result, in this case, is what counts. It undeniably tracks the sound of the absolute, a feat that puts it in a class by itself). And the price is supremely right (well, it was, before it just went up \$7000, although the demand is such that you may have to wait in line at your dealer's door for the next batch to come through the importer's good offices. And just wait till you read the results, next time around, of our A/B comparison against the \$60,000+ Burmester player.

Pearson. Harry Pearson.

Rumor has it there are exactly 2 Lector CDP 0.6T CD players in the United States of America right now. One is in my listening room. The other is in an underground vault at Venus HiFi in East Lansing, Michigan. How did I come by such a windfall? Whom did I have to sleep with at CES? What is the source of my source? A big shout out to the always gentlemanly and very knowledgeable Brian of Venus HiFi (one of our nation's few intrepid Lector dealers) and his customer and my good buddy Tyler, HiFi hound psychiatrist, consummate sailor and internationally ranked origami champion, for the loan. Let's have a look-see at this lacquered black Italian rarity named for a famous fictional serial carnivore.

Liver, Fava beans, a nice chianti and (my) audio reality.

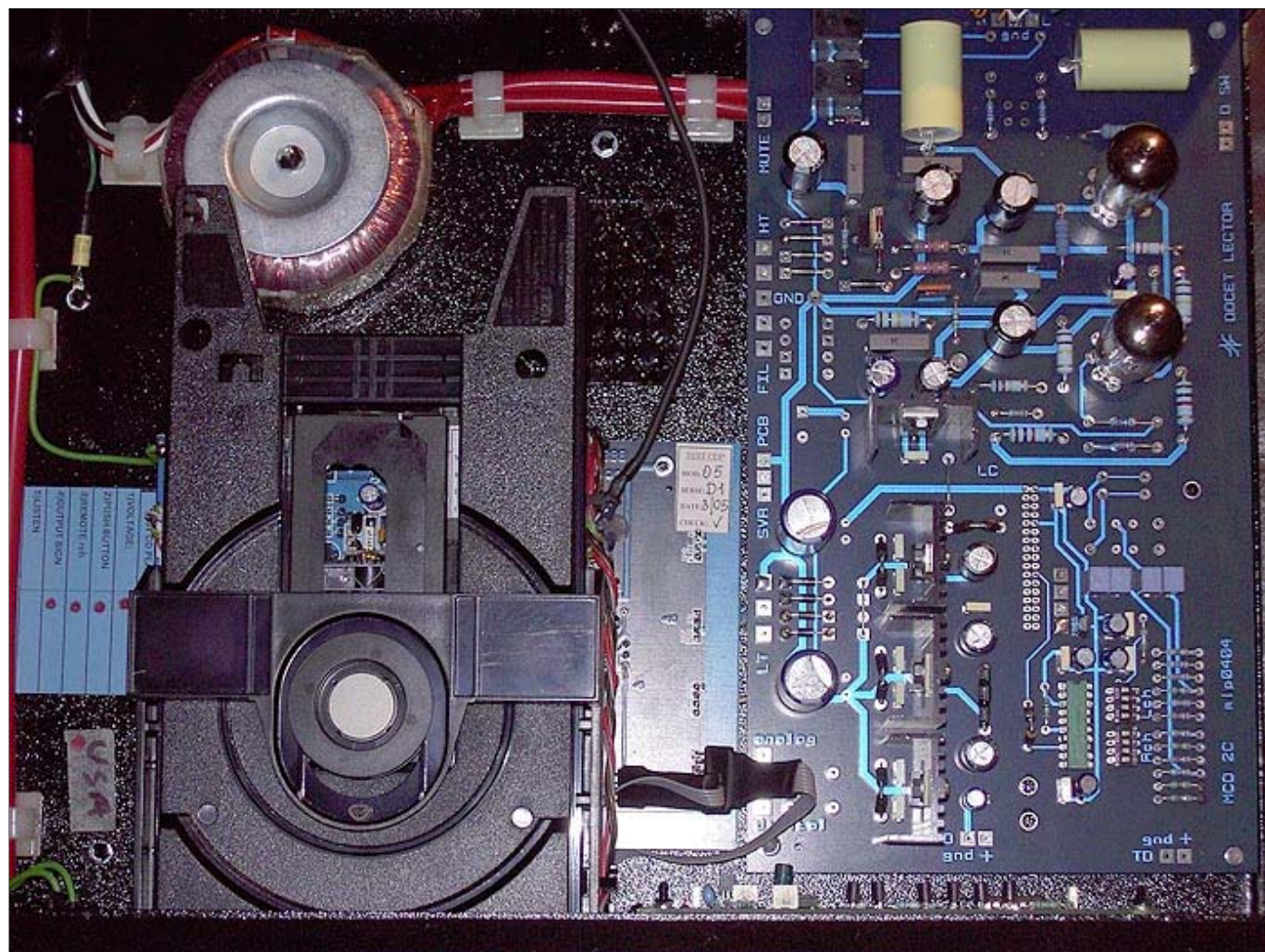
What's the first and most important tenet of audio sales in the 21st century? *Easy*. Have an up-to-date website with a breezy user interface. Your honor, I give you exhibit A: www.docet-lector.com. Up-to-date? Breezy user interface? Negatory. And who in heck is this 'Docet' guy? No matter. When you have gangbuster buzz and spin going for you like the Lector line has got, you can sleep through the more ordinary demands of good business.

Just in case you didn't know, a few issues ago Harry Pearson all but anointed and canonized the 0.6T's big brother, the CDP 7TL, calling it perhaps the most *absolute sounding* player he has heard at *any* price, save perhaps for some \$60+K Burmester he alone gets to listen to. In this month's issue, Sallie Reynolds pronounced the mighty 7TL "almost the greatest CD player ever in the world" or words to that effect but at the last minute decided she was partial to the Musical Fidelity A5 as well.

Anyhow, once the proclamation of true and utter greatness came down from HP, Lectors became scarcer than scarce. Naturally, I wanted one. Immediately. But I couldn't afford one. So I did the next best thing and sought out its little brother for review

Technical data - the 'Tekkie' section.

The Lector CDP 0.6T player features a "24-bit resolution dac (selected by Lector) and phase circuit output control for invert or no-invert the absolute phase at output! Around the ECC81/12AT7 tube output we have design a simple 6db/oct. passive filter. Low taps digital filter design and zero feedback, we have design this CD player without any local or total feedback control. Great attention in the power supply section: five stages regulation and big power transformer. The Dac is a new concept chip: 24bit/96Khz for better linearity and lowest distorsion."



How does an ex-English major like myself know all that technical stuff? Why does an ex-English major have such poor spelling and grammar? The answer on both accounts is that, owing to some difficulty contacting the US distributor Fanfare International for comment/explication, the above had be lifted directly from the Lector website. A few lines further down, it reads; "Docet-Lector reserve the right to change or modify this specification without notice. Design and made in Italy by Docet-Lector." I for one wish they would stop reserving the right and actually change and modify their *website*. For example, the CDP 0.6T does not officially exist on it yet. Details on it are scarcer even than actual units.



It's funny the way we audio types love our tubes but speak disparagingly of components that sonically reek of them. When I heard the Lector was tubed, I figured they'd sexed up the sound by pouring a bit of sugar over these Lectors make them more "analogue" sounding. That is most definitely not the whole or part of what's going on here. How do I underpin this assertion? I happened to have on hand my Rega Jupiter 2000 as a sacrificial lamb - er, *reference* player. The aforementioned Ian Bostridge Schubert song cycle is getting a lot of play here since, as an aspiring tenor wannabe, I'm actually trying to sing some of this cycle myself. Through the Lector, I sat back and read my Sunday NY Times on the couch and smiled the smile of a contented audiophile. *Vocal magic* especially as heard through the delightful small-room wonders, the Totem Arros, which I have recently purchased again after selling them off some while ago.

In went the Jupiter 2000. Two tracks later, off went the Jupiter. No contest. Some of the Jupiter, while still a superb player for the money, is made out of plastic and on comparison with the Lector, you'd think that a bit of that synthetic material had leaked into the circuitry. There was very definitely some artificiality -- a constant reminder that this was a CD played on a CD player -- in the sound of the Jupiter. It was simply not as human. In relative terms, extended comparisons with recordings such as the Bob Neill-recommended Philips recording of Mitsuko Uchida and Mark Steinberg playing Mozart violin sonatas and the excellent (though maybe a touch bright) Penguin Classics Mozart opera highlights recording revealed the Jupiter to be generally less extended, less projected and more "plastic sounding" than the Lector. To its credit, the Rega may have held the merest edge in PRaT and possibly equaled the bass performance of the Lector but it very definitely did not resolve detail like the Lector or portray space and venue like the Lector.



If I were blindfolded and asked to identify the tubed player, I would probably pick the Rega. Less extended on top, less detailed and warmer sounding, it certainly sounds more stereotypically tubey than the Lector (minus the dimensionality and humanity of good tubed units). This stereotypically tubed sound may be a good thing if you like it. But what of the decidedly un-tube-like plasticky artifice I noted? That's surely not a good thing.

Up against the best - Top Gun.

Now we come to the fundamental reason you should pay more attention to reviews by guys like Art Dudley, Jules Coleman and our own editor and less attention to a young upstart like myself. Owing to a lack of finances and connections, I don't actually have state-of-the-art gear in house as a frame of comparison. Like you, I've *heard* some of it. I've even owned the above-named superlative front ends for a time and can do a virtual shootout in my head between the Lector and whatever sonic tracings of these fine pieces remain in my cortex. However, as someone once said, "ain't nothing like the real thing, baby."

In this vein, I feel comfortable stating that, based on fond memories of top shelf Goldmunds and Naims and a \$6,000 Marantz or two, about the only real failings of this comparatively humble Italian machine were the final word in detail retrieval and balls-to-the-wall, nth-degree image density or holography. On some of my favorite CDs like Willie Nelson's *Teatro* and Pavarotti's (rare on CD!) *King of the High Cs* [Decca], the big money Naim and Audio Note gear simply put these artists in the room more corporeally. Call it a notch up on the presence control. Fortunately for the well heeled among you, I have it on good authority that the big-boy Lector Alphatop Signature and the even bigger boy CDP 7TL do just that.

On the more real-world memory-trace side of things, I have at length auditioned the 6moons budget fave, the \$1,099 Eastern Electric MiniMax CD player and have found it to be as advertised. But I think the Lector is the better all-around player and more dynamic with less grain. You could shoot back that it's also twice as expensive. Touché.

Pronouncing sentence. Will Hannibal please rise.

For the money, the Lector CDP 0.6T is an extremely good CD player with a crappy numeric name. As such, I am in the process of putting my money where my mouth is. The Rega will serve door stopper duties until I find a buyer [above]. The Lector will take take pride of place in what goes for my reference rig, a lovely sounding system assembled at a working man's budget.



David Abramson

Manufacturer's [website](#)
US distributor's [website](#)

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