

Silversmith Cables

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► Most of us would regard silver based cables as being the ultimate wire for our listening pleasure. There are companies that have been producing pure silver (up to 99.9% that is) cables for the hifi market like Audionote, Siltech, Audiotruth, Kimber and Wireworld to name but a handful. Now Silversmith Audio has joined in the fray but this time with a slight twist in their offering. With only a three strong line up consisting of a digital cable, a pair of interconnects and a pair of speaker cables, all of them utilise a unique ultra-thin ribbon pure silver conductor. Silversmith Audio started out as a DIY enthusiast's meddling in the pursuit of the ultimate cable and after many months of research, listening to commercial and DIY cables, they decided that a new approach to cable design was needed.

Silversmith Audio's unique design begins with a single, ultra-thin

ribbon conductor, which is custom manufactured of fine silver to a very specific geometry and temper. This single, solid core ribbon conductor:

- Avoids sonic degradation due to boundary discontinuities inherent in multi-strand, non-individually insulated cable geometry. Electro-magnetic waves are both partially reflected and partially absorbed when incident upon such discontinuities.

- Avoids skin-effect related time smearing in both non-individually insulated, multi-strand cable and single, solid core round cables, whose diameter is greater than the skin depth of signals in the audible frequency range.

- Avoids complex and sound degrading interactions of multi-strand, individually insulated (Litz) cable designs, regardless of the weave or braid geometry.

- Has lower internal inductance than a round conductor of equivalent gauge.

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According to Silversmith Audio on the use of silver as the conductor of choice:

"Careful consideration was also given to the selection of the conductor material. Several factors pointed to silver as the best choice as silver has the highest conductivity of any metal. In comparison to other metals, silver is highly diamagnetic. It is an excellent conductor of electric current, but, being a very poor conductor of magnetic current, remains largely unaffected by stray magnetic fields. Oxidation is a concern with all cable designs. Copper oxide is a semi-conductor and therefore interferes with current transmission through the cable. Silver oxide, like pure silver, is a superb conductor and will not adversely affect the electrical signal. In fact, there is some indication that oxidation of the silver will actually improve

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some electrical characteristics of the conductor.

To complete the conductor design, which is optimised for the transmission of audio signals, the physical characteristics of the silver itself must be tightly controlled. Silversmith Audio's silver conductor is cold-worked to attain a specific temper. This temper has an elongated grain structure, contains fewer granular discontinuities than softer tempered or annealed metals, maintains the flexibility required in speaker cables and audio interconnects and creates a durable conductor that resists tearing and breaking under tension, continuous flexing, or tight binding post connections."

The ideal audio cable according to Silversmith is an ultra-thin, single-grain, ribbon conductor suspended in a vacuum between audio components. The gaseous dielectric cable concept (patent pending) is the closest practical design to that ultimate goal."

Okay enough with the technical stuff and on to the review. I plugged in the interconnects into my system and was shocked by the results! Here lies the problem, how do you describe something that you can't hear? Most cables would claim to be either this or that but for the Silversmith, there is none! They had no audible colouration that I could detect meaning that they are the most transparent set of

interconnects that I have come across! They did not mask the extreme highs like some budget non-metal cables do, nor thin out the sound like some silver-plated Teflon wire. Neither did they accentuate the bass nor increase the speed of a musical note. What they did was to totally expose my equipment's pluses and minuses, which is a very good thing. In fact they are excellent tools for a reviewer. Beware to those with lesser electronics; you'll probably say that the cables have either a very bright signature or one that is too muddled. They are neither for it is your equipment that is so. But if you want to know, soundstaging improved by leaps and bounds with a very precise presentation. But the usual description would not do the cables justice, for it is very good. Mere words would not justify the quality of these cables.

Am I in trouble! On one hand this is a reviewer's dream come true! On the other hand, it can show up the glaring deficiencies of your equipment! But if you already have a very good system that has been tweaked to your taste and would like to get a bit more transparency, then these cables are for you. This is probably silver at its best.

RRP \$ 2,600 (3 ft pr RCA)