

**GROUP TEST WINNER**



**Origin Live Aurora** | £1196 | ★★★★★

Aurora turntable £997 | Structurally modified O11 tonearm £199

**FOR**

Swish looks; clear, precise presentation; realistic vocals; full-bodied attack; thrilling dynamics

**AGAINST**

Instruction manual will drive you mad

**VERDICT**

**A stellar performer with a wonderfully realistic presentation: if you can't afford a £3000 CD player try this instead**

AURORA CAN MEAN the goddess of dawn or a luminous meteoric phenomenon; pretty lofty connotations, so does the turntable meet its maker's expectations?

Well, we confess, we wanted to hate this deck: the confusing assembly instructions caused much test-team blaspheming. Come on Origin Live, clearer instructions, please.

But once you finally lay down your Allen key, the Aurora does indeed look phenomenal (our picture shows an early production

model). The Junoesque plates support a chunky platter and the overall effect is reminiscent of a model of the planets. The price includes a structurally modified Rega tonearm - the £199 O11 - and Origin offers further alterations for extra cash. The moment you spin some vinyl, the

sound stuns. The voices of Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong from their *April in Paris* album sound glorious. The Aurora gives vocals great solidity and excellent detail. This is what vinyl's

all about - close your eyes and you believe the singers are in your room. More than CD and Multichannel, the format delivers realism of the highest order. And tonal balance is spot on the bass during *Can't We Be Friends* bounds along but never obscures the midrange or treble. Switch to Nirvana's attack on the higher frequencies and the turntable remains unruffled and there's no evidence of harshness. There is, however, proof of superb attack and rigid bass.

Dynamics are excellent, which means continually engrossing performances and edge-of-the-seat listening. You also get a vast, room-filling soundstage, which means there's reams of space for new instruments: the sonic good news couldn't be better. Yes, it's the devil to assemble but its enticing looks and celestial sounds mean we fully forgive it.

