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Hands-On Review

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SLINKYLINKS: Silver-tongued Kiwi cables that sound charming...

To get the best out of any half-decent audio or video equipment, you need to use half-decent leads. The bits of wire that connect everything are all too often overlooked and the better the equipment, the more crucial the role of the interconnect and speaker cable.

It's pointless shelling out megabucks on some quality gear and wiring it with whatever leads come in the box. It's simply committing sonic suicide as far as the system's overall performance is concerned. Decent equipment demands decent leads.

There's two types that need be considered in any hi-fi or AV system, the interconnect between electronics and the cable between the amplifier and loudspeakers.

Slinkylinks is a New Zealand company that has come up with a three-step cable manufacturing process, which it claims results in improved timing, detail and imaging, as well

as more accurate bass and treble. A couple of its cables turned up in silver tins on my desk for a play - namely its R1100 interconnects (\$759/metre pair) and S1300 loudspeaker cables (\$999/3 metre pair).

Now these are expensive wires and not the sort of leads that you're going to use with a \$400 CD player or amplifier, but if the hardware's up to it, they reward with abundant musical dividends.

Replacing my usual leads, the Slinkylinks proved very interesting, not only in how they're made, but also the sonic character that results. Terminated with snugly-fitting 4mm Bullet Plugs, the Slinkylinks interconnect provides a sure-footed sonic link between source and amplification. It, as does the loudspeaker cable, uses four 0.25mm thick pure silver conductors, surrounded by nothing more than air and translucent plastic jackets. The theories behind the use of materials are all sound, and the aim was to produce a cable that delivers more of the music's clarity and detail.

In this respect, I can't argue in the slightest, because with both cables in situ, the Slinkylinks certainly minimise the loss of recorded music's vitality and impact. Sonically, both these cables are fast and funky,



There's silver in them there cables - Slinkylinks' R1100 interconnects (top) and S1300 loudspeakers cables (bottom)

allowing the music bags of attack and drive. Faithless *Insomnia* benefits from the tight and punchy bass with the ability to kick bottom when needed. Vocals with simpler material sound full and smooth via the silver-lined Slinkylinks, meanwhile, the coherent soundstage, sharp focus and very fine dynamic range also emerge intact. These cables are up for more than just a bit of late-night jazz, and work just as well with fast, hard-hitting dance and heavier rock.

Both cables do a superlative job in conveying music and prove far more insightful rather than a hindrance. As I said, these aren't inexpensive wires, however they're the sort of cables that will allow high-end systems to spread their wings. Slinkylinks' three-step design techniques really show off just what an important role quality cables play in music reproduction.

AVL

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Verdict: ★★★★★