

TEST

Symphonic Line RG 6 Reference

# GALACTICALLY GOOD

Symphonic Line  
RG 6 Reference

**lite** Test rating  
**2026**

*Highlight*

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■ Massive  
Precision Instrument

Outstanding Presence, ■  
Superb Dynamics, Sonorous Foundation



*The Symphonic Line RG 6 Reference presents itself with its extraordinary design as an equally elegant and imposing mass-loaded turntable.*

## Symphonic Line RG 6 Reference

# Galactically Good

**“The Turntable” is what Symphonic Line calls its high-end record player, the RG 6 Reference - and it lives up to this claim of absoluteness with ease: With perfect precision and sophisticated design, maximum mass and an elaborate drive system, this belt-driven turntable, in combination with a top-class tonearm and a premium cartridge, enables fantastic vinyl reproduction.**

Symphonic Line - when this name is mentioned, audiophiles' eyes light up and they usually think of superb signal amplifiers. And rightly so: The excellent reputation of the Duisburg-based manufacturer is founded first and foremost on world-class integrated amplifiers such as the Kraftwerk MK 3 Reference Edition, the RG 14 Edition MK 5 S, the RG 10 MK 5 Reference HD Master S, the preamplifier RG 3 MK 5 Reference Edition or the power amplifier Kraft 300 Class A Anniversary Edition MK 3, which Rolf Gemein, founder and mastermind of Symphonic Line, has been continuously building for decades, repeatedly updating and retrofitting for his customers - keyword: sustainability. On the other hand, the audio specialist's portfolio also includes the finest loudspeakers and CD

players such as the CD-Player Reference MK 3 as well as equally excellent components for vinyl playback - such as the RG 6 Reference. Deep down, Rolf Gemein is a vinyl enthusiast.

### Massive Precision Instrument

This becomes clear to anyone who visits the co-initiator of the German High End show in his Duisburg manufactory and enters the listening room: In this room, where Gemein personally performs the final fine-tuning of every Symphonic Line audio component, there is a lavish and superbly stocked LP shelf covering the entire wall, housing over 3,000 records - and the no less impressive RG 6 Reference. This turntable, which Gemein has been building and continuously refining for 40 years, is his premium source and therefore operates permanently: The analog drive runs around the clock every day - and has done so for years. The RG 6 Reference is a massive precision instrument - and there are two reasons why it is practically immovable and why we traveled to Duisburg for this test: The total weight of this turntable is a hefty 50 kilograms, with several additional pounds added by the supplied granite base and the powerful power supply.



The platter is normally covered with the supplied special cowhide mat. Without the mat, one can see the fastening of the 21-kilogram platter to the sub-platter-like bearing sleeve. Here it is connected by only two screws. The bearing is so sensitive that any additional screw would entail sonic changes. The upper separate part of the spindle is removable. Thanks to this division, the energetic connection to the bearing remains interrupted even after insertion.

## Massive Solidity and Mechanical Sensitivity

In addition, the drive unit – and especially the bearing – is manufactured so precisely and with such minimal tolerances that even temperature fluctuations influence its performance. Likewise, the multi-part RG 6 Reference rewards careful assembly and setup with a break-in period. This combination of massive solidity and mechanical sensitivity forms the basis for the turntable's acoustic accuracy and finesse.

Let us first address the weighty aspect: The RG 6 Reference is a mass-loaded turntable – and is made entirely of aluminum. All components of the multi-part analog drive are milled from solid material. The nearly five-centimeter-high and 40-centimeter-diameter chassis alone weighs about twelve kilograms, plus the tonearm mounting platform. The exceptional design of this turntable begins with the oval shape of the chassis. Gemein chose this visually appealing and flowing geometry for acoustic reasons as well, to minimize vibrations as effectively as possible. Residual resonances are neutralized by bitumen pads applied to the underside.

## Defined Vibration Dissipation for Clear Sound

This chassis rests on three spikes. They enable point-contact coupling to the surface beneath: This is the supplied marble slab, whose high weight and resistance to vibration also contribute to mechanical and acoustic calm. Two spikes are positioned in the narrower area of the tonearm mounting platform. They are height-adjustable and allow perfect horizontal alignment of the RG 6 Reference. The third spike is actually a foot. It is located in the wider section of the chassis, centrally beneath the platter and the bearing – at the point where the entire weight of the drive is concentrated. Here, the foot serves to dissipate vibrational energy. This energy originates from the move-



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# Highlight

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<b>Model:</b>	<b>Symphonic Line RG 6 Reference</b>
<b>Product Category:</b>	Turntable, analog drive
<b>Prices:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RG 6 Reference (without tonearm, without system): 44.000,00 €</li> <li>- Power supply upgrade with Turbo power supply: 6.000,00 €</li> <li>- Cartridge Symphonic Line RG 8 Gold MK 3: 6.500,00 €</li> <li>- Possible cartridge repairs: 450,00 €</li> </ul>
<b>Warranty:</b>	2 years
<b>Finishes:</b>	Housing: paint finish in RAL color Knobs, puck: gold
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<b>Distribution:</b>	<b>Symphonic Line, Duisburg</b> <b>+49 (0) 203 31 56 56</b> <b>www.symphonic-line.de</b>
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<b>Dimensions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chassis: 45 x 400 mm</li> <li>- Platter: 11 x 305 (Ø) mm</li> <li>- Motor: 70 x 150 (Ø) mm</li> <li>- Control unit: 70 x 150 (Ø) mm</li> <li>- Granite slab: 750 x 550 mm (dimensions customizable)</li> <li>- Power supply: 112 x 201 x 391 mm</li> </ul>
<b>Weight:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Total weight: 50 kg*</li> <li>- Chassis: 12 kg*</li> <li>- Platter: 21 kg*</li> <li>- Puck: 0.8 kg*</li> <li>- Power supply: 8 kg*</li> </ul> <p><i>*Manufacturer specification</i></p>
<b>Principle:</b>	Mass-loaded drive, Belt drive, Radial tonearm, Manual operation
<b>Speeds:</b>	33 1/3, 45 and 78 rpm
<b>Tonearm:</b>	- Delivered without tonearm (test model: Linn Ekos SE)
<b>Cartridge:</b>	- Delivered without cartridge (test model: Symphonic Line RG 8 Gold MK 3)

### Rating:

<b>Overall Rating:</b>	<b>Highlight</b>
Class:	Luxury Class
Price/Performance:	appropriate



*The tonearm platform appears to float above the chassis, though of course it has a contact point. This makes the platform rotatable. Various tonearms up to twelve inches in length can thus be mounted on it.*



*Milled from solid material: The components of the mass-loaded drive are made entirely of aluminum and result in a total weight of 50 kilograms. Beneath the chassis, the two height-adjustable spikes are visible - and, directly under the center of the platter, the foot through which vibrational energy is dissipated into the granite slab.*

ment of the stylus, from the resulting vibration of the record, and from the rotation of the platter and spindle in the bearing. Without dissipation, this vibrational energy would remain in the drive, feed back into the pickup process and degrade the sound. Defined dissipation, on the other hand, enables the fundamental tone and bass capability that many turntables lack.

## Imposing Base, Impressive Platter

On the top side, the chassis houses a substantial mounting platform for the tonearm. This base is also milled from solid metal, rises eight centimeters high and measures 15 centimeters in diameter. Once again, considerable mass counteracts potential vibrations - in this case those originating from the tonearm. Despite its weight, the mounting platform appears to float: It is largely decoupled from the chassis and has only a single point of contact. This makes the platform rotatable. Thus, a wide variety of tonearms up to twelve inches can be mounted on this base - flexibly, quickly and easily. It is both a clever and elegant solution. The larger counterpart to the round, rosette-like mounting platform is the platter: Again milled and turned from solid aluminum, this mighty, millstone-like, eleven-centimeter-high platter weighs an impressive 21 kilograms. Once more: plenty of mass for maximum calm. After all, the greatest movement occurs in and on the platter due to its continuous rotation.

## The Bearing: Perfect Precision, Low-Friction Rotation

The bearing is responsible for the smoothness of this rotation. Here, too, massiveness prevails: The bearing itself weighs one and a half kilograms. To prevent energy transfer to the chassis, the bearing is mechanically decoupled from it. The quality of the bearing distinguishes our Reference version from the standard RG 6: The precision and minimal tolerances with which the 16-millimeter spindle made of special stainless steel runs in its sleeve are achieved through elaborate manual polishing with diamond powder. This precision ensures highly low-friction, wobble-free, consistently even and smooth rotation of the spindle. Lubrication with a special oil of particular viscosity also contributes to this. The bearing base, on which the convex-ground spindle rotates with minimal point contact, promotes wear- and friction-minimized rotation thanks to its immense hardness: It is made of sintered tungsten carbide-cobalt hard metal Widia. All this enables such precision that temperature fluctuations indeed influence rotation.



*Here the tonearm platform is configured for the Linn Ekos SE. The nine-inch tonearm is the flagship of the Scottish high-end manufacturer.*



*The externally housed powerful motor drives the platter via a long belt. The associated control unit guarantees and monitors highly precise and constant rotation. The speed - optionally 33 1/3, 45 or 78 rpm - is set via two multi-turn potentiometers and can be adjusted with utmost precision. The third rotary knob switches the motor on and off.*

## Accurate Drive, Elaborate Control

his deviation is compensated for via the external control unit of the separately housed motor. Both assemblies continue the circular design language in favor of harmonious aesthetics, yet they are nestled together to form a horizontal "8." The necessary connecting cables run invisibly through their small contact area. The origin of the high-quality and powerful precision motor is a closely guarded company secret of Symphonic Line, as is the exact functioning of the control unit. Its uniqueness can be guessed from the fact that two so-called multi-turn potentiometers serve the same purpose: the precise adjustment of the rotational speeds 33 1/3, 45 and 78 rpm. These precision resistors can rotate several turns, operate ultra-finely and across a wide range, which is why they are also first choice for audio applications. This allows ultra-precise fine adjustment of the motor speed. The drive sets the platter in motion via a long belt. Gemein chooses belts from Transrotor because they are manufactured without a transition at the joint and therefore run particularly evenly.

## Planetary Ensemble with Passive Secondary Drive

For even more low-friction rotation, the Reference version of the RG 6 features an additional second drive unit. It closely resembles the motor but is passive. This second drive unit is placed directly opposite the motor, so that the platter sits between them. This symmetrical arrangement guides the belt tangentially along the platter. This relieves the spindle, as it is no longer subjected to one-sided tensile forces. As a result, friction and resonances in the bearing are further reduced. Sonically, this dual drive is said to enhance the calmness and spatiality of reproduction. With this second drive, the RG 6 Reference consists of five elements. Due to their shape and positioning, they resemble a planetary ensemble. This association fits perfectly because - to anticipate it - the RG 6 Reference sounds galactically good. But this is also due to the power supply and the harmonious combination with an excellent tonearm and superb cartridge.

## High-Powered Power Supply

Let us begin with the power supply: As befits this league, it is also external and housed in the typical robust, black-painted sheet steel enclosure from Symphonic Line. The dimensions of 10 by 37 by 19 centimeters and its considerable weight already suggest what lies inside: a highly potent power supply. Under the hood is a transformer rated at a generous 350 volt-amperes and a filtering and storage section whose capacitors provide an impressive capacity of 140,000 microfarads. In Gemein's own words: One could build an amplifier from this. A powerful power supply ensures a high degree of stability thanks to its large and prompt delivery capability and abundant reserves, thereby contributing to the calmness of the drive. There is even room for improvement here: Instead of the "Power supply," the RG 6 Reference can be equipped with the "Turbo power supply": It operates with two Super-Mu metal transformers, each delivering 300 volt-amperes, and a capacitor combination with a capacity of 300,000 microfarads.



*In the Reference version, the RG 6 is equipped with a second passive drive unit. It is positioned opposite the motor so that the platter is located precisely between them. This avoids one-sided tensile force on the spindle - and thus minimizes friction in the bearing.*



*The front of the external power supply. It is housed in the typical robust Symphonic Line enclosure. Thanks to its powerful transformer and the substantial capacity of the filtering and smoothing capacitors, the power supply guarantees high delivery capability and ample reserves. This promotes rotational smoothness and stability of the drive - and thus the composed performance of the turntable.*

## Top-Class Tonearm and Noble MC System

Now to the arm and cartridge: Neither is included with the RG 6 Reference. Gemein has equipped his model with the noble Linn Ekos SE, this nine-inch arm, but fitted it with his own headshell cable. Beneath the headshell sits the Symphonic Line RG 8 Gold MK 3. Gemein has this MC system manufactured by A.J. van den Hul according to his own specifications and with materials that are no longer available on the open market today. He considers him the world's greatest authority in the field of cartridge construction. The coil wires of this system are finer than a human hair and made of pure gold. To increase the output voltage, the system features an additional front-mounted magnet, delivering 0.4 millivolts. Other voltage values can be realized upon request. Naturally, the scanning gemstone features the vdH 1 Van den Hul cut. Thus, the MC system scores with channel separation of over 40 decibels and a frequency response extending beyond 60,000 Hz.



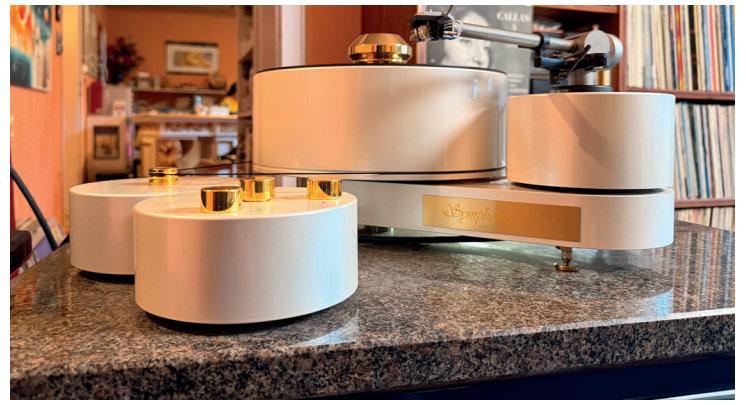
Beneath the headshell sits the RG 8 Gold MK 3, a new version of Symphonic Line's excellent MC system. It enables superb tracking of the record with extremely low groove noise. Manufacturing is handled, according to precise specifications, by the Dutch specialist van den Hul. The system's coils are wound with ultra-fine gold wire. The additional magnet is mounted at the front. It increases the output voltage - and also allows a stylus to adhere here, making azimuth adjustment easier during setup. Upon request, the cartridge is available in a wooden version.

## Final Fine-Tuning

Of course, Gemein also performs final fine-tuning on his turntable purely by ear to eliminate unwanted residual vibrations and disturbances and to achieve an absolutely harmonious sound. In addition to the already mentioned bitumen pads, we see one of Symphonic Line's special adhesive pads between the top of the chassis and the platter, and another applied to the transformer of the power supply. Rolf Gemein also applies C37 lacquer at selected points, with which he has also coated the tonearm. The MC system supplied by van den Hul is likewise fine-tuned once again by Gemein. Tuned in this way, the RG 6 Reference now stands before us ready to play. Gemein's model is painted in mother-of-pearl, which perfectly matches the gold-plated rotary knobs and record weight. The turntable can also be painted in any other desired RAL color. This finish is extremely expensive because it must be absolutely smooth and homogeneous. Especially on the rotating platter, any wave or streak would immediately be noticeable.



*The shine of the tonearm results from fine-tuning: Rolf Gemein applies C37 lacquer during his personally conducted final sonic tuning of each component.*



The entire drive rests on a granite slab, adding further mass for calm and relaxed reproduction. This granite slab is included in delivery and can be sized according to customer preference.

## The Symphonic Line RG 6 Reference in Practice

In Gemein's listening room, the RG 6 Reference is connected via the Symphonic Line Reference NF phono cable to the integrated amplifier Symphonic Line RG 10 MK 5 Reference HD Master S. A pair of Symphonic Line Belcanto Edition loudspeakers serve as transducers, which Gemein is currently optimizing and refers to as a test model. The sound chain is warmed up, though the cartridge has only logged a few hours of operation. In a few days and weeks, it will therefore sound even more open, freer and rounder. Even now, however, the reproduction is simply fantastic.

We experience this immediately at the outset with The King's Singers. The famous vocal ensemble performs the "Jimmy Brown Song" - and the very first entry is a revelation. The recording dates from 1976, yet the sextet possesses astonishing immediacy: The six singers seem literally to stand before us - grouped in a gentle arc around their central tenor Alastair Thompson.

## Outstanding Presence, Superb Dynamics, Sonorous Foundation

Thompson opens with his crystal-clear voice the vocal story of Jimmy Brown. What immediately fascinates us is the directness: The physical presence of the tenor is outstanding. Soon his colleagues underpin his singing with magnificent harmonies - and with their entry intensify the illusion that the sextet is singing here in the listening room. This is also due to the superb dynamics: The singers masterfully grade their voices in volume and intensity, and these lively, vibrant changes are audible and perceptible even in the finest nuances. In such perfection, this vocal art produces goosebumps.

The illusion also succeeds thanks to the transparency and sonority of the reproduction. In the harmonies, we experience an absolutely differentiated blending of the six voices. We are particularly impressed by the reproduction of the baritones and the bass. Many analog drives show weakness here. With the RG 6 Reference, however, we experience a full fundamental and low-frequency range with room-filling foundation - especially during sustained drone tones in the bass.

## Immersive Spatiality

We also enjoy the wonderful variety of melodies: The voices follow exciting lines in this choral arrangement, and we can effortlessly trace the intervals of each individual singer. As beautifully as the voices blend harmonically, all six vocal artists remain clearly distinguishable. This is also due to the excellent imaging accuracy. We can assign each vocalist a very precise position in space. Thus, song verses in which the action shifts back and forth between the countertenors and the baritone/bass section become a true stereo experience. The three-dimensional presentation also has impressive depth: The recording was made in the famous Abbey Road Studios, apparently in the huge Studio One, judging by the grand reverberation. The depiction of this spatiality is magnificent: Thanks to superb resolution, we even perceive the finest sound reflections from the studio walls. We can intensely and immersively experience the size of this hall; the imagined ambiance of the recording space makes us forget the real walls.

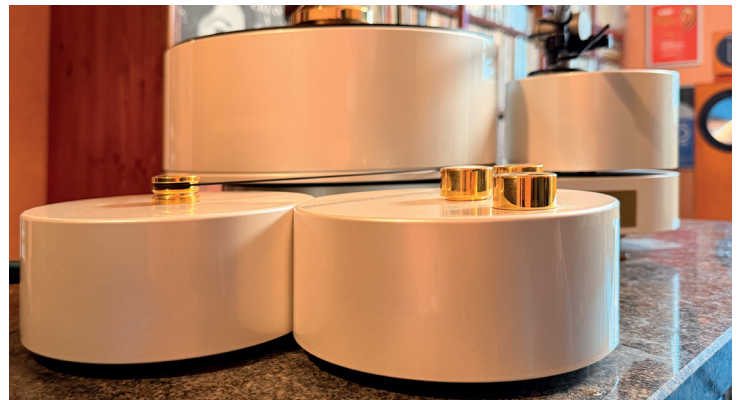
## Purity and Calm

This works so well because, on the one hand, the record is tracked with extremely low noise. Here the MC system performs a true miracle with this aged LP. On the other hand, the reproduction shines with a wonderful and soothing calm: The singing of The King's Singers sounds absolutely natural, harmonious and completely relaxed, as if it could not be otherwise. Here the magnificent mass and immovability of the mass-loaded drive make themselves felt - along with the well-conceived dissipation of sound-blurring vibrations. Thus, the entire musical event unfolds against a deep-black background without distracting disturbances.

We experience this splendid purity and calm with other pieces from this session as well - for example with "Ordinary Guy" by Jacob Dinesen: The Danish singer-songwriter recalls Bruce Springsteen - and his singing now gives us our second goosebump moment. Dinesen's warm yet gently raspy voice sounds even more sonorous than we know it, even more intimate - and thus even more touching.



*The phono cable exits from the underside of the drive chassis, allowing it to be routed discreetly. The signal cable used here is the Symphonic Line Reference NF phono cable.*



*Motor and control unit are connected, keeping the necessary cables invisible. This drive unit is also decoupled from the surface.*

## Phenomenal Power of Presentation

Dinesen accompanies himself on acoustic guitar. Thanks to the phenomenal power of presentation, the materiality now becomes tangible: We hear the steel of the strings, the wood of the resonating body - and, because of the soft tonal character of the picking, we know that Dinesen is plucking the strings with bare fingers. The bard is accompanied by bass and drums, and here too we realize: There is more in the record groove than we previously knew. The bass possesses noticeably more depth and carrying power while retaining the same contour definition. The drumming appears more agile: Jesper Andersen plays a shuffle on the snare with brushes, yet we have never before heard the impact of the bristles on the drumhead of the snare in such plasticity and with such dynamic gradation. The shuffle sounds wonderfully fresh! Even the background vocals, which we previously perceived more as a surface-filling layer, are now discernible in their individual voices. Thanks to this reproduction, "Ordinary Guy" climbs even higher on our list of favorite songs.

## Pure Music

Let us switch to a richly instrumented track: "Mary Shut The Garden Door" by Donald Fagen. We know this song extremely well - yet now it sounds as if we had not put on the original LP but a more successful remaster. It begins already with the tracking: Our LP has many years and numerous plays behind it. Yet on the RG 6 Reference drive and with the RG 8 Gold MK 3 system, the record sounds almost new: It runs nearly free of any playback noise. We hear the pure music - and it astonishes us in every discipline.

The very opening with bass and drums arrives so abruptly that we flinch. For this, drummer Keith Carlock needs only a bass drum kick and a crash cymbal strike. Wow! After that, the drum kit remains wonderfully present: Every drum hit has a terrific attack thanks to the top-tier dynamics. The bass drum has a rich punch, the snare a delightfully dry crack.



*Imposing weight: A gold-plated puck weighing around 800 grams presses the record onto the platter.*

## Unprecedented Wealth of Detail

We have never been able to hear the hi-hat figures so distinctly. They separate perfectly from the shaker, which otherwise slightly obscures the cymbal work. The superb transparency is also owed to the accurate bass. Here we marvel once again: We have never experienced Freddie Washington's striking low-frequency motif that shapes the song with such volume, power and thrust. At the same time, the deeply extended bass is extraordinarily clean. On this defined foundation, all other instruments can unfold freely.

And that is a good thing, because the song is arranged for eleven voices and instruments. In addition to bass and drums, there are percussion, guitars, keyboards, vibraphone, melodica, flute, background choir and lead vocals. Yet despite the large ensemble and dense arrangement, thanks to the excellent transparency we now clearly hear details that we had never previously noticed - for example, during the melodica solo, the tremolo guitar in the background that repeatedly throws in cool two-note figures with rapid alternate picking.

*Rolf Gemein's listening room: Here the high-end pioneer and founder of Symphonic Line tests every component of his manufactory thoroughly and performs the final tuning. In the background we see the Symphonic Line Belcanto Edition loudspeakers.*



*Test & Text: Volker Frech  
Photos: Roman Maier*

## Truthfulness

Thanks to the clarity and the newly audible details, we understand the song better as well: The muted guitar patterns and tones thrown in from left and right now meaningfully complement the almost Morse code-like central keyboard motif. Here too we experience this remarkable coherence: The triangle, which otherwise often seemed somewhat intrusive, is now perfectly integrated; the background vocals are presented so clearly that in the wonderful tonal tensions of the melodic and harmonic progression we can hear every single interval leap. Phenomenal!

The crowning glory is finally the solo vocal: Fagen lisp slightly and has a hoarse, breathy, roughened voice. Often his voice therefore sounds somewhat strenuous, a bit amorphous and artificial. In this sound chain with the RG 6 Reference, we experience how the frontman truly should sound: Free from artificial sharpness, Fagen now has a truthful physical presence and stands before us as a real, corporeal person.

## Conclusion

The RG 6 Reference fulfills its claim to absoluteness: "The Turntable" is what Symphonic Line calls its high-end record player - and it proves with flying colors that it rightly bears this title. As a mass-loaded drive, it ensures reproduction with wonderful calmness and composure, coherence and naturalness - as if it could not be otherwise. Contributing to this are the highly precise and elaborate bearing, the powerful motor with its passive second drive, and the potent high-performance power supply.

In combination with a top-class tonearm and a superb cartridge, the RG 6 Reference achieves magnificent 3D imaging with virtually immersive spatiality and breathtakingly present and tangible rendering of voices and instruments. Thanks to its explosive dynamics, excellent resolving capability and outstanding wealth of detail, the musicians possess astonishing vitality and truthfulness. Through phenomenal purity, clarity and transparency, previously unheard details of the music are revealed. Thus, the performance of the planetarily designed RG 6 Reference is galactically good.