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accuracy of such information.

Sadly, this is the last of our 16-volume run of print issues.

In recent years we have suffered production and distribution difficulties arising from Brexit, Covid and the imposition of VAT on magazines in Europe. Add to this, multiple postal strikes and the economic pressures arising from the Ukraine war, resulting in a leap in the price of energy, paper, and printing. All of this means the production and printing of HIFICRITIC is no longer economically viable

The HIFICRITIC team sends heartfelt thanks to all who have guided, advised, and supported this adventure. I must add my personal thanks to everyone who backed my ambition to create an independent critical audio review journal free from advertising influences, including contributors and manufacturers, past and present. Friends and colleagues have commented on how we managed to deliver 16 volumes and win the co-operation of so many great manufacturers for the loan of review product.

Special thanks are due to Philippa Steward who has designed and set every issue; the late Malcolm Steward for his literate reviewing input, and Paul Messenger who bravely abandoned existing commitments to edit and shape this journal, also contributing many articles and reviews. And Pam Messenger, for her generous help. When Paul retired, we were lucky to have contributor Andrew Everard step-up to the editorship, notwithstanding his other writing and publishing responsibilities.

And a big thank you to you, our readers, for having faith in our project. Some of you have been with us from the start!

When founding HIFICRITIC, my objective was to encourage our authors to report honestly and objectively on the products they were asked to evaluate, and not be afraid to omit a recommendation where none was deserved. I also believed that technical feature investigations from myself and learned authors such as Keith Howard were important, to dig more deeply into misleading advertorial and technology claims. We fought hard to be well-informed and trusted for our honest opinions.

The HIFICRITIC website will continue, with contents including the Forum and blog, features and back number sales.

But we go out with a bang in print, with reviews of a tasty selection of great designs headed up by a loudspeaker which we knew was good but could not anticipate just how good until it was delivered and fully set up. Chosen from Magico's 'budget' range, the A5 is a rather larger version of the A3 I previously enjoyed, but as it turned out there was much more to experience than the size increase would suggest. For speakers under £70,000 a pair this is our loudspeaker of the year: dial down impressive, dial up stunning naturalness.

Other issue highlights include an interview with Rob Lawley, MD of Sevenoaks Sound & Vision, Stan Curtis on replicas and fakes, the iFi ZEN Stream network player, the newly-improved Vertere DG-1S record player complete with a striking white finish option – and the Musical Fidelity MX-Stream network audio transport.

For our in-depth technical feature, Keith Howard explores the true spectral content of DSD music files, and why so many measuring them have been getting things wrong. I analyse the revived Mission 770 from Peter Comeau, chief designer at the Mission division of IAG, while Editor Andrew Everard explores the FiiO K9 Pro headphone amplifier.

Neat's New Petite Classic loudspeaker is examined by Ed Selley, who also covers the Cyrus Classic AMP integrated amplifier, and the new Focal Utopia headphones.

I've also reviewed the Acoustic Energy AE 500 compact and found it has a big heart, while our final equipment review is the Melody AN300B by Chris Frankland, a classic triode-equipped integrated amplifier from Australia which I suspect would partner the Mission 770 revival speakers really well.

Martin Colloms
Editor-in-Chief