

wonderful hobby remains intact. It still hurts to walk a little, and I eventually told Laura about my misfortune. Keeping the injury a secret for as long as I did allowed me to reveal the "owey" at a time when I could use it to its fullest; it served to take the sting out a much deserved retribution aimed in my direction. How can a woman remain mad at her audio honey when he is deserving of the audiophile equivalent of the Purple Heart (with a limp). I've learned to let her mothering instinct take over when it's beneficial. I showed her where it hurt.

Then I think about the suffering around the world and I realize what a sissy I am....

**SPECIAL** At last, a speaker cable I can live with. It's been years since the introduction of the Lowe's 6 awg as the speaker cable of choice in the Big Rig (November 2003). Subsequent to that pronouncement, speaker cables have come in and have gone out, mostly without comment. If I recall, I've done one speaker cable review in the last three years, and I was reluctant to do that one. With time, cable manufacturers discovered how I felt on the matter and pretty much stopped sending samples.

Not so with **Signal Cable**.<sup>1</sup> They sent a whole bag of goodies; power cords, interconnects, and you guessed it: speaker cables. I've only been working with the one set of cables so far, and I have good news... they are very good. The cables are the Silver Resolution Reference and they usually sell for \$299 for a six foot set. They are on sale right now for \$249, and for those persons who have shied away from making their own Lowe's cables, an alternative is at hand for a fair price.

The SRR basically has nothing in common construction-wise with my fave Lowe's. This cable is a hybrid of sorts in that it is a combination of 4 stranded silver conductors and 8 solid core copper conductors. All conductors are insulated within thin wall Teflon™ tubes. This is a 12 awg, shielded cable.

Other than the Lowe's cable, this is the only speaker cable I've been able to tolerate in the Big Rig for more than a week at a time. Unlike cables to precede it, the SRR has been in my test system since it came in two months ago, and if compelled to, I could quite easily live with it indefinitely.

Sonically, the Lowe's and the SRR are very similar though not identical sound-wise. Tonally, I don't think I could tell them apart. Vocals are right on and strings sound like strings. Neither cable will have you come away thinking things are too light, or too dark. That is unless some other component has a spectral problem. These two cables are balanced just right spectrally. The Lowe's comes off as just a little bit more dynamic, and bloom areas are slightly more rich. The SRR, on the other hand, is slightly more precise in terms of imaging, and leading edges are minimally more precise. Both cables are amazingly transparent to the very back of the

stage. And they don't blur or in any way obliterate detail and important venue information. Both are amazing in that respect.

Though different, the homemade Lowe's and the store bought Signal Cable, Silver Resolution Reference are in many ways equal.<sup>2</sup> It's in the low level stuff where these two part ways, but when it comes to getting "the big picture" right, the SRR is there with the best.<sup>3</sup>

1. [www.signalcable.com](http://www.signalcable.com) sales@signalcable.com ph. 917/957-8508

2. Due to my obvious affinity for the Lowe's cable, a cable I discovered, developed and wrote about with pride, it's hard for me to admit that there is a cable available for a fair price that is basically its equal. I think I would in some respects feel better if the Signal Cable cost a couple of thousand dollars more ...

3. In the months to come, I will be covering more of the wires and cables from Signal Cable, one at a time.

**WHAT?** You think the cost of gas is high? Let's pretend for a moment that you own a car which runs on Last Stylast, stylus cleaner and interface. Filling up the tank would be out of the question as a half ounce costs \$33. If one extends that price out to the per gallon cost, the price per gallon is \$8,448!!!!. How many gallons will that Hummer hold?

But that's not the only thing audiophiles pay a premium for. The following are the per gallon prices for some of the audiophile favorites as found in the musicdirect catalog for Spring/Summer 2006. The next time you fill up at the pump, think about these prices...

Record Research LP #9 stylus cleaner: \$6,397.44 gal.

Last 2 record preservative: \$2,624 gal.

Last Power Cleaner: \$10,240 gal.

Last All Purpose: \$1,536 gal.

Nitty Gritty cleaner: \$489 gal. (a real value)

Record Research: \$80 gal. (an even better value)

Optrix CD cleaner: \$1,053 gal.

☆ **Are you ever in Western Illinois?** I can't make a habit of this because my wife would kill me; but if you're ever in the neighborhood and want to stop by, let me know. Even if you simply live in the area, which I know some of you do, call me about coming in for a listening session.

My motivation? There is a growing distrust of reviewers and the things they write. I don't blame audiophiles for feeling the way they do. They have been the butt-end of far too many phony promotions and "good ol' boy" reviews to implicitly trust the message or the messenger. In my estimation, most reviewers have lost the right to present themselves as unbiased and knowl-