

**CD PLAYERS**

**Primare CD31**



**IT'S ALL SUBJECTIVE**, but to our eyes the CD31 is the best-looking machine in this test. There are more important things to be concerned with, naturally, but Oscar Wilde didn't say, "It's only shallow people who don't judge by appearances," for nothing. We're all interior designers now, it seems, and good-looks add to the overall charm.

We've judged a fair bit of Primare equipment lately, and found it all to be competitive, value-for-money stuff. The identically priced I30 amplifier scored five stars in August. And if one thing has become apparent from these

The CD31 continues where the excellent I30 amp left off – Primare is on some roll this year

**↑ FOR**

Fine build and (to our eyes) svelte looks; forthright, but not overbearing, sound

**↓ AGAINST**

Can sound a tiny bit tentative through the RCA outputs

**→ VERDICT**

Primare's surefooted progress continues – fine sound and good looks should ensure plentiful sales

recent tests, it's that Primare is pretty consistent in its audio signature – and the CD31 sits just as comfortably in sonic terms with its siblings as it does visually.

**Demonstratively talented...**

Loading I Am Kloot's splendid *Gods And Monsters* disc into the CD31 hints at its credentials early on. It's a painless, drama-free exercise (unlike the Cyrus or Copland machines) which illustrates the Primare's superb build. Neither does the sound disappoint. It's not the most immediately impressive listen, but the CD31 is a subtle and insightful device that finds a big, well-defined sound-stage and unearths fine levels of detail.

There's possibly less raw shove to dynamically testing material than is ideal, but the Primare communicates in spades without ever getting right up in your face like the Copland does.

Switch to the CD31's balanced outputs and it's an even more impressive story: sound separates yet further, making the stage easy to understand, and the previously rather reticent character gains plenty more crunch and bite. *Sheena Is A Punk Rocker* by The Ramones sounds genuinely insolent, packed with attitude and ropey musicianship.

With the balanced output, things step on decisively in the dynamic area: there's greater attention to detail, better grip on

**"The Primare sounds a treat, and won't be overly fussy about the kit you pair it with"**

transients and lovely, broad-stroke definition. Voices benefit too, becoming ever-more natural and expressive. At the bottom of the frequency range, there's ample weight and admirable speed; the upper frequencies attack glossily.

So what Primare has served up is a well-made, competitively priced, impeccably finished and handsome CD player that sounds a treat and won't be overly fussy about its partnering equipment. At this price, there's more to a CD player than the sound it makes, and Primare seems to have hit the bulls-eye in every area of the manufacturing process. Can you tell we're mightily impressed?

