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**AUDIO**

REVIEW: CD32 CD PLAYER  
MAGAZINE: HI-FI & HOME THEATER AUDIO, KOREA  
TRANSLATION FROM MARCH 2011 ISSUE  
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# Primare CD32

A Precise and Neutral Sound Based on Resolution

Primare, a Swedish Hi-Fi audio manufacturer, was established in 1985. At Primare, Bo Christensen, a well-known Danish designer of the time, was developing the 900 and 200 series according to his philosophy of “captivating sound and extraordinary design”. These products improved Primare’s standing in hi-fi so that the brand could strengthen its presence in the low and mid-price product market. There was an association with Xena Audio of Sweden, a well established, commercially astute operation, famous for its Copland and QLN brands. It was a great blending of talents because it produced great looking and reliable high performance products at more realistic prices: the very Primare products so loved by many consumers.

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Then, when world-renowned engineer Mike Bladelius, presently of Bladelius Design Group AB, joined the company in the late 1990s, fresh from his experiences with specialized US companies such as Threshold, PassLabs and many more, Primare was ready to be counted as one of the world's most progressive high-end hi-fi companies. A brief introduction to the Primare range is as follows: the fully-balanced power amplifier A32 delivering 250 watts into an 8 ohms load; the stereo power amplifier A33.2 - 120 W / 8 ohms, the integrated amplifier I21 - 75 W / 8 ohms; the integrated amplifier I30 – 100 W / 8 ohms. There are 2 CD players: CD21 and CD 31. Primare's CD player CD31 and integrated amplifier I30, which I have admired before, is an award-winning system, collecting consecutive Product of the Year awards from a British audio magazine.



The CD32 that I now listen to replaces the CD31. The CD32 uses a transport from Sanyo, a specialized source player mechanism manufacturer, and a switch mode power supply for the microprocessor circuits. A purer and clearer sound quality with 24 bits/96 kHz sampling is secured by two PCM1704 D/A Burr-Brown converters and a DF1706 digital filter. Digital output is available from optical and coaxial AES/EBU. There's a USB input for playing and controlling MP3 or WMA files. The overall sleek appearance and fine construction will be more than enough to get the customers' trust. I tried the CD32 with the combination of the Advance Acoustic integrated amplifier MAP308 and various loudspeakers including Electrocompaniet PSB-1 and Epos Epic 2. The funeral march (Hyperion) from Chopin's piano sonata No. 2, 3rd movement by Marc-Andre Hamelin - one of the best technical pianists - was played first. The overall sound was rich yet tidy.

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The piano tone was well composed, and the occasionally strong striking of the piano keys was quite well expressed. The CD32 CD player seems to reproduce information well, including the stage and instrument acoustics, according to the size of loudspeakers used. After that the opening of Tchaikovsky's famous piano trio 'In Memory of a Great Artist' was played. The strings were conveyed with a realistic softness and the piano with a tender resonance. The size of acoustic image and the musical texture of the piece varied, depending on the loudspeakers. On occasions there was softness, on others there was a rougher sound. **This means that the characteristics of the loudspeakers were well revealed, showing off the neutrality of the CD32 CD player very well.** The bass strings from Vivaldi's 'Larghetto' (Warner Classics) and in 'Nulla In Mundo Pax Sincera RV 630' by Sumi Jo, were clearly yet firmly expressed in every corner of the wide sound stage. In the chorus part from Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 Choral (EMI) conducted by Celibidache, the orchestral music resonates immediately. The solos were beautifully textured with a variety of tonal colours, and the chorus occupied the full width of a very large and realistic acoustic space.

**Having listened to these recordings it can be concluded that Primare's CD32 CD player is designed to produce a very precise, consistent, and neutral sound, based on high resolution.** It produces a clear, firm, and controlled sound, making the most of any high-end audio system. It also reveals the true nature of the connected amplifiers and loudspeakers. Furthermore, it expresses the detailed and subtle parts of instrumentals well, multiplying the pleasure of listening. **If you have a high quality amplifier and loudspeakers, the CD32 will give you a more precise and richer high-end sound.**

