



**"We are all the other people":** Flashback – David Bowie predicts our future

**Group Test:** Six mid-price DACs go head-to-head



# Hi-Fi Choice

**PASSION FOR SOUND**

Issue No. 509

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Goldring's E4 moving-magnet cartridge



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JANUARY 2024 £5.75 01 9 1770955 111144 PRINTED IN THE UK



**DETAILS**

**PRODUCT**  
Goldring E4

**ORIGIN**

UK

**TYPE**

High-output moving-magnet cartridge

**WEIGHT**  
6.9g exc. fixings

**FEATURES**

- Elliptical stylus
- Hollow aluminium cantilever with dual magnets
- 3.5mV sensitivity

**DISTRIBUTOR**  
Armour Home Electronics

**WEBSITE**  
goldring.co.uk

over the E3 without altering the basic balance that the more affordable model does so well. Listening to the potent but slightly bright *Electricity* by Ibibio Sound Machine, the E4 captures the energy and power in the recording without tipping over into sounding hard or forward in any way.

There is more detail on offer, though. There is extra texture and nuance to Eno Williams' vocals and she's more defined against the thundering playing behind her. Across a selection of material, the E4 works little additional snippets into its performance that make it sound more convincing without upsetting the overall balance. While I don't feel that the stereo separation is markedly better than an Ortofon 2M Blue (*HFC 375*), it doesn't struggle to generate a convincing stereo image.

Where the Goldring really scores over the Ortofon is that the slightly warmer and more forgiving presentation ensures records that sound a little hard and flat on the 2M Blue have warmth and engagement on the E4. *Ritual* by White Lies is not a pressing for the ages, but here it manages to sound usefully civilised and fun. The Goldring is not the most out-and-out ballistic cartridge you can buy at this price and I suspect the effect on some turntables might be a little gentle, but on something like the TecnoDec it gives a welcome balance that favours a variety of material.

**Conclusion**

It's this balance that makes the E4 a compelling new arrival at this sort of price. There are more notionally exciting cartridges available for similar money, but they are frequently unsettled by recordings that the Goldring is completely unconcerned by. The rest of the E Series is characterised by its unflappable all-round ability and the E4 brings these same welcome qualities to a whole new price point ●

# E4 excellence

The new flagship of Goldring's E Series brings some impressive refinements to a sensible price point. **Ed Selley** spins it up

**G**oldring's E Series has earned a solid reputation for providing some of the best options available at their price points. The E1, E2 and E3 have now been joined by the imaginatively named E4, which augments the range rather than replaces any of the existing models.

The E4 is visually similar to the E3, but the difference is in the diamond. Where the cheaper cart uses a bonded elliptical stylus, the E4 switches to a nude elliptical one which should improve both detail retrieval and performance towards the inner edge of a record. The aluminium cantilever is hollow for reduced effective mass and is well protected by the body.

Internally, the E4 has two magnets rather than one. The idea is that each only interacts with its own coil, which reduces crosstalk and improves channel separation. Goldring also states that the design is such that small adjustments to alignment and azimuth are possible at the production stage to ensure that each unit is set correctly when it leaves the factory. As this is a potentially major area of variation in performance, this could be very useful indeed.

The body is sturdy, well finished and benefits from flat sides and threaded inserts, both of which simplify fitting and aligning it. The pins are well

spaced and the size and weight is not going to be a problem for most arms to support. The height is slightly greater than some rivals, but not to the extent that it's going to be a challenge. A replacement stylus is available separately for £145 and can be fitted to other members of the family to upgrade it. The only thing worth noting is that the 3.5mV output is a little lower than some, which might be an issue if gain is tight.

**Sound quality**

As I still have a Michell TecnoDec – which shipped with an E3 on it – this seems like the logical place to test the E4. After the painless fitting process and a few hours running in, it shows that it is a meaningful step forward



**Hi-FiChoice**

**OUR VERDICT**

**SOUND QUALITY**



**LIKE:** Refined but engaging sound; simple to fit and use

**VALUE FOR MONEY**



**DISLIKE:** Some rivals are more exciting; fractionally low output

**BUILD QUALITY**



**WESAY:** A fine new arrival to the E Series that builds on its performance without losing its virtues

**FEATURES**



**OVERALL**

