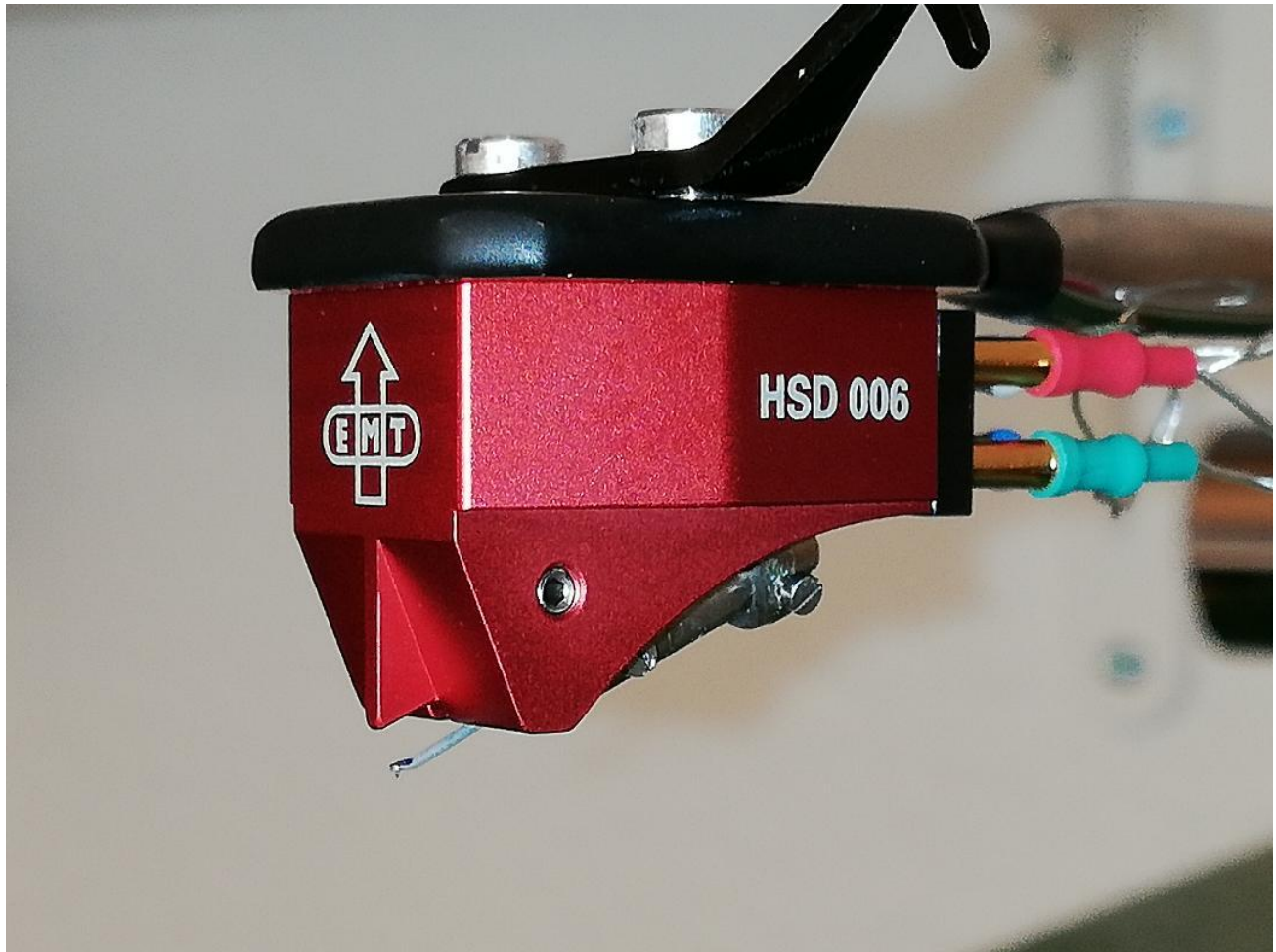


dimanche 14 juillet 2019

## EMT HSD 006



During the last months I have considered modifying my way of appreciating hifi gears.

In so many years of listening and owning and selling and distributing hifi equipment, something has broken. I have learnt to making less mistakes, even though it means at the end less fun in exchange of more satisfaction.

Strange eh? If I do not allow me to make mistakes I could not try later to solve these same mistakes, to improve things, in this case sound reproduction. And a lot of the game in hifi is concentrated on it.

How not to make mistakes? I have thought about it and the easiest and most efficace answer I have is: to know what you are able to really love. Easy with many years of experience but difficult at the beginning.

It is nevertheless fascinating how a certain basic sound taste stays inside us almost unaltered. We cover it, we kill it, we modify it only to realise after a while that it is always there.

I remember, many years ago, maybe in the very early '90 I was listening and comparing cables with my, at that time Arcam CD drive and separate DAC. For digital cable, at the end of many comparisons, I was enjoying much more an expensive MIT then anything else. Its dynamic freedom, this kind of free breathing was talking to my sensibility. But of course its timbre were not as beautiful as another cable I had on hand and a little monochromes. So you think I would like also high efficient speakers? No, I have never liked them since generally they are more coloured then other designs and when my ears detect a coloration they will magnify it little by little after every exposure so that within few days I could not stand it.



So I should like electric cross overs? Yes I love them. You get much more free breathing with them, but many amps, many cables, cost and complication rise the bar too much for my economic situation and space allowance.

What I have done in all these years is starting liking many audio things, but loving very, very few of them. It was like a curse. The more things I was liking the less things I was loving. I started liking the way some equipment were able to reproduce timbres, the way they could paint an acoustic landscape, and so on. But at the end, within their good qualities and within the admiration I had for some of their capabilities, for me they were more or less useless, at least on an deep listening level relation.

The most important basic feature that an hifi gear has to have for me is to be able to talk to my heart, not just to be interesting in a way or in another.

How many times, it happens that something is better in almost all reproduction parameters in comparison to something else but miserably fail to move us ? So why we end up with things like that ? It is because when we have to spend our hard gained money we try to be reasonable, but when we try to be reasonable in an heart affair (and music is an heart affair) we make mistakes. So when we choose our new amplifier in comparison with our old one, and we ear better bass, better high, better imaging, then we are selling ourselves that product, we are allowing us to spend that money since we have, what we think , a valid reason to do so. At the end this very valid reason become the worst reason, since, after a short or a long while, we relise we were enjoying our music more with our previous amplifier. Everybody has done this same mistake in his hifi journey, and me of course included.

**Since I am not paid, nor I receive any gift from anybody in the audio bussiness, I have made the decision to change, from now on, my way of writing about hifi gears. I will try not to write about what you could like,** like a professional audio writer does, and trying to describe a sound in a way that, from his writing, you may think you would be able to like it or not. **My positive conclusion will only be based on if something is capable of talking to my heart or not.** Yes, **I will become much more subjective.** I think it will be easier also for you that are reading me. At the end you will be able to discover if you have more or less the same taste that I have.

And this will happen starting from right now. Right from this cartridge.

It is listening to this cartridge that at the end brought me to consider this choice.  
Now to this cartridge.

This is An EMT cartridge. EMT is an old firm and bla bla bla, you remember I am not paid to describe everything and to try to show I have earnt my salary, so if you are interested in knowing more about EMT you can do your researches. It is the less expensive in their range, and according to Mr. M.Huber at EMT, "Our experience is that – if treated carefully – the diamond will last for 2'000 hours. High tonearm friction values will reduce the lifetime".

It is a fairly high output MC so no need for step up transformers (even though I love what step up trasformer do, I just said no need of it) if you have a decent MC phono preamp. I have tried with few phono preamps with no problem, from a Trichord Dino to a very expensive Lamm. I found the optimal loading to be spot on with EMT recomandation between 200 to 300 ohms.

The building quality is quite good ; I am just a little disappointed in the quality of the red painting of its body that has a clear imperfection on one side of the cartridge, like a finger print... This could be easily avoided I think without the production being more expensive at the end.

What you have with this cartridge after the very needed 50 hours break in ?

The first thing you notice is **a certain sense of completeness.**

You are not called upon a certain aspect of the music reproduction, like delicacy, timbre, or bass, or drive, or whatever, but you are called upon hearing the music. This is extremely rare. It has enough drive, enough image specificity, enough bass, enough high, enough nuances, enough transparency, enough of any parameters in a way that any parameter is neither left behind nor pushed forward so that you have this sense of completeness I have talked about.

If this will be your only cartridge and you won't compare it with anything else, this will be enough. But to appreciate and to quantify the long list of enoughts that this cartridge is capable of, we have to compare to other cartridges in the same price range and beyond.

**Comparing it with some same category price champions cartridges I don't think will be a question of taste : the EMT HSD006 is just better, if you listen to music. If your goal is to listen to hifi you could prefer something else.**

It is better not just because of its completeness but also because it exposes shortcomings in other similar prized cartridges and also some much more expensive ones. Maybe one has better midrange glow or delicacy but just a little bit, and at the end this little bit is heavily paid by much less drive. Maybe another cartridge is a little more silky, but it pays off this little more silkiness with a lot less transparency. And so on. Of course if you are one that has one specific sonic attribute where all your emotions are concentrated you could prefer something else only in direct comparison since the EMT will give enough of it in its own. None on my hands, except a much more expensive Koetzu had better colours, and its drive was almost on a par with Deccas, none had the life in it like the 006 has, except the now out of production Myabi Standard. You soon realize that it can compete in certain parameter with almost any cartridge and if loses on them it will lose slightly but when it gains in other parameters it gains easily.

How can it be bettered? Many things like a more silk top end, a slightly better image height, a slightly more differentiated bass, and a slightly richer mid high reproduction, and transparency, but... if to get one of these things better, it means altering the pleasure this cartridge is capable of giving, please don't touch it ! Leave it the way it is ! Please do it for us.

This will be my daily pleasure cartridge, capable to reproduce effectively and with the right attitude all my very different music collection, from Baroque to Reggae and Jazz and some Pop too.

For the special occasions I have many other cartridges that I can love for that « certain » moment, when I crave transparency, or a beautiful midrange golden glow.

How will it sound a much more expensive EMT JSD Pure Black or the beautiful green JSD Pure Lime, or the Platinum ? It will be dangerous to discover it out...

At the end the JSD 006 easily achieves things that too many even much more expensive cartridges fail to achieve: to reproduce the emotion in the music it is playing. Too many times cartridges and other hifi equipment don't know how to do it. In their quest of a flatter response or a better something else they get lost in the sterile details, perfectly detectable by our ears and brain but

absolutely tasteless for our soul.

Considering the reproduction of music is for me absolutely undissociable to the capability to reproduce its emotional content, the EMT JSD 006 is very simply **one of the best product in hifi history**. And of course it will appear in my new Favourites sections.

PS: in the coming week I will be updating all my recommended components. No more great hifi products only great soul movers... the problem is that many, too many, if not almost all new products are just great hifi products...