

## Review of Bladelius Mimer - The beautiful duckling.

Skrevet av [Karl Erik Sylthe](#)



**Some products evoke a discreet yawn upon its arrival. Bladelius Mimer located at the opposite end of the scale.**

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During a visit to Roald Mikkelsen's shop Renaissance Audio on Støletorget in Bergen, I noticed that he had received a blood fresh sample of Bladelius' new creation Mimer. As the psychologist he is, he immediately read lust in my eyes, and arranged for a week-long visit for a short test.

Primus motor in Bladelus - Swedish Mike Bladelius - had a great career in the United States in which he developed products for Threshold in the early 90s. Back in Sweden, he has been responsible for the manufacturer name as S.A.T. and Advantage, and the latter eventually replaced name to Bladelius.

It is very rare that we experience products that are very different than any other product in the market, but this time we have a unique product in our arms. And the main ingredient of the total new creation is undeniably the giant touchscreen Mimer is equipped with. The whole set has exterior wxh on 247x428mm, and in this surface we find a monitor with effective width of approx. 18cm and a height of 35cm. This corresponds to a screen size of around 16 inches! It is the double size of an iPad mini, and approx. 65% larger than a standard iPad.

This enormous touch screen is located in a casing that is only 78mm deep, and in addition seems even much leaner due to the protruding flanges. There are two obvious options for the placement of this device. You can choose to place Mimer on a shelf or table, on the optional stand. With a location on a table next to the easy chair in the sweet spot will also be able to get the full benefit of a

comfortable operating the touch screen. The second location variation is to hang it on the wall, and then maybe at head height. I look forward to the day when we'll see a photo of the ultimate installation location of Mimer - I think it's just a matter of time before the first enthusiast fits Mimer in a specially built wall, where the front flush with the wall surface, and all connections are hidden behind the wall plate. The audiophile design enthusiasts` ultimate wet dream!

The story of Bladelius Mimer would fit very bad in a moral adventure of our Danish friend Hans Christian Andersen. We all know the story that is about the ugly duckling who grew up and had to go through lots of suffering before finally adulthood was recognized as a beautiful swan. Mimer is bang beautiful even as a newcomer, and the developments that will eventually go through while growing up will probably go on more functionality.

But let's slow down a little and get a total overview before we dig down into the details. What exactly is a Bladelius Mimer for something? Similar to what is often true for new products with a digital slant is hard to find a single word that covers functionality. A combination of preamplifier, DAC, streamer and Control Point, the latter designation is derived from the UPnP terminology.

As preamplifier Bladelius Mimer has only one analog input, and it is in the format minijack. This may initially seem as a little strange limitation, but it must be seen in context. Device compact format does not allow unlimited inputs and outputs, and here it is the digital connections that are prioritized. But it is also an important part of this that Bladelius develops an additional box that will have far more inputs, and which in addition are fully balanced. The connection this will happen with a special connector that I initially took for an HDMI connection, but as I became aware of is actually a fully balanced analog and digital link. This option makes sense - in addition to that it addresses the practical challenges to accommodate connections to the limited surface in the bottom of the cabinet, giving it a far more elegant solution for those who choose to hang a Mimer on the wall.



Digital connections are present in sufficient numbers - we find two coaxial and two optical digital inputs, and one digital output. In addition, all three USB ports which two are USB 3.0. The digital brain behind these is a DAC that can handle formats with resolution up to 32bit/384kHz.

And then we have streaming. Mimer, of course holds wired network connection, but also support for WiFi. This provides an increased flexibility, although wired connection may be preferable for optimum stability when streaming files with the highest resolutions.



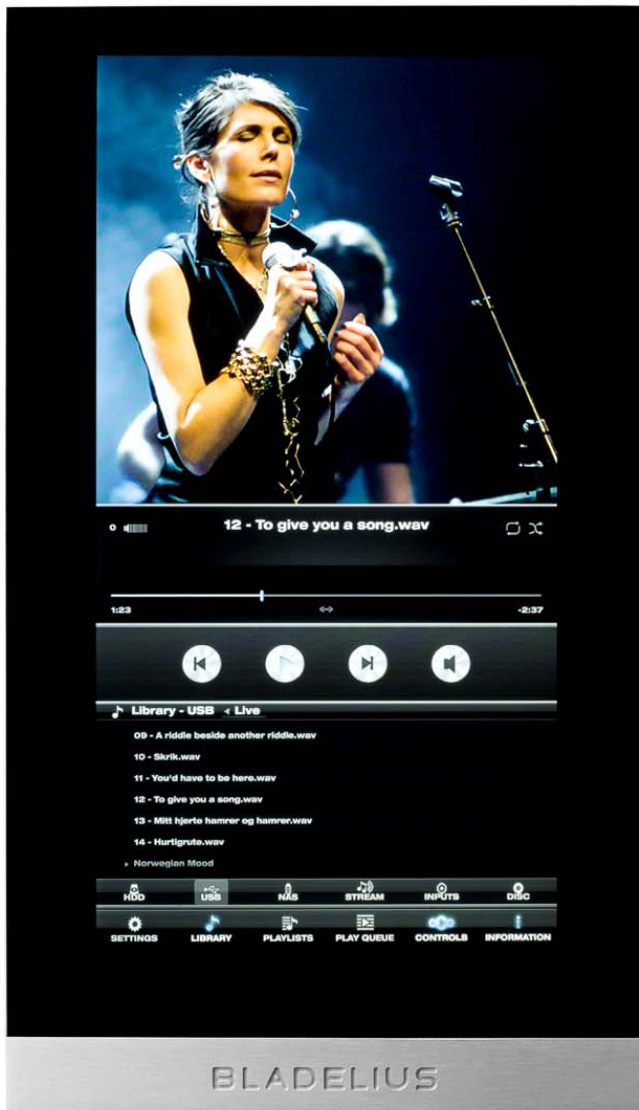
We start with the service, where Bladelius Mimer was the first HighEnd streams with direct support for WIMP HiFi. I hardly need to tell what WiMP HiFi has meant for streaming, but it gives availability to a formidable selection of music titles in lossless CD quality. With WiMP on Mimer you get direct access without relying on a PC, mobile phone or tablet to play lossless. Only small drop of wormwood is that in this early edition of implementation are you are depending on logging in manually each time - a bit cumbersome. This I feel confident will be improved next time around.

Spotify is also implemented and function in practice in a similar way as WIMP. Some larger repertoire, but thus limited to 320kb resolution.

Bladelius Mimer also acts as a UPnP streamer, and it found my music library without hesitation. As streams I found it natural to compare Mimer with my reference since 2007 - Linn DS Akuraters. This has gained a very good interface in a well-developed program Kinsky, who are both for PC / MAC and mobile / tablet. Currently, there are not too Mimer, but Bladelius working on it. And if anyone should be wary of promises of future evolutions, only to take a look at the great app Bladelius has created Embla.

### **The sound of Mimer.**

As mentioned Bladelius have a long experience in the production of HighEnd products, both in the analog and digital domain. Our writer Rudi has previously tested Bladelius Ask and Idun , and was so delighted about that hit almost made permanent consequences for him. For my own part, this is the first test with a Bladelius product, and the excitement is great. Is this a full Bladelius product? Can this Mimer so jammed with pioneering functionality have something left for the quality sound, with its moderate price tag of 28,000, -?



The review period was shorter than normal as a very benevolent Roald in Renaissance Audio lent his only store sample in one week. There is some limited testing capabilities in one week, but I still got tested it in a number of different layouts.

The first stage was to let it replace Akuraters DS as a pure stream of my primary setup, which also comprises the preamplifier Linn Kinon and speakers Ninka that is driven by active split triampig in a Chakra 6100 with custom active crossover manufactured by Linn. In this configuration I put the output from Mimer to a fixed level. This can be configured in the setup menu in Mimer, so that you can optionally allow it to function as pure streamer connected to external preamplifier.

Comparison with Akurate DS is far from fair - this is a streamer which cost just over forty thousand NOK in 2007, and has no additional qualifications at all. Not even digital inputs or outputs. It is thus the antithesis to Mimer, who is the epitome of functionality. Yet it was in no way the league of its own as the price tag would suggest, but rather a demonstration of a somewhat different character.

Linn Akurate DS has a neutral sound that tends towards the analytical, despite its music-oriented style of play. If you have a layout that otherwise tend toward the cold, it can easily become too much of a good thing. Here comes the rest of the layout Akurate DS to assistance, and nice balance back toward neutral. Mimer is also neutral in principle, but where Akurate DS has its analytical tendency, I would rather say that Mimer has a little touch of heat.

The next step in the main setup was connecting Bladelius Mimer directly to the power amp Linn Chakra 6100. In my enthusiasm I forgot to go to reset to variable output. And yes, it was loud ... After

a short technical break it was time for listening session. I am unsure if I should be surprised, but the tiny advantage Akurate DS had in favor of Mimer as pure source, was quite unchanged when it was compared with Akurate DS + Kinoss. This confirms to the extent that Kinoss is a good transparent PREAMP, but it also confirms that Bladelius has performed implementing a surprisingly good Preamp section of Mimer. And it is important to remember that here is electronics around 100k it is a hair's breadth from to equate itself with. I would also remind you that the limited review period gave fewer opportunities to uncover nuances than a full test period would provides.

Bladelius Mimer was in most of the test period used in combination with the fascinating power amp Burson Timekeeper, which was in for review simultaneously. These were run both as bridged mono blocks and as stereo power amplifiers, and a thorough description of the experience of Timekeeper, you can read more about the test that will be published in a short time. In this context, we note only that Mimer retained its great character displayed together with Linn components. A neutral base character with a minimal tendency towards the warm, combined with a fantastic large perspective. And a good care of dynamic contrasts in the source material. Not unexpectedly came Mimer really into its own when it got to play with HighRes files streamed via UPnP.

### **Summary.**

Bladelius Mimer had already distinguished itself as an incredibly exciting product, and the impression is retained after this short test. Bladelius have achieved to create a product that has both a fantastic large area of competence with the market's biggest touch screen in a hifi product, and a sound that is much better than what one would expect of such a complex product at a really sensational low price.

I can not avoid commenting that I have a wish list for future development. The good news is that Bladelius already working on the wish list. We're talking about an additional box for multiple connections, and an app for operating through mobile and tablet devices. We know this is coming, and I'd also been extra happy if this was topped by an old-fashioned Hardware Remote for use as early in the morning that the iPhone has not woken yet. Or maybe it's me?

Bladelius Mimer get well-deserved full attention whether it is wall mounted or stand on a shelf. And so I hereby promise to publish a report in Audiophile.no if the first buyer who join us for a solution person has made embedding Mimer ito a wall!

Thanks to Roald Mikkelsen and Renaissance Audio for generously loan of Bladelius Mimer.

Importer of Bladelius is Norwegian Audio Technology .



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