

Luis Fernandes, finite elemente

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This isn't the first time we've spoken to Luis Fernandes from finite elemente. But things have changed, both in the wider market and for finite elemente. When last we spoke, Fernandes had just taken the brand back. A few years later, what's changed? What has progressed and how?

We spoke to Luis Fernandes in the delightful Petersham Hotel in Richmond-upon-Thames, as he travelled to the UK for a brief visit. The full interview can be seen on our YouTube channel soon.

AS: What does finite elemente make today?

LF: Our primary focus is, of course, on our Pagode range of stands, which celebrates its 25th year in 2025. So, the Pagode concept is still alive. Six years ago, in June 2019, we improved it to the latest generation. This is our main focus, our mainstay. And the second one is the CERA interfaces, which also celebrate nearly 20 years.

Cosmetics aside, what has changed in the Pagode Mk II series?

They didn't change! It worked properly over the years and still works.

What about Carbofibre?

Carbofibre is our new carbon fibre range of isolation bases. And now we even topped that with the Carbofibre Statement for reference isolation of power amps and turntables. So, we have the Pagode, the Cera family products and now the Carbofibre products.

I understand that the Carbofibre Statement is being launched officially at Munich 2025. Is there some intermingling between Pagode and the Carbofibre?

Yes because the Carbofibre technology, which incorporates the honeycomb core material inside the shells and the carbon layers outside, can be tailored to any size. So, we have standalone Carbofibre bases, but we also have Carbofibre shelves for the Pagode racks, which substitute the existing wooden shelves... which are not only wood!

That sounds cryptic! What do you mean?

They also use a honeycomb core inside so that we could improve the sonic properties of the Pagode series with the carbon shelves. To top that, we developed the Carbon Edition, which also has wooden frames layered with the same carbon material. Its 1.5mm thick carbon layers increase the stiffness significantly, which benefits the sound.

I don't want people to think that Carbofibre is simply an upgrade for Pagode. The two run concurrently. Ideally, somebody goes down one line or the other. Now, there are also layers within layers, as you said. There's Carbofibre and Carbofibre Statement. There are also levels within the ranges. For example, with Pagode there's more than just one set of options.

We started with the Master Reference Mk II series, which has inserted shelves that can now be exchanged for Carbofibre. We also have our entry-level series, the Pagode

Signature Mk II. We also improved it to the second generation. These products deliberately have quite plain looks because the technology is built inside the platforms and stands. We have the honeycomb core material inside the shelves.

It's a series dedicated to light to medium weight components, whereas the Master Reference Mk II and Pagode Edition II series – and the Pagode Mk II Carbon Edition – can be used with even the heaviest components.

Many high-end support systems wear their technology on the outside. You have placed that technology 'under the hood' for aesthetic reasons. Talk us through what goes on inside a Pagode product.

The main goal was 25 years ago to create an equipment support for the Pagode line that fits nicely into the living environment. Something that can be considered a piece of furniture with some technology visible. But with the main technology hidden, so that you look at it and you don't focus on the outside technology because you have to consider it as a piece of furniture that melts nicely into the living environment.

That's why we came up with the design of the system. It's a three-layer design, where you have an outside frame and bottom level, the inside pillars, and then you have the frames with separate shelves. It's a system that avoids resonances piling up, that you get from using heavy one-piece shelves, for example.



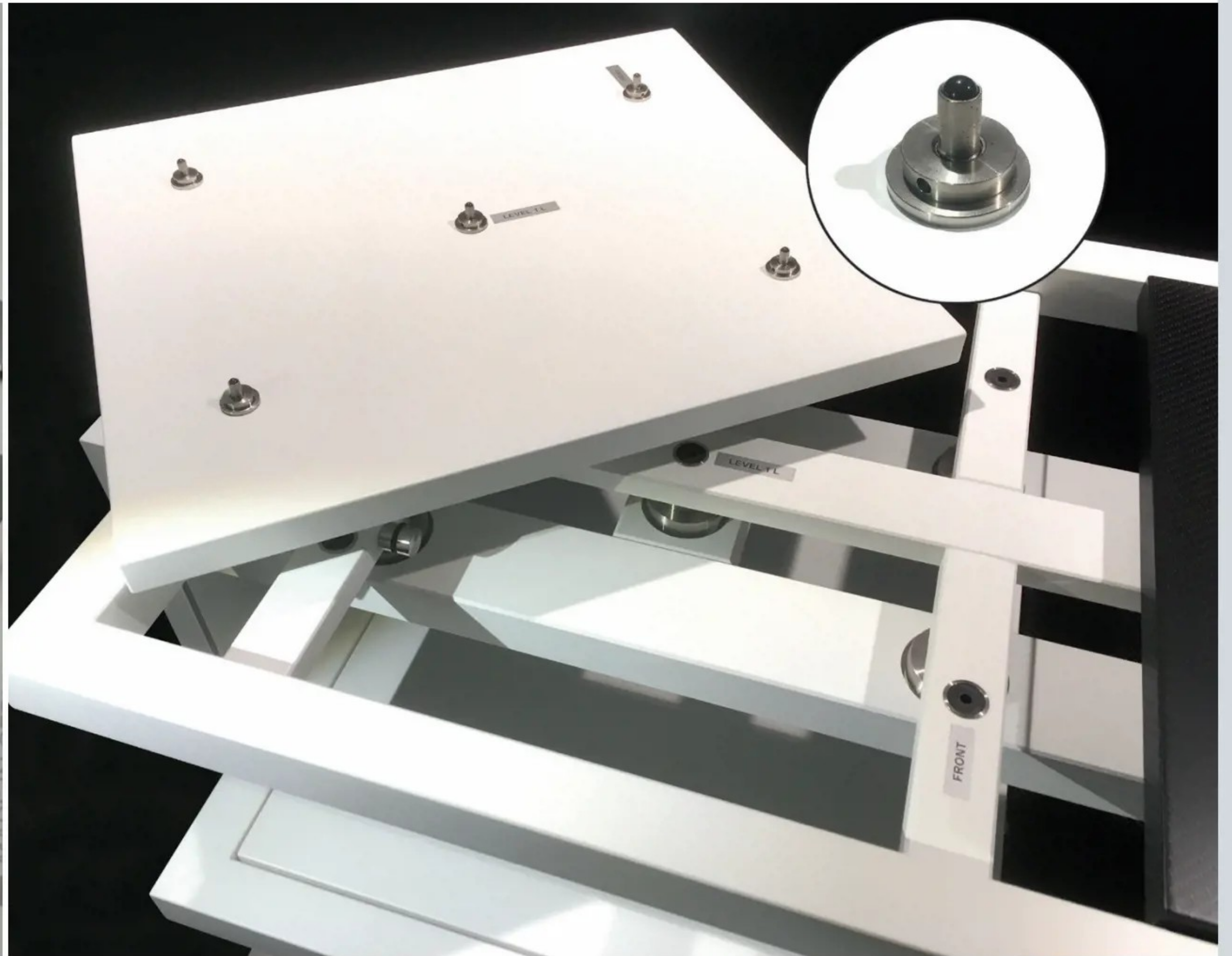
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Cera products can be used under loudspeakers, too. Or under racks or platforms.
Let's call Cera the joint between the components and the equipment support.



» **What about Cera products? Where do they fit in?**

The Cera products came from the idea of having a resonance control environment for the components, which can take resonance energy. It's a simple physical principle. So, we came up with coupling the device to the shelves or the equipment supports.

Of course, the Cera products can be used under loudspeakers, too. Or under the racks or platforms. Let's call Cera the joint between the

components and the equipment support. We use the coupling technology very effectively because we create a resonance-controlled environment with our products.

Before the 2019 'reboot' of finite elemente, there were several more

affordable equipment support options, such as Spider. Why were they discontinued, and could they ever return?

We're a small company. We don't have our own manufacturing. We do the development, assembly, logistics, distribution, and customer care. And so, it's very difficult to enter lower-priced regions.

There are a lot of other companies who can do that better than we can. Manufacturing and material costs for a small company like finite elemente, which exclusively works with suppliers,

are quite high. That means when we develop future products, they will be at higher price levels for dedicated audiophiles and music lovers. »





You can't make the same upgrades for the price of the Pagode Signature by upgrading the loudspeakers or electronics.

» What advice would you have for someone who has never considered dedicated equipment support systems?

Let's start with our philosophy. We see the equipment supports as an intrinsic component of the system as important as the main supply. The quality of the supply and the quality of the room acoustics are the three mainstays of the system. If you do these three mainstream mainstays right, you can go on to talk about components, cables, and speakers.

However, most customers, dealers, and distributors consider equipment support mere equipment support. So, just put components in, and then that's it. Also, a vital aspect is that equipment supports are not very sexy because talking about the speaker and the technology of the tweeter or the cabinet, whatever, or components or amplifiers or turntables, it's much more sexy than equipment support.

If you look at most components, consider improving the resonance with equipment support. A lot of companies operate with high damping materials and high damping principles. However, we don't do that because we consider the equipment support to be like an instrument. You have to tune that to a certain resonance behaviour so that it doesn't influence the components that rest on it.

How do you get that message across to people?

It's really a matter of understanding what good support can do and what truly dedicated support can do better. So for us, it's very important to stay with the music, to keep the music as natural as possible and not influence it too much. Excessive materials, too much damping, and overly elaborate

constructions ultimately kill the naturalness of the music.

If you look at the Pagode Signature Mk II, which is our 'entry price' level, and you apply this to a €10,000, or €15,000 system, we can make it sound like a €20,000 or €30,000 system. You can't make the same upgrades for the price of the Pagode Signature by upgrading the loudspeakers or electronics because the speaker only reproduces what you feed into it. I feel that if you make mistakes on the wrong side of the system (the equipment support), then you cannot benefit from good recordings.

What do you think people get wrong about equipment support, and why?

They miss a lot of the engineering story. However, people fundamentally miss some aspects of what a support system brings. That should come from the dealer and the distributor, making the differences clear and understandable. Suppose the customer steps away from the regular sideboard at home, where he puts his components on, and moves towards a dedicated equipment support. In that case, they stop there, and they don't know that there are equipment supports around that can take their sonic level to another, higher level.

I often see that they stop there if they think I have bought an audio rack, and that's it. But they probably could have done better investing a little bit more money and getting much better results, or by using a dedicated equipment support.

Are Cera products a gateway to equipment support systems?

Yeah, they make key improvements to the system, such as reducing the noise floor, which is a big problem

in most systems. That means more refined detail, and more coherence in the music. And, I think it's a correct expression. It's a gateway, yes. We have a family sound.

I always use an example of being in a room with a dimmable light. Suppose you start with Cera or Pagode Signature. In that case, there is a certain level of light in the room, but if you increase the level of performance with the Master Reference Mk II the Carbofibre platforms, etc., it's like turning up the light, and you see more detail on the walls, on the carpet.

The family sound is important too. When I listen to other systems, if you have different lines within one company, one sounds like you're in one room, and the other sounds like you're in another room. And our products, because they behave very neutrally, will always stay in the same room, and you only get more detail, more information, more coherence, the better you get in the range.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Yeah. I can only recommend that music lovers and audiophiles take a closer look at equipment support and what they can do to benefit their sound, and not look at it as only a piece of furniture, just to see that there is something more about it. +

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