





THE ART OF CONNECTING

In my hi-fi universe, there are two occasions when to deal intensively with four-digit numbers; with the type designations of old JBL drivers and the connectors and terminals of the Essen-based manufacturer WBT. Today, we'll take a look at the latter.



Der 0120 ist der Schrägwinkel-Cinchstecker von WBT

Number games

Before we dive headfirst into discussing the new WBT products, we must first send our congratulations to Essen: WBT is currently celebrating its 40th anniversary. Just think about that for a moment: for 40 years, the company has been manufacturing nothing but RCA and speaker connectors, and with great success. No other company in the audio world has managed to be so successful with such a specialized portfolio. Even though company founder and namesake Wolfgang B. Thörner passed away last fall, there is no sign of lethargy in Essen-Kettwig: the improvement of signal transport for small and not-so-small signals, which has been continuously advanced over decades, remains at the top of the agenda.



Compared to the classic 0110, the 0120 is noticeably more protruding

nextgen history

One of Wolfgang Thörner's passion projects has now finally reached the series production stage after years of delay. Namely, the RCA connector with the type designation 0120. To explain this, we need to go back a little: Quite a few years ago, WBT shook up the small signal connector landscape with its famous „nextgen“ models. For the first time, RCA connectors were available with a drastically reduced metal content compared to all competing products, which prevented eddy current losses. A clever collet mechanism allowed for rock-solid mounting under all conditions, and the design also enabled signal transmission with a defined characteristic impedance for the first time. The combination of injection-molded plastic parts and metal components using stamping/bending technology is still groundbreaking today, and the competition has yet to catch up in this regard.

However, after many years of using next-gen RCA connectors, it has become apparent that the technology is not without its pitfalls, especially when used frequently: the collet mechanism is difficult to operate in confined spaces, and even after years of use, it is still unclear which way round is actually „tight.“ The end result, at least in the rough and tumble of everyday editorial life, is that the screw sleeves on many next-gen connectors simply disappear at some point. No matter, the thing still works. And some people claim that it sounds better „without“ them anyway.

The new RCA plug

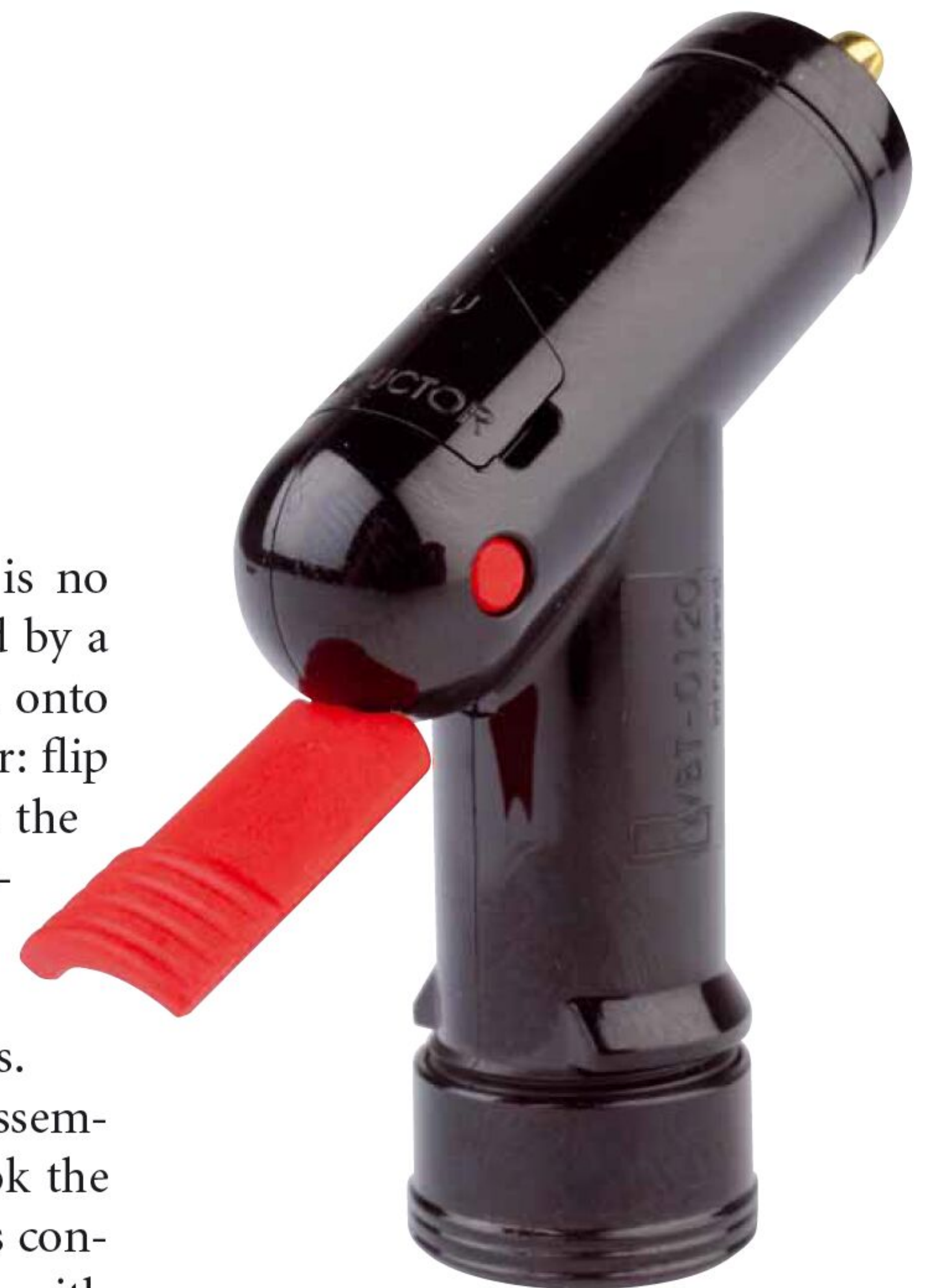
This problem has long been a thorn in WBT's side, but the solution is called 0120. WBT calls it an „angled RCA plug,“ and it took a long time to get this gem ready for series production. I remember various conversations with Wolfgang Thörner in which he told me, „We're finally ready with the 0120,“ but that turned out not to be entirely true. As always, the devil is in the details, and that takes time. Now the 0120 is finally available for purchase. At \$53 and \$76 for the copper and silver versions, respectively, it's not exactly cheap, but it now works perfectly.

The 0707 pole terminal is also a genuine next-gen product. The metal content has been reduced to the absolute minimum



And what are the differences compared to the classic nextgen connector? For one thing, the cable is no longer inserted from the rear in the traditional way, but at an angle from below. WBT promoted this many years ago with its speaker connectors, and the idea is sound on both sides: in an age of heavy and rigid cables, the angled connection significantly reduces the leverage forces on the plugs and sockets. Broken solder joints in RCA sockets are a common cause of failure in hi-fi equipment. In ad-

dition, the aluminum screw sleeve is no longer available. It has been replaced by a clamping mechanism that is locked onto the „inlet nozzle“ by means of a lever: flip the lever up to insert the plug; flip the lever down to connect the plug securely to the jack. This works very well in practice, but requires more space than conventional RCA plugs. To install a cable, you have to disassemble the 0120, and it's easy to overlook the clamp on the top at first. The cable is connected by soldering, and cable jackets with a maximum diameter of nine millimeters fit into the housing. The plug still works according to the nextgen principle, as can be easily seen from the narrow contact tab



The 0120 is locked in place using a lever

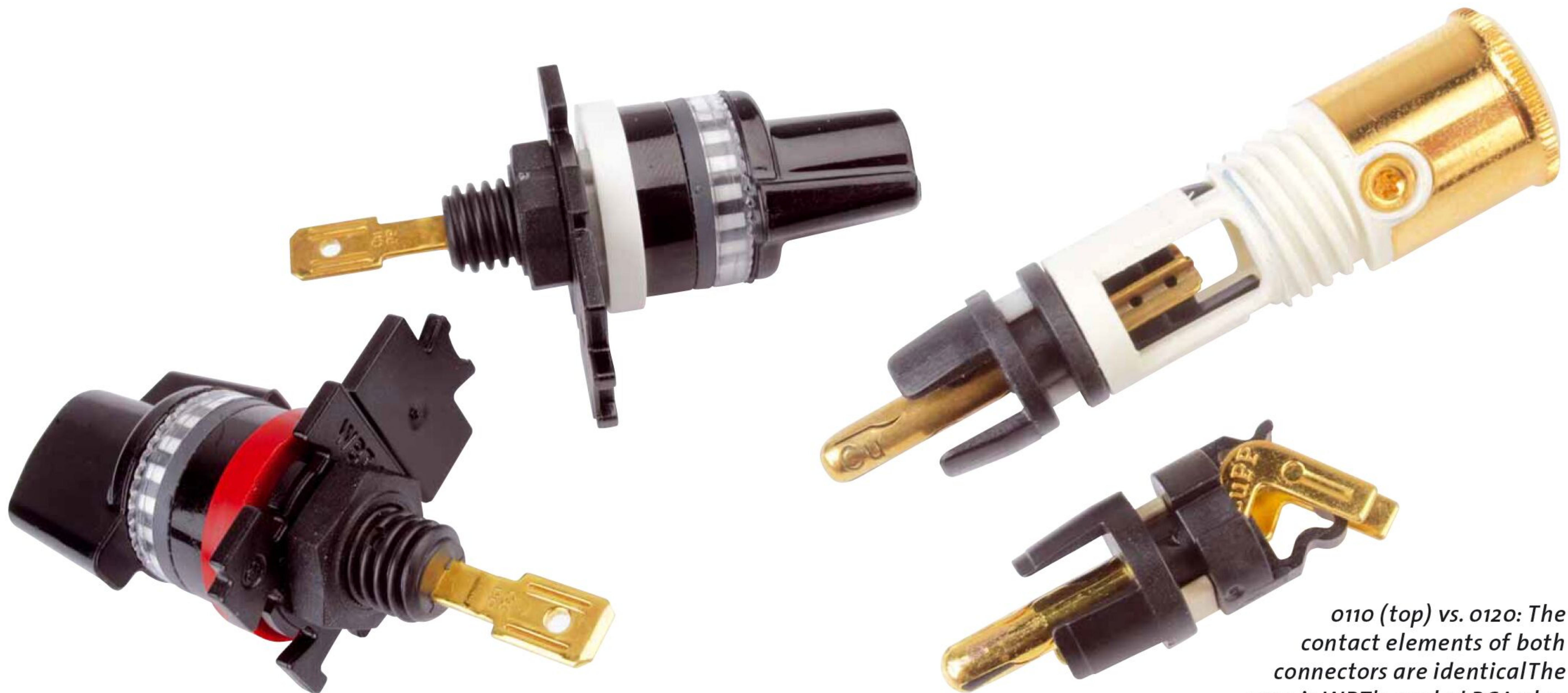
OTTA



NEW Finally, here is our newest MC pickup cartridge, the MANDOLIN by OTTA. The OTTA philosophy – magic in the midrange. The midrange is the basis for natural reproduction; this is where emotions emerge, the foundation of the sound, paired with natural highs and transparency. This is our pursuit of emotional sound.

TCG Handels GmbH
Döppers Esch 7
D-48531 Nordhorn
Phone +49 59217884927
info@tcg-gmbh.de





0110 (top) vs. 0120: The contact elements of both connectors are identical. The 0120 is WBT's angled RCA plug.

WBT offers a range of mounting aids for its pole terminals all kinds of mounting aids, which are more interesting for commercial users

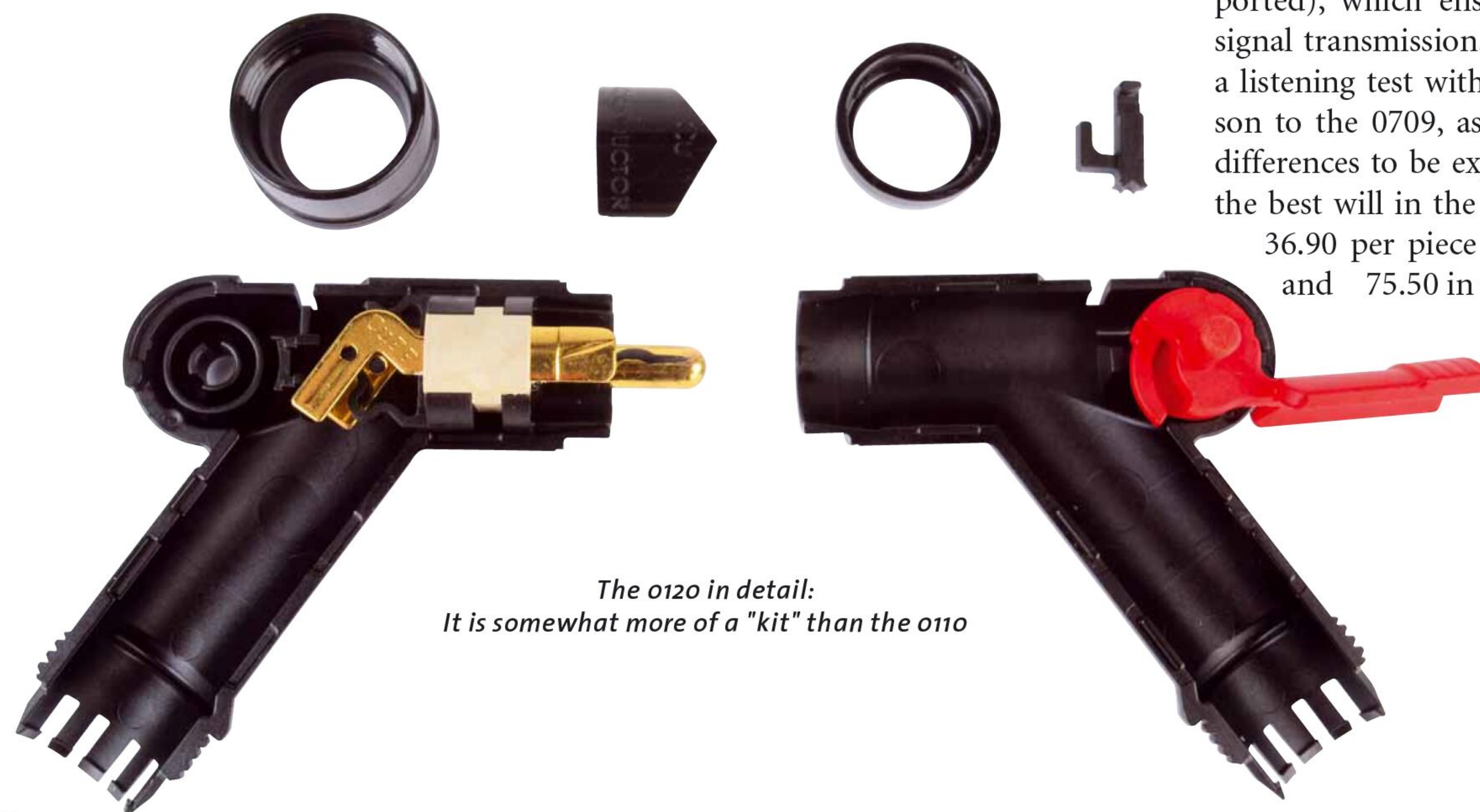
for the ground connection on the front of the plug. Since the entire plug housing is now made of very high-quality plastic, there are no longer any reservations about the aluminum screw sleeve. And I couldn't resist soldering two sets of cables with 0120 and the „old“ 0110 and listening to the difference. And yes, there are differences: the 0120 version seems a little cleaner and more transparent, perhaps slightly slimmer. It's not much, but with a little concentration it's noticeable.

The 0707 speaker terminal

The second new product from WBT concerns the speaker sector: with the 0707 model, a new pole terminal is going into

series production. It is a variant of the well-known 0703 model, the only difference being the „control element“: The 0703 has a roughly ribbed round handle, while the new 0707 has a toggle-shaped knob. In theory, this makes it easier to achieve higher tightening torques, but in practice this is hardly significant: even a 0703 can be tightened more than enough without any problems. Due to its 27-millimeter-wide toggle, the 0707 requires slightly more distance from the „neighboring terminal“ than the 0703, which must be taken into account during installation. Of course, this is also a genuine next-gen product. As with the 0120, the metal parts are coated with gold using the PVD process (we reported), which ensures noticeably better signal transmission. I didn't bother doing a listening test with the 0707 in comparison to the 0709, as there are no acoustic differences to be expected here, even with the best will in the world. The 0707 costs 36.90 per piece in the copper version and 75.50 in the silver version.

Holger Barske



The 0120 in detail: It is somewhat more of a "kit" than the 0110

WBT 0120 / 0707



- Prices

0120 CU / AG

0707 CU / AG

- Distribution

- Phone

- Internet

53 / 76 Euro

36.90 / 75.50 Euro

WBT GmbH, Essen

+49 2054 875520

wbt.de

lp

WBT

0120 / 0707

International 3/25

» Even after 40 years, WBT still manages to bring new aspects to audio signal connectors. The new 0707 pole terminal is a welcome variation on the theme, while the 0120 RCA plug is a real step forward, especially for frequent users.