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Tonearm of the Year

DaVinciAudio Labs Master Reference Tonearm Virtu \$14,795

When Peter Brem announced a new, highly adjustable DaVinci tonearm last year, JV was skeptical. One of the chief reasons Brem's 12" Grandezza tonearm sounded so great was that it *wasn't* particularly adjustable-it had none of the extra hardware that adds functionality but also adds mass and resonance to most 'arms. To his surprise the Virtu turned out to be much better than the Grandezza (and, of course, a whole lot easier to set up and use). With a unique 4-point, gimbaled, magnetic/ruby bearing, a removable headshell, new VTA and azimuth adjustments, and (soon) exchangeable 12" arm tubes, the Virtu is not only a snap to mate to cartridges; it is also the best-sounding pivoted 'arm JV has had in his system, with superb tracking and tracing, resolution, tonal balance, transient response, staging, imaging, and bass. The first pivoted tonearm that JV feels equals a linear-tracker, it is one of his references-and an unquestionable Product of the Year. (JV, forthcoming)