

## *Streamer of the Year*



### **Linn Klimax DS/3 and DSM/3**

Linn Products' goal of continuous improvement coupled with a desire to never leave one of its customers stranded makes for some potential clashes of ethos. Fortunately in the third iteration of Linn's top streamers – the standard Klimax DS and preamplifier-equipped Klimax DSM – both sides of the equation are expertly resolved. Linn's new Catalyst DAC architecture represents a major step change in sonic performance of the Klimax platform, while it is also designed to be wholly upgradable for existing Klimax DS and DSM owners, who can also get their old Klimax DS back in a 'Renew' case. Both Klimax variants are also 'Exakt' ready should you decide to go the full 'source is in the speaker' active line that Linn has been developing in recent years. In short, Everybody wins!

Catalyst carefully optimises every pathway to the DAC chip itself, allowing unparalleled access to power requirements right down to a subsystem level. The easiest – and briefest – way of considering this is it is like Linn built a bespoke suit for the DAC and it wears it well in its hewn from solid billet aluminium chambered chassis.

Normally, when listening to a change in digital architecture, the difference in sound quality is comparatively small. With the Linn Klimax DS/3, that wasn't the case. In test, Alan Sircom commented "out came 'Son of a Preacher Man' from Dusty Springfield's justly famous *Dusty In Memphis* album [Phillips], which sounded extremely good on the DS/2. Two bars into the same track on the DS/3 and it sounded like she was singing with a band, where the DS/2 now sounded like she was singing to a backing track. It was as if a group of better and better-rehearsed musicians had turned up." He concluded by saying, "even at the super-lofty end of high-end digital, the Klimax DS/3 stands with the best of them."

*Reviewed in Hi-Fi+ Issue 140*

