

Stereo
PRESTIGE & IMAGE

YBA Signature CD

by Laurent Thorin



French manufacturer born in 1981, YBA designs and manufactures of electronic of high quality CD player with a legendary Attention to detail. At the time of the dematerialization, we have been totally seduced by the CD player Top of range of the brand, obvious proof that this media still has its word to say.

YBA is a French brand well known for music lovers hexagon, but also of the audiophiles around the world, because for many years, she has carried out 90% of its turnover to the export. Founded in 1981 by Yves-Bernard André, she has known an important evolution, until its takeover by Shanling, a few years ago. The development of the products is always coordinated and provided by Yves-Bernard André, assisted by a small team of engineers enthusiasts.

The range retains a structure similar to that which has been established since the early beginnings of the mark; the Signature series created there has more than 20 years constituting Always the perfect solution for those who aspire to possess the product YBA Ultimate.

Using only the best components and materials and designed to move toward the highest quality of music reproduction possible, Signature embodies the line the more exclusive of YBA. These products are approaching a standard rarely seen in excellence audio and are recognized for their performance with high-fidelity without compromise.

The protocol of creation is very sharp. Apart from the boxes, the main components of the products signature are manufactured in France under the watchful eye of Yves-Bernard André. His personal attention to details in the manufacture of a product signature ensures a quality of the first order.

Auditioned Yves-Bernard personally tests each product for many hours to ensure that the sound Signature is exactly as he wanted to. Each product is also delivered with a personally signed certificate of his hand, attesting to its performance.

The Signature CD player has nothing to envy to the productions of the elite World digital audio. Although simple in appearance, it displays virtually 28 kilograms on the balance, which made him one of the two or three drives the heavy more of its category. It is a very beautiful machine, nicely drawn aesthetics completely devoid of plastic material! In the center of the front face, a cut out in the shape of an eye contains the matrix illuminated display can be turned off. A blue LED informs powering the device.

Just below, is the elegant embossed logo also serves as the Standby key. It is heat sensitive and only respond to a touch of the finger of a few seconds. The "symbolic" selectors in polished stainless steel are located on the left hand side. The first manages the playback functions (Play, Pause, Stop) and the second, the jump of beach front and rear.

The loading of the disk is done on the top of the player. Simply slide the flap, it also in aluminum, place the disc and the block with the puck.

On the rear panel, the sobriety is required. Two pairs of analog outputs are available: a pair asymmetric RCA plugs and a pair symmetrical on XLR sockets. A single digital output is provided, type S/PDIF on RCA connector. The arrival of the current is done via a flange IEC also combining the general switch of the power supply. The phase sector is marked by a red dot.

Like all YBA, the Signature CD Player chassis is based on three feet according to a technique dear to the Designer: a hard point in front and two points "soft" behind. This device ensures a good plate and a ideal flow of vibration by a single point. In general, this device has been the subject of a mechanical study of very, very thoughtful, and in particular in terms of the distribution of the masses. The overall weight ratio allows to stabilize the mechanics during its operation.

This last is a Philips Pro CD2 laser, the best model designed and realized by Philips. It is a piece of metal with a brushless motor. A small device allows you to drain the static electricity of the CD. This Pro CD2 block is mounted on a plate decoupled independent of the chassis. In a concern for sustainability of this product YBA has acquired a "large" stock of this Philips Pro CD2 mechanical.

In the compartment dedicated to disk, a flush Blue LED materializes the patented device of the blue diode. This [LED produces a blue laser beam with a wavelength of 400 nanometers](#). This more intense light, reflected on the surface of the compact disc, facilitates the reading by the main harness, and therefore allows for less solicit the circuits for the correction of errors. The purpose of the system is to obtain the most accurate audio signal - most pure and without distortion.

The Signature CD box includes two hulls which fit one into the other. They are each countersunk screws in a aluminum ingot and contain specific interior walled cavities which allow to compartmentalize certain sections to remain isolated from others.

Thus, all of the power supply is placed in the lower compartment to lower the center of gravity of the reader, and position elements that generate vibration (transformers and capacitors) to be more close to the point of flow (feet). In addition, this allows you to preserve the fragile audio signals from the radiation of the power supply. As usual, YBA has totally oversized this supply of linear type to obtain a reservoir of energy very important and stabilize to the maximum the functioning of its circuits.

The main transformer in JE displays an electric power of 190 VA. The twelve capacitors form a capacitive total of 112,800 uF. This is never seen on a CD player. It is to be noted that the processors use of Swiss plate and are pumped under vacuum and cooked to 100° for 48 hours. All their manufacture is made in France, such as that of the capacitors, but also of the resistors, the welding, fuses, and all of the connections.

The conversion to digital analog is entrusted to two DAC Cirrus Logic CS4398 per channel. This component of "race" decodes the 24 bits 192 KHz and supports the DSD. Its dynamic range is greater than 120 dB.

YBA design is completely symmetrical with only active components on the signal path.

No passive component is used.

The output stage wholly simple polarized in pure class A and is entirely discreet.

Listening

We have placed the drive signature on a stable support and rigid, and used a cord of good quality, not without the have compared to the model YBA Diamond recommended by the manufacturer. We have achieved good results in the two cases, but with a balance a bit more light for the YBA, and a little more robust to the O2A.

In relation to the "electricity", we cannot be too advise you to leave the CD Signature under voltage during several hours before making your first eavesdropping. In effect, the copious food requires a little of the heating. We compared the outputs Symmetrical and asymmetrical, with beads of same reference and of the same length in the two modes. Apart from the additional gain, we have not noted a significant difference, apart from a few nuances in terms of resolution for the benefit of the XLR, and stamps (tonality) in favor of the RCA.

Listening



The range of intro of Xenophonia (Bojan Z) summarizes with brio the inestimable virtues of the YBA Signature: purity, finesse and energy. Note the depth of the impacts on the big body, the accuracy of the attacks, the movements of the brush on the body Clear, all in a climate of total concentration. Then the voltage of the game of the left hand of the piano, with these repeated beating on the mattress.

The doublebass fits in very gradually in a scene with plucked strings and dropped who slam on the handle with metal accents. The climate is very particular to this first track is shimmery with conviction in our listening room. The Signature reproduced with sensitivity quite exceptional, as a long rise in pressure. At almost 2 minutes, when the piano is expressed in a more medium, it revels in its clear transparency. The agreements are developed with a striking clarity. The notes are chiseled and linked with a notable elegance. The Signature is also characterized by a speed very pleasant which makes the natural listening and fluid on this excerpt, the implementation perspective takes of the holographic accents. The placement of the musicians is very easily apprehended. The concept of relief takes all its meaning. When the modulation is becoming more complex, the Signature CD does not lose the signal; it remains stuck to the signal and the place with a masterful simplicity.



One finds this sensitivity to the listening of the string quartets Opus 41 of Robert Schumann interpreted by the Quartet Hermes. Again, the place of the soundstage arises between the loudspeakers, propelling us into a universe quite specific. The game is sometimes haunting, sometimes energetic violins and the cello is well made by the CD Signature. To accelerations, the bite of the bow on the strings is done more incisive, and this rupture melodic metal is spotlessly transcribed by the French CD player that maintains the pressure and channels the energy with a very beautiful control. He never gives the sensation to do too much, to force the stroke. It is located more in a logic of accuracy and proportions. This machine is the antithesis of a flattering product; she is always on the wire, but with a Brio balancing ingeniously inspired.



On the Blu-Spec Edition CD from the Kind of Blue of Miles Davis, the climate which is required in the first few seconds of "All blues", is completely taking. The rhythm put in place by the piano trio battery low is unfolding as a well oiled group with a precision of a métronomique. On this sumptuous track, the saxophone and the trumpet housing register their dialog with an infinite distinction.

We note the depth of the saxophone, its glossy side, copper. The Trumpet deploys an energy without any restraint. The Minimalist game of Davis against the ardour tense of Coltrane is fully identifiable. The Signature CD expresses this partition with coherence and realism.

SUMMARY: Synthesis of the aesthetically sound

For having experienced many of the products YBA since a good twenty years, we have been able to judge the beautiful progress made by the mark in terms of sound reproduction, with this CD Signature. YBA has always had a non-conformist approach of CD players, and the latter will not be the exception, but the results are well there.

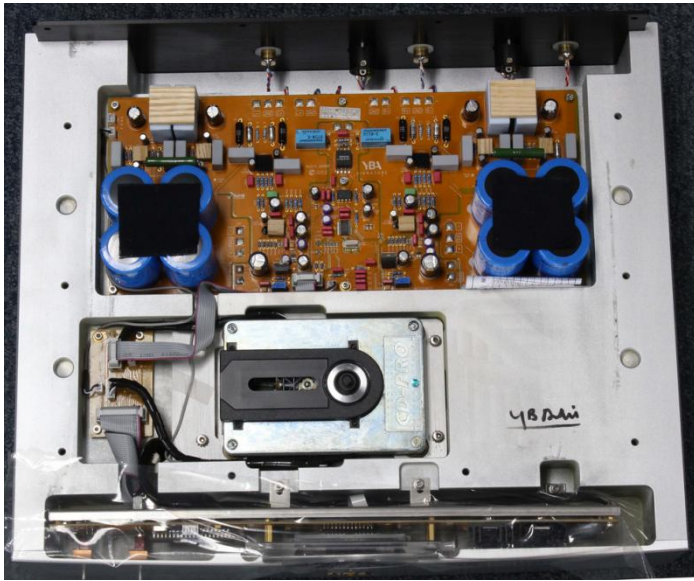
This sumptuous reader first manifests itself by an ultra-wide bandwidth with a serious deep and flexible & controlled bass, and a particularly top octaves that is detailed and subtle. The medium is velvety, delicate, very open and highly structured. It is evidence of density and substance of matter. This feels very well on the voice and the acoustic instruments. The second point marking for the dynamic which is expressed here without any restraint, but with a absolute control. This means that the Signature CD accelerates to perfection when the modulation requires, but that it is also able to curb to follow the signal, and this without settlement, without rupture of the melody.

This range from softness to energetic vitality give the Signature CD a type of sound reproduction that is very analog, in the good sense of the term. It is also what makes this machine, this form of duality totally consistent between the power of resolution of the CD and the musicality baritone of the black disc.

Manufacturer Specifications
Level of unbalanced output: 2.3 V
Level of balanced output: 4.6 V
Signal/noise ratio (RCA): 115 dB
Signal/noise ratio (XLR): 120 dB
Frequency response: 20 Hz to 20 kHz (-0.5 dB)
Distortion (20 Hz to 20 kHz): < 0.003%
Chassis CNC machined from solid aluminum billet
Dimensions: 430 x 388 x 151 mm
Weight: 60 lbs (27.5 kg)

US\$ 16,500





Left: Bottom "hull" as seen from the top (note Yves-Bernard's signature of QC approval)

Right: Bottom "hull" as seen from the bottom



hi-fi+

"In a brief talk with company founder Yves Bernard Andre, we learned that Andre feels that in some cases CD players can still outperform computer-based digital audio solutions, which explains why he has chosen to create the Genesis CD4 player."