

WHY THE LINN LP12 IS STILL MAJIK!

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“It’s an expensive way of appeasing Fluffy or Nibbles, but if ‘Nibbles’ is next-door’s guard Rottweiler, the Silencer is money well spent.”



KLAUDIO KD-CLN-LP200 RECORD CLEANING MACHINE

The TechDAS came with an unexpected extra feature, in the boxy, upright shape of the £4,000 KD-CLN-LP200 from audio newcomer Klaudio. The name is mostly descriptive; it’s a 200W LP cleaning machine, but entirely skips over the whole ‘ultrasonic cleaner and dryer’ part.

Although Klaudio is a new brand, its parent company Koolance has been a major player in the liquid-cooling field since the turn of the millennium, and a lot of the mechanics are common to both cooling and ultrasonic cleaning.

Unlike previous cleaners, this is an entirely detergent, near-enough contact-free method of cleaning: the disc is placed vertically in a slot at the top of the LP200, it squirts distilled water from a reservoir evenly across the disc, does its ultrasonic thing, and then air-dries the disc. It’s all completely automated; you just select washing and drying time, depending on the LP crud-factor. There have been some concerns over the use of a 200W ultrasonic motor, as in theory prolonged cleaning could damage the disc: Klaudio’s website shows what happens to a red and a blue vinyl LP run for nine hours at high heat – aside from dirt removal, nada. Thus, a five minute clean is unlikely to damage an LP, and no-one’s going to turn their nose up at a five minute blow j... blow dry. Optional adaptors for 10” and 7” records are available, and there’s even an automatic disc loader for those with thousands of records to clean.

There’s also one more ‘option’ that really isn’t optional for the LP200 in the home – the £1,500 ‘Silencer Acoustic Dampening Case’. The case uses similar damping layers to the ‘blimps’ used by stills photographers on movie sets to cut the sound of a DSLR mirror clattering, and this offers a claimed 50dBA attenuation overall. In fairness, the LP200 isn’t significantly noisier than record cleaners like the Nitty Gritty, but it’s the ‘ultrasonic’ component that is the problem. If you (or your neighbours) have pets, an un-blimped LP200 is like Metallica turning up for a soundcheck on your driveway for them. It’s an expensive way of appeasing Fluffy

or Nibbles, but if ‘Nibbles’ is next-door’s guard Rottweiler, the Silencer is money well spent.

I’m pretty good with my LPs. They get played, and reviewers are not known for their fastidiousness, but somehow my LPs are in generally fine fettle. So, my take on RCMs has usually been limited to helping out those second-hand finds that need a little TLC. And in this context, the LP200 is all the TLC you could ask for. Five minutes cleaning and five minutes drying restores them to the way they looked when they first left the inner sleeve. OK, so there’s nothing you can do about the scratches and divots taken out of an LP by a 1970s stoner missing the spindle, but the remarkable thing is most of those pops and crackles that you thought were just a function of overplaying just go away.

And then, the really crazy part hits. You get one of your cleanest, or newest, LPs... and the same thing happens. The surface noise just drops away, fairly significantly. Even thick 180g virgin pressings get noticeably quieter and the music just flows a little easier.

The Klaudio KD-CLN-LP200 raises the bar in terms of record cleaner price, but it also raises the bar in terms of record cleaning. LPs leave the LP200 in pristine, museum-grade condition, and you really can hear the difference, too. Serious record collectors – start saving!

Manufactured by: Klaudio
URL: www.klaudio.com

