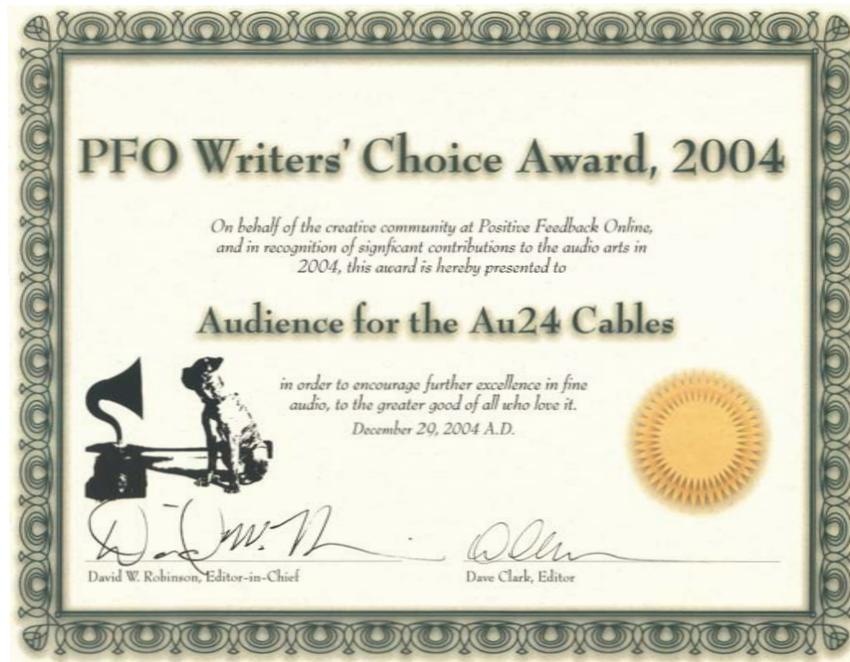


Positive Feedback Online

Writers' Choice Awards for 2004 by Greg Weaver



Audience Au 24 Cables

Richard Smith's diminutive coaxial Audience Au24 cable system provides the most natural and relaxed presentation I've ever experienced in my system, yet it sacrifices nothing in detail. The words "resolute" and "detail" are often used as code meaning "bright." None of that here: every detail is present, from a front seat cough to the acoustic signature of the recording space. I have never heard such resolve without that "in your face" glare or forwardness. Moreover, their ability at resolving detail down near the noise floor is breathtaking. They are both darkly quiet and explosively dynamic, making them unrivaled in my experience at the rendering of micro-dynamic shadings. Macro-dynamic presentation is equally spectacular at 50 dB to 90 dB playback levels. Listen for this attribute with other cables. Typically, dynamic scaling diminishes right along with the volume setting.

Their timing is near flawless. They offer no obvious disparities across the entire spectrum. Everything arrives coherently, yielding an unbelievable sense of "pace" and "drive." To that end, they have an almost organic balance, as their interpretation of timbre is astonishing in its naturalness. They have the ability to recreate a full and realistic soundstage, not disproportional or exaggerated. They are simply the most "honest" sounding cable system I have yet to experience in my own system. More than any other cable system I have encountered in my home, they get out of the way and effectively communicate the inherent message of the music.

I have used many brands of cable over the past three decades, including, but not limited to; Monster (the entire gamut of their products), Fulton, Polk, Cardas, JPS, D.H. Labs, Kimber, MIT, Audio Quest, Straight Wire, Herron Audio, Transparent, Goertz Alpha-Core, Silver Audio, Silver Circle Audio, Analysis Plus, Harmonic Technology and now the Audience Au24's. While I am able to note the differences *every* cable makes when inserted into my system, the Au24 marks the most fundamentally *musical* shift in performance I have yet to experience. In addition, that transformation has been universal in my experiments across equipment with price tags ranging from \$200 to \$8000. Don't let these skinny little black cables escape your attention. These are world-class cables that, given the price tags of some of their portentous peers, represent an excellent value as well.