The original Audience Au24 power cords have been a part of my reference systems for sometime now, but Audience recently introduced an upgraded SE line that offers improved rhodium-plated copper plugs and IEC connectors, higher-quality metallurgy, lower mass, and improved terminations. The Audience SE is a low DC resistance, low-impedance design that uses multi-strand conductors of high-purity mono-crystal copper. Jacketing is quite flexible, which will be welcome to anyone who has wrestled with the implacably stiff stuff. Note: Existing Audience Au24 cords are upgradable to SE status for $275.

The signature of the Au24 is sophisticated—complex, controlled, detailed, with a neutral-to-cool character. The Audience established the widest, cleanest soundspace, broadening the proscenium to the boundaries of the loudspeakers and inflating the ambience of immersive acoustic recordings like the Elgar and the Rutter with flurries of soft air and top-end extension. Most markedly, Au24 SE has a light, delicate touch, an insider’s touch, that illuminates transient and low-level information like few power cords I’ve encountered. Music seems to emerge from a quieter space and exhibit wider dynamic contrasts. During the intro to the Ricki Lee Jones, for example, the Audience brought out the very articulate and agile acoustic bass and the organic snap and string rattle from the classical guitar. But this higher resolution came at the cost of some of the bloom of the Dynamic Design.

The bandaleon theme during the “Nublado” was the most specifically focused in soundspace of all three contenders, though the Audience also held tight to the reverberant information from the menagerie of other regional instruments. Layering and dynamic contrasts and tonal-color rendering were excellent. During the finale of The Wasps the timbral and harmonic intricacies of the flute line dancing around the accompanying harp motif were riveting in their pastoral beauty and articulation.

The Audience’s portrayal of Rutter’s Lux Aeterna track was impressive in the energy it gathered from the large men’s and women’s chorus and the weight of the pipe organ expanding and contracting in the immense acoustic space. The Audience made it a breeze to picture the soaring height and scale of the auditorium, and the diminished size of the musicians within it. It’s a terrifically balanced power cord. Some cords, the Dynamic Design for one, will nose it out in ultimate bass extension, but not a cord surpasses its pitch precision or its charms when it comes to illuminating dimensional space.

Conclusion: Well balanced, and a knack for detail spells reference-level sonics that reveal the entire musical picture.