



SUMIKO

PHONO CARTRIDGES

Rendering the emotion in your music.

Sumiko Phono Cartridges embody the artistry of Japanese handcraft. Guided by the insights of American aficionados of analog fidelity, we draw on over half a century of Japanese expertise, employing the finest materials and artisans to render sonics that enrich generations of listeners. Each cartridge is a meditation in precision and quality, unfolding a horizon of transducers that remain true to the groove. Tonally balanced, refined, and fatigueless, they deliver the emotional message embedded in your music.

A rich history of global favorites since 1982...

- 1980s – Talisman, Alchemist & Virtuoso
 - Landmark phono cartridges put Sumiko on the map
- 1990s – Oyster, Black Pearl, Pearl, Blue Point & Blue Point Special
 - Sumiko remains committed to analog as the CD proliferates
- 2000s – Blackbird, Celebration & Presentation
 - Hi-fi enthusiasts become disenchanted with CDs
- 2010s – Rainier up to Amethyst, Songbird & Starling
 - Vinyl is surging even in the face of hi-res digital
- 2020s – Wellfleet, RS 78, Celebration 40 & *more to come!*
 - Vinyl is here to stay!

A history of quality...

- Designed in the US, made in Japan since 1982
- Manufactured by Excel Sound – Yokohama, Japan
 - Cartridge Master Masao Okada-san with over 50 years experience
 - World-renowned for artisan-quality phono cartridges
- All cartridges are made by hand
 - Refinement of build = refinement of sound
- All cartridges (and styli) are individually measured & microscopically inspected at multiple points in the production process to ensure quality
 - Stylus & cantilever alignment, frequency response, trackability, channel separation & balance
- All materials are the finest & purest, sourced within Japan
 - Purpose-selected for both durability & voicing
 - Pure oxygen-free high-conductivity copper coils (minimizes signal loss & distortion)
 - Pure, annealed ferrous material (refines & stabilizes micro-structure)
 - Reinforced alloy cantilevers
 - Advanced polymers selected for rigidity & resonance control

Sumiko cartridges are...

Musical · Fatigueless · Tonally Balanced · 'Analog'-Sounding · Refined · Excellent Trackers
Smooth · Warm · Rich · Effortless · Quiet · Forgiving · Clean · Natural · Dynamic ·
Resolving · Tactile · Poised

They are not...

Harsh · Aggressive · Forward · Analytical · Clinical · Exaggerated ·
Grainy · Gritty · Etched · Muddy · Bloated · Congested · Thin · Dry



Classic Oyster MMs

Our classic lineup of affordable MMs – Black Pearl & Pearl – have been selling themselves for over 40 years. Highly regarded among listeners on a budget, they perform with smoothness & musicality that bely the budget category. Further impressive in resolution & refinement, they leave no fatiguing artifacts on the table – a rarity in this class of cartridge.

Black Pearl & Pearl styli are interchangeable (spherical & elliptical respectively), thusly Pearl offers a wider frequency response & improved channel separation.



Modern Oyster MCMc

- Meticulously voiced high-resolution generator
- Integrated generator/housing for rigidity & resolution
- Strategically designed resonance-optimized housing
- Housing hugs stylus assembly for heightened stability
- Tiny low-mass magnets reduce moving mass
- Pure materials – all sourced within Japan
- Threaded inserts for easy mounting
- Wide compatibility with tonearms (6.7g)
- Handmade in Japan



- Low-noise generator lends smooth, clean, quiet & 'analog-sounding' qualities
- The resonant behavior of the housing lends a warm, dimensional overlay to music
- The cartridges are forgiving yet engaging, balanced and free of distracting exaggerations
- The cartridges are unique in this class for their warmth without sacrifice to musical vitality
- It's not all about the diamond! Thoughtful design & build make way for more musical information
- Note: break-in time (30-50 hours) is particularly important & noticeable with these cartridges!

Rainier

Technical

- Refined version of our classic MMs
- Elliptical stylus (0.3 x 0.7mil)
 - Easy setup, excellent detail retrieval
- Solid aluminum cantilever (Ø0.6mm)
- Robust output (5.0mV)

Bottom Line

Rainier sets the tone for the series with prevailingly warm, smooth & musical sonics while conveying impressive detail & ambience. It presents an immersive, cohesive soundstage with intelligent placement of voices & instruments that you might not expect from a cartridge of this class. The tonal balance, warm overlay & excellent tracking render sonics that can be enjoyed for hours without fatigue.



"[After break-in] ...the presentation blooms into something that's surprisingly musical and engaging. The sound gains notably in refinement, becoming smoother and more fluid ... we can't help but be impressed at the cartridge's robust character and the way it conveys the sense of power and scale ... it's more the musically cohesive way that the Rainier delivers all that information that makes it special. There's a good dose of dynamics and plenty of punch when required. Tonally, the results are pleasingly full-bodied with a surprisingly rich and powerful bass..." –What Hi-Fi?

"I think Sumiko might have a hit on its hands. The Oyster Rainier offered a lovely, warm sound with a wide range of recordings, but could still kick up its heels as required. It handled warped records with aplomb, and LP surface noise was minimal, even from records I can't get entirely clean." –Soundstage!



Olympia

Technical Improvements

- Hollow Ø0.6mm cantilever, new magnet
 - Significantly reduces moving mass
- Wider frequency response
- Reduced output (4.0mV)
 - Quieter background
- Tighter channel balance

Bottom Line

By reducing moving mass, the stylus is afforded greater groove fidelity. With improved mobility in all directions, the stylus can react more accurately and with greater speed to tinier contours in the groove (more detail). All things improve sonically. With improved frequency response and channel balance, you hear more space around instruments with a tighter central image which also heightens perceptible width of soundstage.



"...the manner in which the Sumiko humanises the midrange and upper registers is genuinely superb. The track unfolds in a wholly convincing soundstage that immerses you while balancing both energy and refinement to superb effect."

–Hi-Fi Choice

"The Olympia does move the game on from the Ranier though. It finds detail that the simpler cart cannot and works it effortlessly into a presentation that has enough space around the music itself to mean you can appreciate what it is doing." –AVForums

"Cymbal attack and decay were quite well presented... The bottom end was extended and punchy without being bloated and the midrange was smooth and controlled without being 'in your face.' This was far better than [\$219] will often get you." –Positive Feedback



Moonstone

Technical Improvements

- Hollow Ø0.5mm cantilever, new magnet
 - Further reduces moving mass
- Reduced output (3.0mV)
 - Quieter background

Bottom Line

Moonstone represents a clearer picture for just how much the cantilever & magnet matter – it's not all about the stylus profile. Here again, the stylus is more nimble in the groove. The jump from Olympia to Moonstone is more perceptible than Olympia from Rainier, most notably in refinement. Warm & balanced, Moonstone reaches a little deeper for improved articulation and more nuanced musical information. Ambience is more available, the central image more solid. The emotional element comes closer to the surface.



“With the Moonstone, when bass slam was called for, it came. When a sweet midrange was demanded, it was there in spades. When crisp, sparkling highs were the need, the Moonstone fulfilled it.”

–Soundstage!

“...the Moonstone produced highly sophisticated, delicate, rich, somewhat warm sound free of any obvious mechanical artifacts and resolved a surprising amount of low level information sufficient to keep me listening for an entire evening... Add impeccable tracking, and an attractive, delicate ‘tactile’ textural quality that will keep you listening for hours.” –Analog Planet



Technical Improvements

- Nude elliptical stylus
 - Solid diamond, reduced tip mass
- Wider frequency response
- Increased channel separation
- Tighter channel balance

Bottom Line

A solid, nude diamond reduces tip mass and eliminates a bonding point for a more 'direct' reaction to groove contours. You'll hear improvements in room portrayal and low-level musical information. These subtleties are a big part of what makes sound quality more life-like. There is a holographic effect about Wellfleet due to its balance of both ambient and musical information. Dynamics are stronger too, lending to even more emotional character.

Wellfleet



"[The phono stage] evinced the Wellfleet's most attractive qualities, especially in the mid and upper frequencies, where see-through transparency, transient clarity, and precision—completely free of edgy artifacts, grain, and grit—produced a bubble of pleasure my ears wanted to sink into and did, for hours." –Stereophile

"...my eyes were opened wide. Its overall sound was that of the Moonstone—plus some. All the good points of the Moonstone were there—its smooth reproduction, rich sound, and excellent tracking—but all were improved on the Wellfleet. And there was more definition and improved imaging." –Soundstage!

"If you are already equipped with a Sumiko Moonstone that's coming to the end of its life, or indeed any of the Oyster range, the Wellfleet stylus upgrade will bring you even more of the things you have enjoyed; I have no doubt." –Stereonet



Amethyst

Technical Improvements

- Nude line-contact stylus (0.2 x 0.8mil)
 - Greater contact patch
- Improved, lower-noise generator
 - Fewer coil turns, lower impedance
 - Reduced output (2.5mV)
- Wider frequency response
- Increased channel separation

Bottom Line

The improved generator significantly reduces extraneous noise, allowing music to emerge from a blacker background. Dynamics are more profound with greater impact. A quieter backdrop reveals more nuance across the board. Transients are more poignant & resolution more apparent. The line-contact stylus only enhances the strengths of the low-noise generator, retrieving more raw detail from the groove and delivering it more gracefully. Full & homogenous yet clear & articulate, Amethyst is among the more adept MM cartridges on the market with respect to refinement & musicality.



"...the finale is delivered with plenty of power and energy, which is a testament to its obviously great tracking ability... The warm presentation of this nicely made cartridge is certainly very appealing, especially for those users who prefer an analogue smoothness from their system." –Hi-Fi Choice

"The Sumiko Amethyst has so many strengths as a moving-magnet cartridge that it's difficult to ignore. The bass response is superb. It's one of the quietest MMs I've ever used... the Sumiko Amethyst has to be one of the most musical and balanced choices you can make." –Part-Time Audiophile

"...it communicates the essence of music—the PRaT, timbral accuracy, and midrange presence of music—with such efficacy that it will move a listener on an emotional level." –NOVO



Oyster Et Reference MCs

Inherent Advantages

- Lower moving mass due to a sophisticated balancing act via finely tuned suspension & damper
 - Heightened groove fidelity, faster response to more minute undulations
- Far fewer coil turns with 50% thinner copper > far less copper through which the signal travels
 - Reduced susceptibility to RF/EMI for a lower noise floor
 - More direct response with improved imaging & spatiality
- Continuous run of copper from moving assembly through output pins
 - Greater resolution, deeper/wider soundstaging
 - A more dynamic, emotionally engaging experience

Sophisticated Implements

- Open-architecture minimizes resonance (coloration) in & around the generator – they excel at *getting out of the way!*
 - Clean, open/expansive, resolving
- High-efficiency magnetic circuit with pure, annealed yokes/pole & premium magnets
 - Magnetic core design (ferrous armature)
 - Higher output without excess copper for compatibility with a wider array of phono stages
 - Thoughtfully positioned & anchored for a highly concentrated & controlled magnetic flux field, bearing direct influence over linearity & accuracy of the resulting electrical signal
 - Minimizes distortion & losses, promotes dynamics & staves off fatigue
- PEEK material for generator anchors & terminal plates
 - A purpose-selected, high-grade & expensive organic polymer often used in aerospace, medical & electronics engineering
 - Performs better than metals in cartridge bracing
 - Anti-resonant, extremely high rigidity

Technical Improvements

- Affordable, refined entry to MC sonics
- High & low output options (2.5 & 0.5mV)
- Improved 15μ pure copper
 - Less moving mass
- Resonance-optimized housing
- PEEK mounting plate
 - Better properties than metals

Bottom Line

Blue Point No. 3's smoothness offers appeal for many types of listeners. It offers great balance & warmth for forward-sounding systems while leaving micro-information intact. It offers MC speed, nuance & air around instruments that most MM cartridges simply cannot attain, no matter the stylus profile. Blue Point No. 3 offers sweet highs, rich & clear mids and robust, well-defined bass.

The low-output version offers increased speed, improved transients & resolution over a blacker background. With far fewer coil turns, the moving assembly can react with more agility to groove undulations.

Blue Point No.3

High & Low Output



"Without ever steering away from being faithful to what's on the record, there is energy to voices and instruments that draws you in and keeps you listening... the Blue Point No. 3 simply doubles down on its ability to effortlessly flow through music... The result is even handed, forgiving but endlessly engaging and presents measurements and dimensions that won't trouble most equivalent hardware. –AVForums

"The Blue Point No. 3 Low's delivery of this record produced a wide, deep three-dimensional soundstage on which were laid out details galore, plus a rich, smooth overall presentation that could easily fool you into thinking you're listening to a cartridge costing twice the price." –Analog Planet



Technical Improvements

- Resonance-reducing open-architecture
- CNC-machined aluminum headblock
- PEEK mounting & terminal plates
- Improved cantilever ($\Phi 0.5\text{mm}$)
 - Higher-grade, stiffer aluminum
- Wider frequency response
- Tighter channel balance

Bottom Line

The open-architecture design & improved generator anchoring drastically reduce resonance in & around the generator. The improved cantilever is more responsive still. You get faster attack, sweet extension & resolution of sparkling highs, depth-charged & defined bass with midrange clarity & richness. Open architecture really facilitates open, expansive sonics. The sonic image is wildly immersive & dynamic. The emotional element on full display with Songbird.

Again, the low output variant expresses greater speed, resolution, depth & micro-detail due to much lighter coils & lower noise-susceptibility.

Songbird

High & Low Output



"I look for accurate tone and some type of natural vitality. Which is exactly what the mildly broken-in Songbird exhibited... The Songbird, with its sweet tone and subtle textures, is cut from the same sonic cloth as its Reference series sibling, the Starling." –Stereophile

"What this is, though, is a cartridge that goes toe to toe with the best low-output designs at the price while making use of a simpler phono stage." –Hi-Fi Choice

"[Gives] you is the refinement that one expects from a four-figure moving coil cartridge, along with a knack for digging out those elusive micro details. It's also really good at tracking complex dynamics in a piece of music, showing poise and effortlessness – more hallmarks of a serious high-end pickup – all for less than a grand." –Stereonet

stereophile

RECOMMENDED
COMPONENT



Starling

Technical Improvements

- Nude Micro-Ridge stylus
 - Line-contact, larger contact patch
- Thinner boron cantilever (Ø0.28mm)
 - Lighter & more rigid
- Specially selected damper
- Gold-plated yokes & pole piece
- Improved frequency response
- Improved channel balance

Bottom Line

Improvements in the stylus, cantilever & damper (much of the moving assembly) yield significant sonic rewards. Starling offers a vivid sonic picture suspended effortlessly before you. You get more detail and greater dynamics over an even blacker background. Listeners will hear their favorite songs portrayed in newly convincing ways. The tonal richness, wealth of detail and alluring dynamic swings are presented in an understated, sophisticated manner that lacks any hint of harshness & edgy artifacts.



"...the Sumiko Starling played my records with a dark, nano-detailed refinement that elucidated whatever sophistications the recordings and the music had to offer." –Stereophile

"...the Starling's real magic was its reproduction of space and soundstage depth... I was bowled over by how well the little Starling presented me with a huge world of music." –Soundstage

"...it is very crisp and detailed but it has a poise, polish and panache that is alluringly addictive. The way in which it disdainfully shrugs off poorer pressings is also a revelation." –Hi-Fi News

stereophile
RECOMMENDED
COMPONENT

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Thanks kindly!