A bridge to better Audio

Crystal Cable is revolutionizing the Audio industry with their new patent-pending Bridge and Dreamlink Cables

It isn't often that a new product generates excitement in the soul of a seasoned audio reviewer, but every once in a while it happens. When Benjamin Scarcelli arrived at my house to show me something new, I expected yet another model of cables from either Siltech or Crystal Cable, he is, after all, the distributor of both brands. What I didn't expect was to see a brand new development that allows folks with existing cables to improve or upgrade their interconnects with a unique, patent-pending cable design from the house of Gabi van der Kley, Crystal Cable's commander-in-chief. The cables are touted as revolutionary accessories for every audio and video system.

Appearance
The Bridge looks almost exactly like the company's high-end interconnects, but instead of the single-ended RCA, the Bridge sports one which allows another RCA to connect into a piggy-back receptacle. The Dreamlink shares the same geometry and appearance, but sports Crystal's unique barrel at one end, presumingly to help identify signal flow direction. Sound confusing? Well, it isn't once it's understood that both cables are additions and do not replace existing interconnects.

Technology
The cables are said to lower distortion without modifications to the existing system. Inside the cable's special RCA jack, Crystal has incorporated what it calls a high-speed filter that guarantees perfect phase even at extreme frequencies, up to about 20GHz. The lower priced Bridge holds a HPSA filter made of 99.9999% silver/gold alloy, while the higher priced Dreamline model boasts a HPSA filter made from an alloy that has 99.9999999% purity. Likely because of a pending worldwide patent, additional information is presently not available.

The Sound
As I already had my Audio Aero Classic CD player connected, I simply added the lower priced Crystal Cable Bridge to my existing Nordost Valkyrja interconnects and fired up the player. The auditioning system included a pair of Wyetech Labs prototype Ruby monoblock amps and matching preamp (available soon) and a pair of Ethera Vitae speakers.

The most apparent improvements included better bass, especially in the lowest audible regions, overall improved midrange and better delineated high frequencies. For the next couple of hours, I listened attentively so I wouldn't miss a thing, played back some classical, jazz and blues and noted better spatial proficiency as well as improved focus and detail. I also noticed that the Bridge/cable assembly improved as time passed. Eventually, I disconnected the Bridge and listened to the music without it. I missed it immediately. Further investigating the Bridge's purpose, I connected it solo and found that it didn't work on its own, resulting in no sound at all. Strange, I thought and reconnected it. The Bridge affected the entire frequency spectrum, making listening to music more gratifying and expansive. Whereas female and male vocals were very good to begin with, the Bridge made them more conspicuous, but not out of balance. Though resolution improved across all frequencies, the most noticeable enhancement was in the bass regions. It is difficult to rationalize that an additional conductor accounts for the improvements, but then again, the addition seems a very sophisticated and/or complicated design.

The Dreamlink is Crystal's high-end version of the cable, and I began testing it with the same program material I used for the lower-priced Bridge. The Dreamlink rendered identical improvements, but this time with considerably more efficacy. While the cable's sheer potency seemed the same as the lower-priced Bridge's, it rendered a subtle yet heightened body and

weight to the harmonic structure of the music. I'd say that the Dreamlink contributes about 30% refinement right across the audible bandwidth. Thus, high frequencies are better accomplished and smoother. The Dreamlink's bass, when compared to the Bridge's, seems to loose a little resolution (burning the cable in for another 100 hours brings this back as I discovered after hours of listening). Harmonics above the bass frequencies and right up to the upper midrange region are more perceptible, thereby adding quite a bit to the musical finesse musicality with all program material. It's safe to say that the Dreamlink is meant to be used in very high resolution, high-end systems.

While both cables introduced a much improved audible panorama, I think that either one is a great accessory to turn a good system into a superb one. Once inserted, either cable becomes but part of a great system and difficult to live without.

Synopsis
I wish I could tell you what kind of magical forces are released when the Bridge or the Dreamlink cables are employed, but there isn't any doubt in my mind that they span a signal-diminishing gap I didn't know existed. The Bridge's sonic characteristic is that it has a slight bite at frequency extremes, which will add resolution to systems, especially those that sound a bit sluggish and I think many system configurations will benefit.

The Dreamlink's sound is more on the neutral side, and features, among other benefits, smoothness from top to bottom frequencies. I can't think of a high-end system that will not benefit from the Dreamlink, as it will enhance the sound of the connected components. The ultimate test for either cable is to connect it and use it for a few hours/days, and then take it out of the system. If you miss it, you'll find it difficult to listen without it. If you have long runs between amp and preamp, for example, the additional costs are relatively low (check with the distributors).

I believe that the Crystal Bridge and/or the Crystal Dreamlink cables offer a relatively inexpensive means to upgrade, rather than to replace, those expensive interconnects you have bought.