

# Two Is The Magic Number

**Jon Myles finds Tellurium Q's new Ultra Black II loudspeaker is a real star.**

**T**ellurium Q cables have always been a bit of a mystery. Founder and chief designer Geoff Merrigan resolutely refuses to go into details about the construction, materials or make-up of his products.

Which is fair enough. His approach is very much just listen - if you like it buy it and if not buy

something else. There's no pseudo-science involved in their marketing.

So there's little I can tell you about the new Ultra Black II speaker cable's construction - apart from the fact that it replaces the original and looks pretty similar.

That means it comes in mono pairs with a flat outer sheath which, while it looks rather hefty, is easy to route through tight spaces. Run

your hands along that sheath and it's impossible not to be impressed. There's obviously some shielding involved to minimise RFI and EMI interference - which is a growing problem nowadays with the growth of wi-fi networks, attached appliances and even the likes of mobile 'phones and gaming devices.

Tellurium Q also fit their own steel spacers and bespoke Z-plugs





(spades are also available). The Z-plugs are very well made – they fit tightly to both amplifier and loudspeaker inputs and once fitted do not come loose.

Bear in mind, though, that these cables are directional – which is clearly indicated on the connectors.

I'll readily admit I'm always sceptical about directional loudspeaker cables – but if the manufacturer recommends it then it's worth following their advice.

## SOUND QUALITY

If you have the original Tellurium Q Ultra Black then this update might take you aback. It doesn't just improve on the original it takes the sound on in leaps and bounds. For example, Keith Jarrett's piano on 'The Koln Concert' had more body, echo and a fulsome, utterly realistic quality.

The same happened with New Order's 'Bizarre Love Triangle'

Martin Logan hybrid electrostatic loudspeakers via both a Creek Evolution 100A transistor amplifier and an Icon Audio Stereo 30SE valve-based integrated, the resolution of these cables became clear.

With the Creek there was power aplenty on Sarri Schoor's blues-rock album 'Never Say Never'. Keys player Bob Fridzema, guitarist Ash Wilson, bass man Mat Beable and drummer Roy Martin all came over as firmly in place on a well defined soundstage. Schoor's vocals – which are gruff but wonderfully blunt – also stayed firmly in the centre, never being overwhelmed by the backing track.

Switching to the Icon Audio it was apparent just how transparent these cables are. Playing the same Sarri Schoor album there was more warmth on offer thanks to the Icon Audio's single-ended design and its use of tubes.

A big difference? Actually yes.

Q's Silver Diamond cables in my home system – which are even more transparent. In comparison the Ultra Black II's are a little darker overall – however they are about a third of the cost of the Silver Diamonds which represents something of a bargain.

But that said they work superbly well in bringing out extra detail in even some of the most familiar recordings.

On Bob Marley and the Wailer's 'No Woman, No Cry' Live the quality of the opening organ notes was noticeably better than on the original Tellurium Q Black. These new cables have better scale, presence and openness. When Marley's voice came in it sounded more alive and plaintive than before, as I recall.

I heard the same effect on every track I played – leading me to believe that there's something special going on with these Ultra Black II's.

As I said at the start, if you have



remixes. The bass had more power while the electronic embellishments became clearer and easier to hear.

What this cable did so well was allow me to lay back and let the music flow over me or lean forward and follow individual instruments.

Plugged into our reference

Which is the beauty of these new Ultra Black II cables – they have the ability to let you know what your source and amplifier are doing.

So with the Creek they sounded powerful and rather forward, with the Icon Audio there was more warmth but a little less thrust to the sound.

That, to me, is the essence of a good cable – it lets the music through without imposing its own character on the sound.

That said, however, I use Tellurium

the original Ultra Blacks then the new design is a significant upgrade. Not only do they increase sound quality but also bring out a whole new level of enjoyment. I'd recommend a listen.

## CONCLUSION

Tellurium Q's Ultra Black II's can be seen as one of the best loudspeaker cables on the market at their price. They are not cheap – but in terms of pounds for sound they out-perform many more expensive brands.

## TELLURIUM Q ULTRA BLACK II £310 PER METRE



**OUTSTANDING** - amongst the best.

## VERDICT

A superb cable that delivers great sound with balance, detail and an open soundstage.

## FOR

- detail
- construction
- balanced sound
- works well with any amplifier

## AGAINST

- not cheap

Tellurium Q  
+ 44 (0) 1458 251 997  
admin@telluriumq.com