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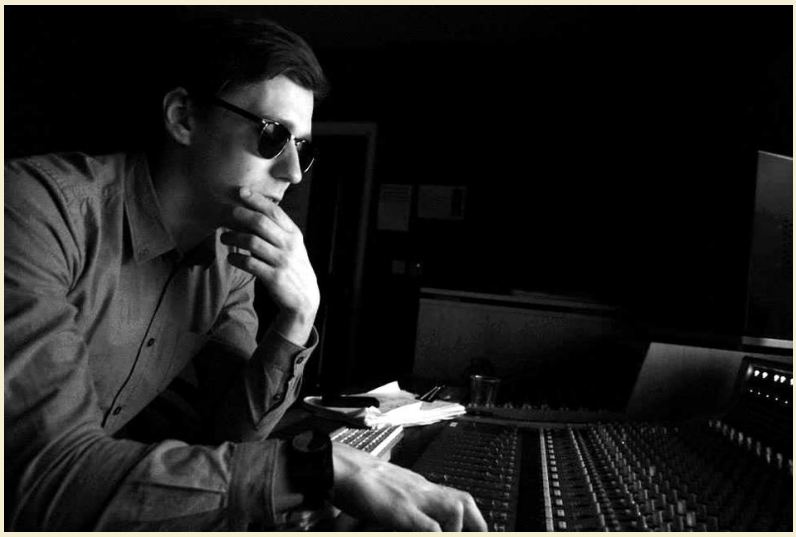

I will begin by mentioning that before the listening session I did not really know what to expect. I had a fair share of experience of listening to decent audio systems in mixing and mastering suites. However, listening to the NIDA sound system made me reconsider – it's a completely different type of sensory stimulus, a different listening experience.

In the quiet section of the listening session I was instantly struck by the clarity of the micro-dynamics. It's remarkable how a system can produce such a wide spectral image and represent harmonics without being driven too hard.

I was surprised by the clear spatial definition in the louder part of the session. I could clearly visualise the captured resonating bodies from the recording, I could feel their dimensions. In one track there was a prominent cow bell section, and I could clearly see a hollow vibrating rusted bell at the centre of the sound stage. The size of the projection of said instrument can be translated into the intended perspective of the mixing engineer. From this one may say that this system eliminates the imperfect link between the recording and the listener, thus facilitating the possibility to analyse and understand sound in more depth and detail, discovering new ways of interpreting sound recreation.

The system has exquisite phase coherency. One cannot identify that the sound is radiated from two distinct sources situated in the corners of the room. The phantom image is so clear, that it creates the impression of waves originating from an amorphous wall of sound, that doesn't get picked up by the listener's ears but rather gets absorbed by the face. This sensation suggest that the frequency response of the system is masterfully crafted around the dangerous range of 2-4 kHz.

In the loud section of the listening session the system was pushed to near-concert SPL levels. The sensation from this was slightly puzzling, as experience suggests that a system inside the home should start distorting when operating at such levels. However, the representation remained linear and crisp. I began to wonder whether the system had a built-in frequency response vs. velocity compensation mechanism. But Ceslovas, the creator of the system, assured me that no solid state trickery is involved and the spectral uniformity is attained solely by careful acoustical calculations.

To sum up – the NIDA system provides an impeccable representation of digital audio recordings. Listening to program material on this system is an unprecedented sensory experience.