

Shh...

The fine art of low level listening
By Jeff Dorgay



We didn't even peel the protective coating from the T+A Caruso R before listening began.

While other all in one players have perhaps garnered more attention, T+A really invented this form factor back in 2008.

Now with streaming, increased connectivity, and a bigger, sharper touch screen, the Caruso R can also stream internet radio stations, play CDs and receive FM and DAB radio broadcasts.



If you still love playing CDs, the value proposition of the T+A Caruso R is off the chart. Its front-loading mechanism (all controlled by the slim remote) makes it so easy to switch from streaming to physical media in seconds.

Don't laugh. As all things old become new again, many are inheriting parents' CD collections, just as some of us of a certain age inherited our parents' vinyl. And, there's plenty of talk on the internet about "crate digging" for CDs as well.



Our listening begins with the self-titled collaboration from the group Little Villiage, consisting of John Hiatt, Jim Keltner, Ry Cooder, and Nick Lowe.

If you're fans of any or all of these guys individually, it's the same lineup that produced Hiatt's *Bring The Family* album in 1987. So chances are you either love or hate this record.

But, the great harmonies, and sparse, yet jangly arrangements make for some great quiet listening.

As you can see from the rear panel, the Caruso R is well equipped. With a built in FM/DAB tuner, a plethora of digital and network inputs (including wireless), T+A hasn't forgotten one of the most important things - a pair of analog inputs so you can connect a phono pre, or even a tape deck. There's even a subwoofer output, and a variable line out, just in case you'd like to change up the mix for amplification.

Good as the onboard 50+50w power amplifier is, we made it a point to connect a few small tube amplifiers to stay on point with our low-level listening credo.

Again, the Caruso R succeeds brilliantly, no matter how you choose to use it. at \$3,800, there's a lot of functionality in this compact enclosure. Those wanting one stop shopping can add the R10 speakers (shown on previous page) to the list, to round out an all T+A system.

This all makes for a great small room system that's quick to setup, and thanks to built in streaming, will have you listening in a few minutes. All popular formats are supported, and you can even use it as a ROON endpoint via AirPlay.

