
AMR Music Fuse review by



27th September 2011

By Carles Dolz



Maybe it's my personal opinion, but when I share ideas with veteran audiophiles I realize how they have changed some things in this world. Maybe many things remain the same, or are virtually unchanged, to confirm this I have only to look at my collection of valves and my speakers built up over several decades. But I think everything that surrounds our amps and components has evolved, and not just a little.

Today, most audio fans are aware of the importance of room acoustics and placement of the speakers. But it does not stop there, the market offers many options for interconnection wiring between components themselves. Mechanic decoupling requires equal care and consideration, through furniture and supports. Beyond that, there is also a myriad of gadgets and accessories (what the Anglo-Saxons call tweaks), intended to improve aspects of our systems, or at least that's what their manufacturers claim, which we would never have considered.

One of the aspects that differentiate perhaps more current audio systems from those several decades ago is the care that is paid to the quality of power supply. It was thought that the electric current was just that; current, it was perfect and that if it were not, it had no impact on the sound of our systems. However, the disquiet of many, including myself found that this idea was abandoned long ago, when we began to know that the power supply is of poor quality and especially, when we began experimenting with the mains is in our homes. Thus it is common to find audio systems powered with dedicated lines. Breakers are also replaced by other solutions that degrade electrical flow less, sockets installed are audiophile, and the simple power cables of yesteryear have given way to generously-sized hoses. Today many amateurs spend much effort in the pursuit of the ideal power cable and I've heard more than once that the power cables have a significant impact, or more, on the sound of a component such as an interconnection cable or speaker.

But after carefully looking after all the wiring of our system, eventually all the current in our components must pass through the fuses; its thin filaments are one of the most critical points in the supply. No wonder then that many brands manufacture fuses designed to meet the needs of the audiophile market.



AMR fuses Why?

Abbingdon Music Research is a company whose products, especially digital sources, have received rave reviews. Looking at their designs, they seem to love solving problems by finding unconventional solutions. In this case, instead of using economic industrial-type fuses, as other brands include in their expensive components, or by buying from other manufacturers, AMR executives decided to make their own fuse, considering both their efficiency and to ensure their machines run to their full potential, avoiding degradation of the current passing through them.

AMR makes primarily slow fuses (slow blow) and to certain values. To avoid oxidation, the terminals are gold-plated copper. The filaments are formed to most of the values from silver alloy. To avoid inductance or microphonics as seen in typical spiral slow fuses, it is a non-spiral design. Stressing the importance of avoiding microphonics, the fuse body is ceramic and anti-resonant.



It seems that the design of these fuses is aimed mainly at improving communication flow and preventing degradation via microphonics and other phenomena. This approach focused upon negating unwanted electrical signals (noise) is similar to the attention paid to mechanical vibrations of components. This phenomenon may seem banal, but is revealed when we heard the noise generated when tapping a microphone cable. The last time I experienced this was recently while testing a digital source; I changed the cable between the two components without disconnecting from the computer (and I did not mute the power amp!).

So far so good, but do these fuses improve my system? After using them for a few days I started to replace the Gold Fuses, step by step, through supplanting their economic fuses industrial-type counterparts. These tests coincided with those being made by the DEQX HDP-Express, so I could only test them on my transport and ancillaries. After replacing one section at a time, using them in the transport I appreciated greater transparency of sound, and an improvement in the pass band, especially a greater extension in the treble. Also the soundstage gained slightly in depth and width. In the early stages, the most notable effect was to improve the dynamics of the system. For example, during fast orchestral passages, the music sounded a bit more orderly. The ups and downs were cleaner, more defined silences, as if the background noise had diminished and distortion was reduced. All together in the system, with the AMR fuses the sound was more clean and detailed, more refined and more natural.

I already had other brands audiophile fuses and had appreciated the sonic footprint of each, so the results didn't surprised me. I will not compare the AMR to other brands, because the choice of one

or the other is very personal and the price of these fuses allows us to test it without suffering any economic impact. AMR fuses are sold in sets of three values that the buyer chooses; come in a nice case and, compared to the competition, have a more than competitive price. For less than the cost of a lower-middle range audiophile cord, these fuses changed our system and I dare to say, the effect was a considerably greater improvement.

Many times a good audio system differs from an excellent system simply because of the final care you take of small details that, little by little, improve the outcome. Of course these AMR fuses can help to improve any system of certain level at a very low cost. Highly recommended.



2nd Take by Miguel Castro

In all my years of amateur hi-fi, the importance given to the electrical signal passing through our systems has steadily increased, until today that I consider basic. The time invested means my conviction is supported by countless tests, always guided by curiosity and by a lack of conformity. These tests have led me to consider the fuses, as a link just as important as any other, within the chain of elements of the electrical treatment system.

The changes in the sound of an appliance, that a change of fuse is able to achieve, can be evaluated in the same way we evaluate the replacement of a power cord. And in the same way, the incorporation of an expensive fuse, does not always mean an improvement in the sound of a machine. It may be that the change goes in the opposite direction to our preferences, or we prefer the more economical fuse; but no doubt, the changes in the sound of a component, changing the standard fuse, using an audiophile fuse is fully audible.

My quest to find the fuse that improves my component the most to my ears, led me to try a good number of them. I can remember having tried HIFI-TUNING (ultimate silver, ultimate3 and supreme3), Furutech, AHP, PADIS and now AMR.



To perform this review, I have arranged the four fuses 4A and 6.3 32mm. in my Kora Cosmos amps.

Upon receiving the new fuses, before evaluating them, I had three weeks of burn-in to be quite sure that this aspect burn-in would not negatively affect the correct performance. I did not know for sure how much time AMR fuses need to break-in, but having tried any brand of fuse whose effect on the sound varied as night and day during break-in, I had to eliminate this element to ensure that the performance was absolutely excellent.

Two things came to mind after comparing AMR fuses with the standard fuse fitted by the manufacturer. The first is, how it is that all manufacturers do not install audiophiles fuses, seeing the ridiculous minimal cost compared with the price of the equipment they sell. The second was, how I spend so much time listening to music with the standard fuse, not realizing how bad my sound stage is with them! I want to clarify that everyone can understand this slight exaggeration, if we think of how fast the human ear becomes accustomed to the improvements. We quickly get used to the good, we are almost always looking for the next improvement ... and so on to infinity.

The truth is that after getting used to the sound of my amps with AMR fuses, going back to the previous sound made it quite difficult for me. My AMR fuses effected a much greater control of the bass, offering precision and cleanliness in the higher frequencies. Also, the mids sounded much more natural in general and the treble was less aggressive. Returning to the standard fuses, these frequencies were especially hard for me. The AMR fuse sounded more rich, detailed and smooth.

Overall, the sound of my amps with AMR fuses is less aggressive, more defined, detailed and natural sounding ...all being much better...

There is no other aspect of a hi-fi system that I can recommend above these, especially given the so small cost in relation to the system. The sonic upgrade for so little money cannot be argued against. I strongly recommend you audition them, you have little to lose and everything to gain.
