

REVIEWS GEAR



REVIEWS 110 RECORD CLEANING MACHINE



KEITH MONKS PRODIGY RECORD CLEANING MACHINE

£795 www.keith-monks.com

A new stylish record cleaner has John Pickford dreaming of a life without crackle

We've all experienced crackly records that, on visual inspection look undamaged. More often than not, the source of the interference is hidden dirt, embedded deeply in the grooves. While a wipe with a damp cloth or careful wash with lukewarm soapy water might help restore a filthy, half-knackered bargain from a charity shop, the only way to clean vinyl properly is with a record cleaning machine.

There are various vacuum-powered units available and most have three things in

common: they're big, noisy and expensive. Keith Monks Audio know a thing or two about cleaning records professionally, as they produced the first commercial record cleaning machine (RCM) in 1969.

Originally developed to meet the exacting demands of the BBC, the original Keith Monks RCM soon found favour with serious record collectors with large collections and deep pockets. Even a few short years ago, it was impossible to buy a new professional-standard RCM for under four figures.

The Keith Monks RCM bucks the trend with the sleek, elegant and (relatively) quiet Prodigy. It employs the company's (and the world's) first Threadless Point Suction System, which they will now incorporate into their more expensive models.

Made from bamboo, the natural wood finish of my review sample is stylish, while an internal LED continuously changes colour in use, illuminating a perimeter strip around the machine as well as the container of clear cleaning fluid.

