

Akiko Audio's Triple AC Enhancer review

http://www.puresound.be/home/archive/2016/november/article/akiko-audio-triple-ac-enhancer-1/?tx_ttnews%5Bday%5D=08&cHash=e74164369a347f5046ee92408d5aa024

Just under three years ago I came across Akiko Audio's Tuning Sticks for the first time. This revolutionary product was the most recent and promising realisation of what Akiko Audio dubbed "E-tuning".

A Tuning Stick, remind me...

We're talking about a neatly designed and slender carbon cylinder, about 15 centimetres long, which contains a number of materials connected to the plug at the end of it. There are three types: with an RCA which is connected to a free cinch in- or output of a device, an internally identical one with an XLR connected to a balanced in- or output, and one with an AC which is connected to the grounding of the mains. Akiko also produces the Tuning Stick Universal, which doesn't have a plug but is instead directly attached to a mains cable for example. The Tuning Stick reduces the harmful influence of electromagnetic fields surrounding cables and devices by using crystals such as tourmaline. This principle is scientifically sound and results have been shown in measurements. Over the past few years the positive effects of the Tuning Sticks have been described in countless reviews and comments by users. Think of less sharp sounds, a more natural, fuller and relaxed sound, a clearer spatial image and an authentic timbre. Since my first experiences I have also discovered that the Tuning Stick Universal can be exceptionally effective near speaker terminals. I connected two of them to the output of the final amplifier in my main set and noticed the sound's fullness and fluidness reduce when I removed them again, as well as the sound becoming more shallow and matter of fact. Of course I was quick to reconnect them! This experience also suggests how the effect of the Tuning Sticks becomes most noticeable: by removing them. Connecting them for the first time may leave you disappointed about the results at first. Presumably because the Sticks first have to break in ("be played in" we may say). A quick A-B comparison is therefore not forbidden, but won't always immediately present you with the full picture. Perhaps more often with a wrong one than with the right one...

Triple AC Enhancer: design and how it works

In the meantime the Tuning Sticks have been updated and the product range has been expanded. Among others the current test object has been added: the relatively large Triple AC Enhancer. Reviews by professionals as well as customers stating that the Triple works a lot better and stronger than the original Tuning Stick made me decide to test it myself. With a width of 5 centimetres the Triple is 2,3 times as wide as the Tuning Stick AC; this means it can hold up to 5,2 times as much tuning mix! The cylinder contains three compartments with a varying mixture of crystals and gold powder and a solid copper wire connects these to the outside world. Three neatly twisted wires come out of the cylinder and exclusively connect to the grounding in the socket, so that after there is actually no connection to the power supply. This makes the product entirely safe and "fool proof". The finish is of equally high quality: the smooth and shining carbon sheath surrounding the cylinder and the perfectly fitted silver covers radiate class and a sense of quality and detail. But now the question is, how is this supposed to work?! I use many products that "cleanse" the power from the mains or even rebuild it. But does something like a "clean grounding" also exist? And is that important for the music image? To my knowledge grounding music devices was always done as a safety measure and not as a way of enhancing the device. However, some detective work on the internet taught me that a number of manufacturers offer accessories that connect exclusively to the grounding. It could be that ground cables also pick up high frequency noise that come along the (grounded) outer sheaths of mains cables, polluting the power supply. By connecting the grounding near the audio set to crystals that absorb this noise – converting the noise into lattice vibrations and eventually into a little bit of heat – the system could be enhanced. Whether this explanation is adequate and correct remains to be answered however. I remain open to objections and additional

information, though eventually the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Let's listen to what the Triple AC Enhancer can offer sound-wise.

Triple AC Enhancer: listening in two stereo sets

I placed the Triple in the first power strip in my living room. This strip is directly connected to the meter cupboard and powers the large stereo set as well as my TV corner. The effect is immediately audible and caught me slightly off guard; I hadn't expected it to be this big and overwhelming. I didn't even have to break-in the stick; the effect was directly noticeable. The improvement is similar to that of other Tuning Sticks – who would have guessed – but obviously stronger. It seems then that a single Triple actually does more than a handful of the first generation sticks. For me that makes the Triple AC Enhancer the absolute best Akiko Audio product. What does it do exactly? Well actually, the same as every good accessory. More body in the mid tones, a more realistic timbre from acoustic instruments, fuller voices with less harsh and sharp edges, a more subtly built sound stage, an even lower noise floor, a finer drawn sound image with more information that is presented very pleasantly, etc. etc. That same day I ordered a second Triple for the stereo set in my study and there the effect was even bigger... The past twenty years many audio accessories have been introduced that were questionable regarding their appearances and supposed improvements. Nonetheless I can say that the best products in this category definitely contribute to a level of reproduced music that did not exist twenty years ago. Products such as the Triple AC Enhancer!

Conclusion

The Triple AC Enhancer simply does what is promised on the Akiko Audio website, making it one of the best accessories for high end audio systems in the world. For what this product can do in a set that cost serious amounts of money the price is actually quite gentle. I can't think of a single reason why the committed audiophile music lover with a top system wouldn't get a Triple AC Enhancer to connect to the power strip... highly recommended!

Information

Akiko Audio

www.akikoaudio.com

Price

€ 295,00

