

Sendy Audio Peacock planar-magnetic headphones

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I'm going to fess up about some entirely unfounded initial trepidation I had here, regarding the name 'peacock'. In my mind, I envisaged a headphone designed for a Regency dandy, but a quick look at the rest of the range – which includes headphones called 'Phoenix' and 'Robin' – that my initial concerns about the Sendy Audio Peacock open-backed planar-magnetic headphones were just me being a bit bird-brained.

Of course, calling a pair of headphones 'Peacock' means you should expect some finery and Sendy Audio doesn't disappoint. While the box is stiff, environmentally-chummy card, the headphones are sumptuously finished in wood anodized metal, and goat-leather cups and suspension headband wrapping. Lettering is either etched into the wood of the earcup or clearly marked with gold-on black panels. A small, but useful touch; the 'Left' and 'Right' channels are clearly marked; on the sides of the headband, picked out in huge lettering inside the earcup itself and engraved on the Hirose connectors on the supplied cable. As I've lost count of the number of headphones where such things are only revealed under almost microscopic scrutiny, this is reassuring.



Sendy Audio travel case. This stiff, moulded tan leather case comes with a slightly too small carry handle and looks like you packed a terracotta chicken.

The Peacock name is justified by the earcup grille; atop the gold-plated perforated metal grille is a second protective black layer, designed to resemble the spreading tail of a peacock. This fans out from the centre of the earcup in a full circle (as opposed to the half circle peacock feathers used as a logo by an American TV network, for example). This grill protects the 88mm planar-magnetic dual-sided, double-magnet layout driver that uses

a proprietary material and a quad former layout.

This is claimed to give the Sendy Audio Peacock a smooth and extended frequency response up to 40kHz.

It's also worth noting that there's some close similarities between products under the 'Sviga' brand and those known as 'Sendy Audio'.

However, this is not one company cloning the works of another; In some markets, the parent company Sviga chooses to brand the products as 'Sviga' and in others, 'Sendy Audio'. So, in essence, this is two reviews for the price of one!

Terracotta chicken

A bi-colour copper braided cable and a set of adapters are supplied in a small, branded muslin bag inside the



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» Get comfortable

First things first; the Sendy Audio Peacock is comfortable. The goat leather ear cups are cool and allow for long, perspiration-free listening sessions, and the combination of articulated earcups and suspension headband makes the Peacock feel relatively light on your head, especially given its 578g weight. I don't like the feel of being 'pinched' by a tight-banded headphone and the Peacock never feels tight on the head, but it might be too light a clamp for those with smaller than average heads. I also noticed that on leaning forwards or back, the lack of strong clamping means the ear cups move on your ears; however, I prefer that to the 'wandering headband' effect.

The cable selection dictates your choice of partnering electronics... in a good way. By providing a 4.4mm Pentaconn balanced connector as standard and including adaptors for 4-pin XLR and 6.35mm stereo jack, Sendy Audio is making a statement about using the Peacock with lower-power amplifiers. This isn't the kind of headphone that is going to benefit from being plugged directly into the minijack output of your laptop or tablet... it needs to be properly driven, ideally driven in balanced operation to show its capabilities.

There's a mild U-shaped nature to the sound of the Sendy Audio Peacock, with a full and rich bass with just a hint of sub-bass enhancement, detailed treble, and a subtle, relaxed (and relaxing) midrange. This contrasts with the unrelentingly forward sound of many headphones in the same class. This isn't a scooped-out sound; the midrange is detailed and articulate and very warm and inviting, making a particularly insightful but not pressured



rendition of 'Here's the Tender Coming' from the album of the same name by The Unthanks [Rabbe Rouser]. This is sung with great precision and rhythm, and the sadness of Becky and Rachel Unthank's voices comes through perfectly.

These are songs of the wives, mothers and daughters seeing the coming of the press-gang and watching their men get taken to sea. Too much midrange detail makes this lament seem either pedestrian or too focused on the musicianship; the Peacock gets this perfectly right, with a tonal balance that brings out the sorrow of hundreds of years of press-gangs. Not everyone is going to like this tonal balance, with some preferring stark neutrality over the Peacock's more euphonic approach, but it is hugely enjoyable to just sit and listen through these headphones all the same.

Feather in the cap

This record also showcases another of the Sendy Audio Peacock's feathers in its cap; the imaging. This is a sparse recording; starting with just the two voices and reverb, with the rest of the acoustic instrumentation joining in later. Even at its fullest, this is a recording of space and scale, and this is surprisingly un-headphone-like in presentation. Images appear in front of the listener with no sense of lateralisation, and excellent stage width and depth.

Moving over to ZZ Top's *Tres Hombres* [London] and Hickox and Davis playing Vaughan Williams London Symphony [Chandos], the same pattern emerges; sonorous, deep bass, soaring treble, great imaging and an effortless, if mildly recessed, midrange. The ZZ Top track shows how good the Sendy Audio Peacock's dynamic range is for a planar-magnetic headphone system. Sure, it lacks the sheer energy of top-notch dynamic drivers (although it wins in the bass) and there are a handful of planar magnetics that can match or even exceed the Peacock's performance, but the Sendy Audio's balance is a very attractive one.

'Attractive' is clearly a word that describes the Sendy Audio Peacock, but it equally describes its sound as its looks. The sound is detailed with good bass and a fine soundstage, but more importantly is that the overall performance is attractive and enjoyable. This makes the Peacock ideal for long listening sessions. +

Technical specifications

Type Over ear, open-backed planar-magnetic headphones

Transducer diameter 88mm

Frequency response 20Hz-40kHz

Sensitivity 103dB \pm 3dB

Impedance 50 Ω \pm 15%

Cable length 2m

Connectors 4.4mm balanced, adaptors for 6.35mm jack, 4pin XLR

Weight 578g

Price £1,499

Manufacturer Sendy Audio

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UK dealer Eden Audio

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