



DETAILS

PRODUCT
Sivga SV023

ORIGIN
China

TYPE
Open-back, over-ear wired headphones

WEIGHT
318g

FEATURES
● 50mm drivers
● 1.6m braided cable
● 3.5mm and 6.35mm adaptors

DISTRIBUTOR
Still TBC

WEBSITE
sivgaaudio.com

carefully balancing the deep rumble of the drum with the lighter, floating strings. The entrance of the electronic vocal effects strikes a discordant tone, but then the surging strings lift the mood a little. The arrival of the soprano introduces a touch of warmth and the SV023 flaunts its 40kHz range, delivering the soaring vocal with pristine clarity. Oddly, the piece ends with some cheerful riffing from the orchestra and a slow fade that reminds me of ELO's *Mr Blue Sky*, so it's that I choose to turn to next.

Sticking with the 1977 classic (rather than the far-too-tasteful 2012 re-recording), it's easy to just focus on Jeff Lynne's string arrangement, but the SV023 has an ear for all the lighter details too, pulling out the shimmering cymbals that float through the air and the ticking bells that set the pace throughout. The highlight, of course, is the sublime choral section and the open-back design of the Sivga allows it to step back and create a wide open soundstage where the male and female voices dance nimbly around each other, while the precise percussion holds it all together. The SV023 really likes its percussion, and the crisp snare of *Prime Evil* by The Orb has a nervous, manic energy that burrows into your brain. It handles the deep electronic bass effects well too, allowing the melody to glide along with a taut, sinister rhythm.

Conclusion

Sivga's SV023 certainly provides attractive sound quality for a headphone in this price range. The open-back design won't be to everyone's liking, of course, and its rather limited range of features means that it's not the most versatile of headphones around, but the SV023 remains a decent choice for anyone that wants a set of open-back over-ears that don't require a second mortgage to own ●

China tease

Attractive open-back headphones at a closed-back price. **Cliff Joseph** samples a little known brand and is pretty impressed

Sivga might not be a well-known name in Europe, but it's the more affordable companion brand to Senty Audio, which produces attractive open-back headphones such as the eye-catching Peacock (*HFC 486*). Recently launched at the Munich High-End show, the new SV023 is one of its more expensive headphone offerings. The company is still in the process of setting up its UK distribution, but you can track it down via the US arm of Amazon if you can't wait.

The smart open-back walnut wood earpieces house 50mm drivers made out of liquid crystal polymer, with a beryllium-plated diaphragm for a frequency response of 20Hz-40kHz. The earpieces are padded with memory foam and designed to match the contours of the head. The adjustable stainless steel headband grips firmly without feeling too tight.

That carrying case is rather extravagant – it's big and bulky, and festooned with zips and straps. But

it's also very sturdy and provides plenty of robust protection.

The SV023 is a straightforward wired headphone, with no Bluetooth or noise cancelling. Both earpieces have 2.5mm connectors and the 1.6m braided 6N OCC cable ends with a 4.4mm connector – a 4.4mm-to-3.5mm adaptor is included and a 6.35mm one will be bundled, but isn't provided with our review sample.

Sound quality

Jóhann Jóhannsson's *The Sun's Gone Dim And The Sky's Turned Black* starts with a single echoing drum beat, almost imperceptibly deep and low, and lingering for almost 20 seconds as it sets the mood. The SV023 homes right in on the sound, capturing the drama of that initial strike and not missing a second of the long, threatening rumble that sounds like distant thunder. The ominous drum beat is eventually joined by the violins of the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra and the Sivga is again able to capture the full spectrum of sound here,

Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY ★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★
BUILD QUALITY ★★★★★
FEATURES ★★★★★

LIKE: Smart design; well-balanced sound
DISLIKE: Few added extra features
WESAY: Strong sound and open-back design at a competitive price

OVERALL

★★★★★

