



**DETAILS**

**PRODUCT**  
Sivga Oriole  
**ORIGIN**  
China  
**TYPE**  
Closed-back, over-ear headphone  
**WEIGHT**  
280g  
**FEATURES**  
● 50mm drivers  
● Frequency response: 20Hz-20kHz  
● 2.5mm-to-3.5mm 2m braided cable  
**DISTRIBUTOR**  
Amazon  
**WEBSITE**  
sivgaudio.com

around each other. There's a piercing clarity to the violins, creating a sense of urgency that drives the music forward, until the dramatic pause that allows Gibbons' solo vocal to enter. This is a brief vocal interlude, but the Oriole captures the tremulous emotion in Gibbons' voice, soaring above the orchestra and forming the emotional bedrock of the symphony. Adding a little electronica to the mix, *The Waves* from Max Richter's *Three Worlds* album, further displays the open soundstage of the Oriole, capturing the dramatic swirl of the ocean as it pans all around me. The strings and electronic chimes that slowly appear above the sound of the waves are so delicate that they almost merge into a single sound, and once again the Sivga lends a haunting melancholy to the solo soprano voice as it enters (Grace Davidson this time around). But the real drama here comes from the slow crescendo of the orchestra – powerful, yet restrained as it slowly surges up from the depths and exploits the spacious sound of the Oriole to vast and dramatic effect.

**Conclusion**

That's almost an hour of tragedy and loss, so I decide to take the Oriole a little outside its classical comfort zone and treat myself to something more uplifting. The closed-back headphone seems to be at its best with voices, capturing Debbie Harry's swagger and attitude on *Maria* by Blondie – "she's like a millionaire, walking on imported air". Meanwhile, Clem Burke's percussion is precise and economical, although the midrange and guitars don't have quite the uplifting energy that the band is capable of, suggesting that the Sivga is indeed more at home with poised and balanced classical sounds. Even so, it's a strong performance from such an affordable headphone, and the Oriole will be a good choice for any classical music fans on a budget ●

# A bird in the hand...

This affordable wired headphone aimed primarily at classical music buffs is one to tweet about reckons **Cliff Joseph**

**M**ost of Sivga's headphones are more expensive, open-backed models with a chunky – and often rather ornate – build suited to indoor use. In contrast, the Oriole is compact and lightweight and its closed-back design and padded earpieces prevent too much sound from escaping, making it ideal for use out and about.

Available in either black or brown, it is sturdily built and includes wooden earpieces with memory foam padding that house 50mm drivers with quoted 20Hz-20kHz frequency response. There's an adjustable, padded headband with freely rotating hinges and it's light and comfortable enough to wear for long periods.

The Oriole is a wired headphone, with no Bluetooth or noise-cancelling features, and the low cost means that it's a little light on accessories too. There's a carrying pouch included along with a twin-headed 2.5mm-to-3.5mm cable and 6.3mm adaptor. A balanced 4.4mm cable is also available as an optional extra for £62.

The Oriole also has a baby brother, called Robin, which is almost identical, but priced at an even more affordable £150. Sivga states that the Oriole is designed to provide a balanced sound, with a wide soundstage that is most suitable for classical music and jazz, while the Robin has extra bass for rock and pop.

**Sound quality**

The Oriole's focus on classical music means I start with a hi-res stream of Górecki's *Symphony No.3 (Symphony Of Sorrowful Songs)* from Apple Music performed by the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra and Beth Gibbons (of Portishead fame). Despite stating that the Oriole offers only 'moderate bass' for classical sounds, it copes admirably with the deep, mournful double bass that opens the piece. The rich texture of the strings captures the bone-deep weariness that pervades the performance and, as additional instruments enter, the Oriole finds space that allows the contrasting melodies to slowly weave

**Hi-Fi Choice**

**OUR VERDICT**

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

**LIKE:** Clear, spacious sound; good for classical music  
**DISLIKE:** Weaker midrange; limited accessories  
**WE SAY:** Few added extras, but a good, affordable headphone that's well suited to classical music

**OVERALL**

★★★★★