



It started with one frustrated guy...

It all started with one engineer's frustration on the sound of CD playback some eight years ago. His name is Junji Kimura, an eminent engineering designer in Japan. A passionate audiophile and an established audio engineer, particularly that of LP playback systems and tube components, Kimura found himself more and more frustrated with the sound of CD playback systems. Unlike LP, which offers a rich and fresh musical presence with ambiance, CD, to Kimura's ears, sounded too thin and sharp, too electrical. Despite all the information it contains, CD was far from providing musical satisfaction.

Kimura was frustrated, also, by the cost and complexity of technological development and by the complexity of charts and graphs that track the measurements of sound but cannot reveal the quality of that sound. Instead of rejecting CD, however, Kimura decided to apply his proven engineering talents to the task of creating a CD transport that would elicit the best sound possible from CD.

After three years of experiments and developments, a prototype of his CD transport, a massive chunk of metal construction weighing almost 50lb, was presented at 1995 WCES. It was enough to attract many dealers' attentions and offerings, but not complete enough for Kimura to release as a final product.

Enter another frustrated guy...

While Kimura was busy completing his transport design, another frustrated man visited his workshop to have a listen on the prototype. His name was Koji Teramura, a long-time hotheaded audiophile and an owner of a local retail dealer. Teramura was frustrated, because he was not getting what he expects from audio through so-called high end audio components.

In one of his writings a couple of years ago, he states:

"When I was asked what I expect most from high-end audio, the answer always seemed to contradict with what I find in those brand name, pricey components. It seems that the current high-end market grew up to this day by chasing the purity of the sound. In the process, by selecting and eliminating all impurities as much as possible, it reached to the point where the resulted sound lost all the infinite tentacles they originally had and became a very static presentation of the sound in an unrealistic virtual space.

I must say that those lost tentacles were the binding agents between each sound to make it into music and communicate it

to the listener. I call these tentacles that make the sound into music, 'activity' of the sound. Without this 'activity', the sound will never be able to communicate with anybody and, I am afraid, the high-end audio's last stop will be an assassination of music by the purity of sound, totally isolating the listener from his/her music.

I am not a pessimist nor a type who just reminisce good old days, but this is exactly how the state of current high-end audio appears to me. We need a paradigm shift from this sound purism to sound 'activism' to revitalise our beloved world of audio."

The transport itself was impressive, but what attracted Teramura's attention most was an amplifier Kimura was using as a reference. It was a tiny solid state device, which did not sound like a solid state at all. This later turned out to be the beginning of the development of Model 4706 GAINCARD.

The sound Teramura heard that day was enough to convince him that something new was happening. He asked for the partnership right at the spot, and the wheels started rolling. What Kimura and Teramura wanted was an audio system that you can own without re-mortgaging your house, and that can seriously deliver the music.

"Only the simplest can accommodate the most complex"

Since then, under the leadership of Kimura, we have been coming up with many new ideas and re-sults which, in many cases, contradict with current audio equipment design, and the product we ended up with turned out to be quite unique.

Please note:

We do not make unique products for the sake of being unique. Our priority, "more music than gadgets", forced us to create these products which appear to be unique in today's market. What we consider most important in musical reproduction is the liveliness(activity) and freshness of the sound that dwells in the point of contact between the musician and his/her instrument. To preserve the freshness of the sound, the liveliness and the activity of music, we have to preserve this very first note of contact. That is not an easy task.

This note at the point of contact has great strength and a complicated wave form. To trace them exactly, audio components must have the ability to catch up with the rise and fall of fast, complicated signals throughout all the audible frequencies, from the very bottom to the top. In other words, the component has to be fast, ultra fast, and coherent.

For this reason, we try to minimise any storage of energy, either mechanical or electrical. We need a very good power supply that is powerful enough to cover a sudden demand of energy. We minimise the number of parts in the circuitry as much as possible. We shorten the signal pass length to the point where the engineer has to wear a jeweller's loupe to solder the parts point-to-point.

Another radical approach we took, which is often neglected or paid least attention to, is the control of mechanical resonance. We do not automatically consider vibrations as negative. After all, vibrations and electrical current come from the same energy. Instead of damping and trying to kill the

vibrations, which instantly causes delays and modulations in the flow of current, we release them smoothly and quickly by the design of a compact and rigid chassis construction and control the resonance with the choice of materials. So, there is no damping materials or suspensions in our products at all.

Through eight years of experiment and product development, certain design principles became apparent:

- Simplify all technology.

- Trust your own ears to judge the quality of the sound:

do not depend on the measurements determined by test equipment.

- Only the simplest can accommodate the most complex.

At 47 Laboratory, we believe our products are tools for enjoying music, not demonstrations of performance at the test bench.