

AUDIO FILE

Belt-driven turntable with electronic speed control
Made by: J. A. Michell Engineering Ltd, Stevenage, UK
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Prices: £5995 (£7295, with TecnoArm 2)



Michell Gyro

When Michell announced that production of its famous GyroDec and Gyro SE turntables was to come to an end, it begged the question 'what next?'. The answer is the £5995 Michell Gyro, which the manufacturer describes as a 'completely new turntable' that retains only three parts in common – DC motor, belt and on/off switch.

Detail changes are indeed comprehensive. The footprint is largely unchanged but the Gyro weighs in at 15.5kg, compared to the 10.5kg or so for the old SE.

'When things are quiet and soft, there's an almost CD-like silence beneath'

The feet are new and incorporate Sorbothane isolation pads, while the old acrylic 'spider' baseplate has been replaced by a piece of precision-machined aluminium.

Above this floats a new machined aluminium subchassis, which integrates a series of brass weights whose size, mass and position has been determined by mechanical modelling. This distributed mass not only counterbalances the tonearm but is intended to disperse vibration within the Gyro's subchassis in a controlled manner, aided by additional damping near the arm mount. Additionally, its

three springs incorporate a new 'Equilibria' lateral damping system.

The bearing is still Michell's usual inverted type, but with an extra internal helical groove in its self-pumping set-up. The 3.7kg Delrin platter is slightly thicker than that of the older model and has a layer of cork damping set into its underside. Its outer edge is now smooth with no locating grooves for the belt, which finds its optimum location on start-up. Of course, the deck's signature gold-plated brass weights are still present and correct.

While the DC motor is carried over from the Gyro SE, it is housed in a new shielded enclosure. The partnering DC PSU, with 33.3/45rpm speed switching, is in a neat case that matches

Michell's Apollo/Muse phono stage [HFN Aug '25]. Internal trimpots allow for fine speed adjustment at the factory, but these are not currently accessible to the user.



VOICE OF APPROVAL

It's evident that Michell has not sought to 'revoice' the character of this turntable, resisting the temptation to make the new Gyro – which was fitted with Michell's TecnoArm 2 for our review – sound like the brand's flagship Orbe, which has its own distinct character. If you loved the old GyroDec, you'll adore the new one, not least because it

ABOVE: A DC motor pod nestles within a loop at the rear of the alloy subchassis, driving the Delrin platter via a continuous rubber belt. The platter's six underslung gold-plated brass weights add a stabilising peripheral mass. The subchassis is also mass-loaded (with embedded brass weights) and suspended from three conical springs. The Gyro seen here is fitted with the TecnoArm 2

serves up its forebear's traditionally grand sweep of a soundstage, only now with a better sense of central focus and depth.

Kacey Musgraves' country-tinged vocals on 'Everybody Wants To Be A Cowboy' [Lost Highway] stood proud of the accompanying instrumentation and made her performance come alive. Two acoustic guitars were spread wide, one stepping forward to deliver a mid-song solo. When a shift of instrumental focus like this occurs, the deck highlights it with ease.

The new Gyro can also take a full orchestra in its stride, evidenced by Ravel's *Bolero* [Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra; Tacet], where the difference in scale and weight between the gentle start and the thunderous climax was vividly presented. The Gyro seemingly reveals a vast dynamic range, helped by notably low levels of background noise. When things are quiet and soft, there's an almost CD-like silence beneath.

Moreover, it marries this dynamic ability with superb low-end control. The bassline on Donald Fagen's 'Snowbound' [Reprise Records] sounded as deep, flowing and rich as we'd hoped for, but the new Gyro brought more accentuation, more leading-edge precision, to every note. This was a performance of remarkable low-frequency precision, the taut, focused impact making the most of the track's production. Michell's Gyro has evolved in style.

VERDICT

With performance-enhancing improvements to the bearing, platter, subchassis and suspension design, the new Gyro still has the heart and soul of the original but is definitely 'the best yet'. ☺

HI-FI NEWS SPECIFICATIONS

Turntable speed error at 33.33rpm	33.35rpm (+0.05%)
Time to audible stabilisation	4sec
Peak Wow/Flutter	0.06% / 0.03%
Rumble (silent groove, DIN B wtd)	-73.7dB / -75.6dB (with clamp)
Rumble (through bearing, DIN B wtd)	-65.4dB
Hum & Noise (unwtd, rel. to 5cm/sec)	-64.3dB
Power Consumption	4W
Dimensions (WHD) / Weight	495x180x385mm / 15.5kg