

Go for Wood



Inspired by the people around Jean Hiraga in France in the 80s I had the idea of making a wood body for the Denon DL 103(R) about 10 years ago. They had found out that the weakest part of the otherwise phenomenal DL 103 was the thin plastic body. So they tried different bodies from cement to lead and everything was better than the stock plastic. Even the naked version without any body was better.

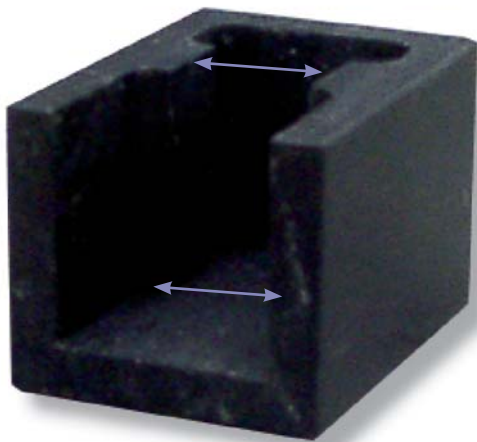
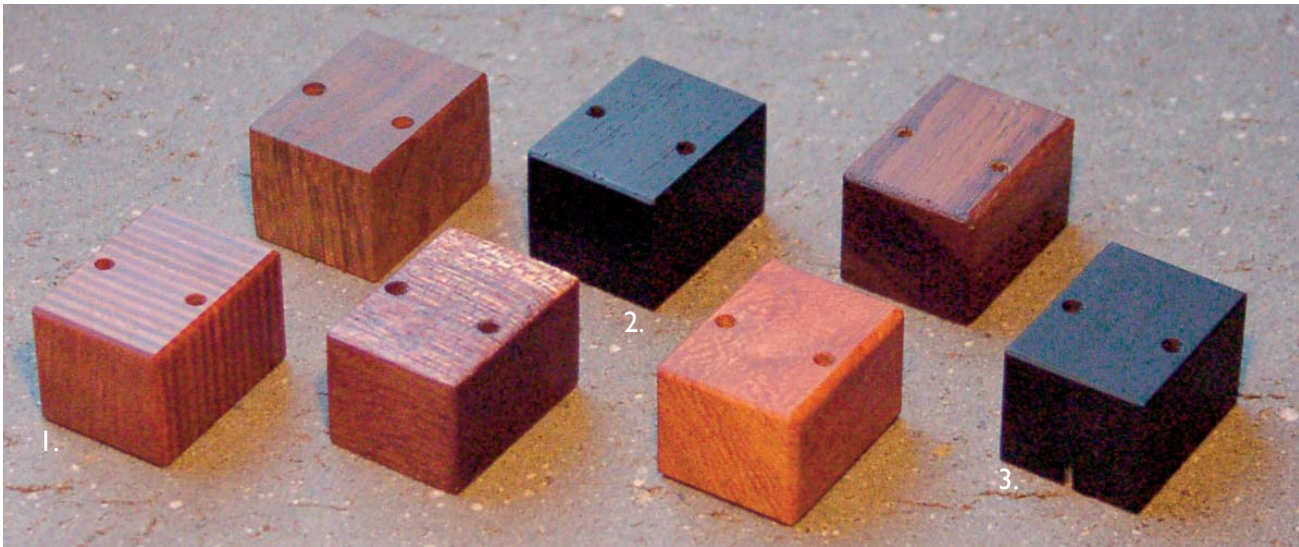
However, in my opinion, the key to get improvement is to have more mass and better damping (with wood!). Since the 80s most of the expensive cartridges now have wood bodies, for example Koetsu, v.d.Hul, Clearaudio, Grado. Some use ebony because of the unique resonance reaction of that wood, for example, Benz, Shun Mook, Yamamoto and others. I have a Schroeder tone arm with a wooden armwand which sounds awesome. That was the reason I chose old ebony wood to start with. But it was a tough task to find the best wood and, of course, I had to buy all the tools. So I was ready to give the wood body a try. It still took me some time to do research, buy all the tools needed, make a prototype, and cut the plastic body off.

When I finally listened to the wooden cartridge the first time I simply was blown away. It was so good. When friends heard it (it outperformed my Benz LP)



they all wanted one. Everybody who tried it liked it a lot. I now make bodies from various sorts of wood (Ebony, Ironwood, Panzerholz, African Rosewood, Clavellin etc.). They all sound better than the flimsy plastic body.

I've been asked many times which wood sounds best. While there might be differences in sound it is hard to verify them in quality. All in all they are slight and also depend on the other components of your system. From my personal experience I can say that Panzerholz sounds ultra fast and neutral while ebony sounds warmer, maybe a bit slower but with a very good three dimensional quality. Other sorts of wood are somewhere in between.



Here are the specs:

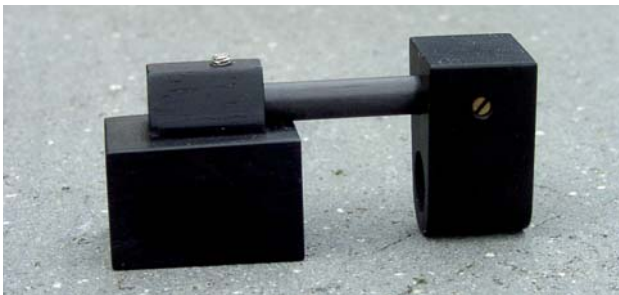
1. Panzerholz ca. 5-5.3 gr.
 2. Ironwood ca. 4.4 gr.
 3. Ebony ca. 3.8-4.6 gr.
 4. African Rosewood (Wenge) = ca. 3.3 gr.
 5. Clavellin ca. 3.8 – 4 gr.
- Denon plastic body = 1.6 gr.

On special request I could also provide Snakewood (ca. 4.8 – 5 gr.) which, however, would be more expensive due to the high cost of this wood.

My bodies have threaded holes and work without glue so they can be used again. You should not over-tighten the screws.

Since the beginning of the year I offer an improved version. The new design has several advantages compared to the old one:

- a more secure fit even under extreme climatic conditions
- you can now use longer screws as the longer thread is nearly completely surrounded by wood (only 1mm is not)
- the wood shell is now structural more rigid and resonance optimized
- improved sound quality



A prototype of a new integrated body and headshell

I'm very proud of my new design that has been tested with great success. The outer dimensions stay the same. You still have to slide in the denuded cart from the back under the two flanges to the front. There is a gap under the flanges of about 1mm.

I ask 100 EUR + 5 EUR shipping and handling (or \$145 + \$5 USD) for a wood body.

You could pay by Paypal



or you could send the money to my bank account (please ask for details).

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