

# the absolute sound

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## ACCESSORIES OF THE YEAR

### Critical Mass Sotto Voce Equipment Rack and Critical Mass Systems Maxxum Amplifier Stands

**\$4500 (Sotto Voce with four shelves); \$5650 (Maxxum amplifier stand)**

The Sotto Voce equipment rack brings the premium performance of Critical Mass Systems' ultra-high-end support structures to a more accessible price. Costing about one-tenth the price of CMS' full-blown Maxxum rack, it nonetheless confers a substantial and musically significant sonic upgrade on any system. The patented vibration-reduction technology delivers a less electronic, less hurried, less blurred presentation of the music. The SV rack can be upgraded over time with the additional of "filter" shelves that take the sonic performance to another level entirely, particularly in timbral information and tonal richness. The Sotto Voce does wonders for a turntable, particularly in the bass. To top it off, the Sotto Voce is beautifully made and will complement even the finest décor.

Critical Mass Systems' top-of-the-line Maxxum amplifier stands employ the same patented technology found in the company's Maxxum mega-rack that is Jonathan Valin's reference. The Maxxum stand is essentially a Maxxum filter shelf mounted on a four-point X-shaped support structure. It's impossible to overstate the Maxxum's build and finish quality. Sonically, the Maxxum amplifier stands allow the system to better resolve low-level information. The increase in resolution isn't heard so much as greater detail (although it is to some degree), but rather as an increase in the sense of realism, spatial definition, the fine dynamic structures of instruments, and the ability of the loudspeakers to disappear. Once you hear your amplifiers on the Maxxum stand, there's no turning back. (Reviewed this issue)