



## LOW RIDER

Like other Rega cartridges, if you are attaching the Apheta 2 to a tonearm from the same manufacturer, it supports three mounting bolts rather than the more usual two – which allows for automatically correct alignment. Happily, if you don't use it in such an arm, it remains a fairly straightforward cartridge to get set up. The alignment is logical, the pins widely spaced and the weight of 6g (pushed nearer to 7g once the two screws have been included) with a tracking weight of 1.75g means it should not prove too challenging. In fact, the only mildly tricky part of the overall setup process is that with VTA and tracking weight both set correctly on the Avid, the clearance to the record is very small. The packaging is also a little on the sparse side, although it does provide effective protection to the cartridge.

# Rega Apheta 2 **£998**

Speed proves to be the key in this thrill-a-minute masterclass of both timing and musicality

## DETAILS

**PRODUCT**  
Rega Apheta 2

**ORIGIN**  
UK

**TYPE**  
Moving-coil cartridge

**WEIGHT**  
6g

**FEATURES**

- Aluminium body with clear protector plates
- Suspension-free cantilever
- Vital stylus

**DISTRIBUTOR**  
Rega Research Ltd

**TELEPHONE**  
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**WEBSITE**  
rega.co.uk

**M**oving-coil cartridges are a comparatively recent addition to Rega's inventory and the original Apheta introduced a new construction process to the moving-coil process, which continues with the Apheta 2. The generator assembly is sufficiently small that it and the cantilever system can be mounted without the wire and damped rubber suspension that is usually employed in designs of this nature. Instead, a rhomboid pivot is attached to a machined aluminium chassis, which is claimed to result in a more accurate performance.

The aluminium chassis is skeletal in nature, and would leave the cantilever and generator unprotected if it were the only part of the body. To avoid this, there is a rigid clear cover to protect the internals and make it simpler to fit (see boxout). The cantilever mounts a Vital profile stylus and there's something quite satisfying about being able to see the components

that make the Apheta 2 work without them being at risk of handling damage.

With an output of 0.35mV, the Apheta 2 is toward the bottom end of the pack in output terms, but not to the extent that it will require any special treatment. While the supplied equipment with the cartridge is on the parsimonious side, the build is extremely good and little touches like the small but protective stylus guard make it feel good value for money.

## Sound quality

From the outset the Apheta 2 shows that its signature ability is speed. The manner in which the piano piece materialises in *Hypocrite* is wonderfully immediate. It doesn't force this relatively slow piece of music or make it sound strained, it just seems to remove any sense of pause or delay to the presentation. The instruments sound smooth and natural and while there is a fractional loss of detail compared with some, the effect is very enjoyable. This refinement and agility combines to great effect with *Do I Move You?* The Rega avoids the slightly hot upper registers of the album and uses that superb sense of immediacy to deliver Simone's vocals with realism and texture tied together with absolute rhythmic assurance.

As the tempo of the test material increases, this ability only becomes more pronounced. *Happiness Is Easy* is effortlessly composed and engaging with the complex percussion hitting with absolute precision and speed. Holliss' vocals are detailed and well separated from the supporting

instrumentation. Once again, there is the sense that the Apheta 2 is more of a big-picture device. It won't reveal every last incremental detail in the mix and parts like the children's choir don't have the discernible individual voices that can be picked up by some designs, but the musical message of the piece is delivered intact.

This allows the Rega to put in a fine performance with *Wide Open* because the track plays very much to its strengths. The bassline is fast and effortlessly controlled if not as deep as it can be elsewhere and Beck's vocals are perfectly arranged over the top. The Apheta 2 does a fine job of finding the emotional content of the music and the sheer speed and immediacy that it demonstrates can be addictive and for many people this will be entirely sufficient. However, there are other models in the group that are capable of delivering a slightly more rounded presentation ●



## Hi-Fi Choice

### OUR VERDICT

**SOUND QUALITY**  
★★★★★  
**LIKE:** Superbly fast and immediate presentation; solid build; easy setup

**VALUE FOR MONEY**  
★★★★★  
**DISLIKE:** Lacks a little detail and bass weight; relatively expensive

**BUILD QUALITY**  
★★★★★  
**WE SAY:** Tremendously engaging performer that will appeal to many listeners

**FEATURES**  
★★★★★

### OVERALL

