



## HOLY TRINITY

The Planar 2 is the middle model of three Planar turntables launched in quick succession that give the Essex-based firm a competitive offering across a variety of price points. The Planar 1 is visually similar, but the inclusion of the glass platter and RB220 arm to the Planar 2 gives it both greater visual elegance and the promise of higher performance, even though they both make use of the same Carbon cartridge.

The Planar 2 can also take advantage of the 'Performance Pack' of components originally developed for the RP1 that is available from dealers. This comprises an updated drive belt, natural wool mat and the Bias 2 cartridge. This £85 pack is extremely interesting as it will probably take the performance of the Planar 2 beyond the Elipson, albeit at a higher price than the entry-level Omega 100.

# Rega Planar 2 £380

It has one of the most evocative names in the business, but this Rega turntable isn't trading on its reputation

### DETAILS

**PRODUCT**  
Rega Planar 2

**ORIGIN**  
UK

**TYPE**  
Belt-drive turntable

**WEIGHT**  
5.5kg

**DIMENSIONS**  
(WxHxD)  
447 x 117 x 360mm

**FEATURES**  
● 33 & 45rpm  
● Carbon MM cartridge  
● RB220 tonearm

**DISTRIBUTOR**  
Rega Research Ltd.

**TELEPHONE**  
01702 333071

**WEBSITE**  
rega.co.uk

**T**he return of the Planar name to three of Rega's newest turntables condenses everything the company knows about affordable analogue. This isn't something that has happened by accident, as it has been one of the key players in affordable analogue for decades, and these new models show why.

The Planar 2 and Apprentice TT Mk2 share a degree of commonality in terms of design philosophy in that both are unsuspended designs with belt-driven sub-platters with clear platters placed on top. There are some key differences between the two, though. The Planar 2's platter is glass and designed to be used with a supplied mat. It also makes use of the new RB220 arm. This still looks (and feels) very much like a classic Rega arm, but features new 'zero play' ball bearings in an all new bearing housing. The clip and the armtube

have also been revised. The motor and its control board are also all new and other areas like the feet have seen improvements.

It might not look as distinctive as the Edwards or as striking as the Elipson, but there is no arguing that this is a very handsome turntable that is instantly recognisable as a Rega design. The high gloss acrylic laminated plinth is shared with the more expensive Planar 3. It does without the 3's brace and the overall fit and finish is extremely good. Like the Edwards Audio and Thorens, the Rega has captive tonearm leads but there's also a detachable wall-wart power supply. It's also fitted with Rega's Carbon phono cartridge.

### Sound quality

The Planar 2 wastes no time in making a very convincing case for itself. There is an assurance to the way that it handles any tempo or rhythm that makes it an immediately engaging listen. It manages to make the Portico Quartet sound lively and fun without doing anything to force the recording or make it appear strained. Ask it to pick up the pace with *Hostage* and it does so with commendable effortlessness.

It might not quite match the Edwards Audio for the sheer levels of attack and excitement that it brings to the performance, but there is a payoff for this slight restraint in that when presented with the thinner and more aggressive *Cruise Missiles* it sounds smoother, more controlled and an easier listen. Only the creamy smooth

top end of the Elipson manages to better it in the group.

It's also able to produce believable tonality for voices and instruments. Lapsley Fletcher's vocals are powerful, rich and entirely believable and sit atop a presentation that has impressive amounts of air and space along with a commendable sense of three dimensionality to it. It can sometimes miss tiny details that are extracted by the Apprentice TT Mk2, but it's more even-handed performance across a wide variety of music will win it many friends. When tested with the Graham Slee phono stage, the Rega retains most of its commendable performance characteristics although it does seem to have slightly greater background noise levels than some of the other models here. This should not detract from what is an excellent all-round turntable and a very competitive offering at this price point ●



## Hi-Fi Choice

### OUR VERDICT

**SOUND QUALITY**  
★★★★★ **LIKE:** Lively, involving performance; great build; upgradeable

**VALUE FOR MONEY**  
★★★★★ **DISLIKE:** Fractional loss of fine detail; some surface noise

**BUILD QUALITY**  
★★★★★ **WE SAY:** A supremely talented turntable that should work well in many systems, but not quite the best here

**FEATURES**  
★★★★★

### OVERALL

