

# ONKK

## ISOO four-shelf system support



**THIS IS THE** brainchild of Paul Beckett, designer and maker of extremely expensive – and arrestingly beautiful – clocks (see paulbeckett.com). One of life’s true eccentrics, this young horologist has just completed a stunning installation for Heston Blumenthal’s latest restaurant in London. Oh, and he’s a passionate audiophile, too.

With hundred thousand pound timepieces being delicate devices, you’d expect the ISOO to be a well designed product and so it proves, showing both originality and audiophile best practice. It assuredly does not look like traditional hi-fi furniture; our review sample’s white satin finish seems more at home in Habitat than an audio specialist. It certainly goes down well with the other half.

It is purposed to separate ground-borne vibration from loudspeakers, from sensitive source components and amplifiers, as well as sinking any internal resonances from the equipment itself. Paul says the idea is for the rack structure to provide a direct path to sink vibration to the floor, while the individual subtables damp it *en route* to the components. He believes deploying these two strategies in tandem is what gives the ISOO an edge at this price.

The rack is an assemblage of platforms, and you can buy as many as you like to suit your equipment. Each one acts as a cell and forms a path for resonance grounding via a knife-edge at the base and a V block at the top. The upright is damped by a large Acetal washer that, “lowers the frequency of the oscillating nature of vibration below that which can be detrimental”, says Becket. An Acetal cam system on each leg locks the platforms laterally together.

### Me myself and I

Each platform cell has an inner and an outer shelf. The inner shelf is mounted on four Acetal outriggers bolted into the outer shelf that has Acetal cones that seat into Sorbothane-lined cups, which are compressed by the cone. This

compression is key, because it varies the density of the rubber as the cone contacts it; for example at the tip it’s heavily compressed, but as wider parts of the cone contact it further along they are less so. This gives the wide spectrum damping needed to isolate the system through the whole audio range, says Paul.

The 25mm MDF platforms are just large enough to accommodate standard hi-fi separates, while the hardwood uprights are available in custom heights to accommodate any scale of equipment and come in a choice of wenge or oak, although bespoke orders are available. Paul says that the woods sound subtly different, so customers can buy to aesthetic or sonic taste. The densest timber, wenge, is said to give the crispest and most transparent sound while less dense hardwoods are better at taming bright systems with their warmer balance. The basic package comes with four shelves (and subtables); spacing is individually specified. There’s a no-cost option of a top-table (not shown) if you don’t want the top cell configured to accept another level. Construction quality is high, and the racks come in a choice of soft white or satin black.

Given its cute, curvy styling, some traditional audiophile types may fear the ISOO is all show and no go. After all, it’s not all shiny metal and big,

tough spikes, is it? However, sonically this could not have been further from the truth – indeed it proves one of the best sounding system supports I’ve heard at or anywhere near the price.

Supporting a Cyrus CD Xt Signature transport, Chord Hugo DAC and Exposure 3010 S2 amplifier, the difference is manifest over my already excellent reference supports. The ISOO improves on both Quadraspire and Audiophile Furniture systems, with a deeper and wider soundstage, and bouncier, more animated bass. Treble smoothes out slightly, the midband opens up, and those small microdynamics that make music so engaging are better rendered.

### Rack and roll

Indeed, the ISOO brings a welcome sense of ease to the music yet sounds more powerful and impactful too. Tonally, there’s a cleaning up of the upper bass and a sweetening of the midband, making every type of music sound purer and more expressive. In short, this is a cracking sounding equipment rack that’s well able to hold its own against the best of the rest. It’s expensive, but still cheaper than its direct rivals and gives nothing away in sonics. An impressive debut for the brand, and we hear there’s more to come. **DP**

#### DETAILS

**PRICE**  
£1,395  
**CONTACT**  
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#### OUR VERDICT

