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Above Metaxas & Sins TR-X Tourbillon – the latest audio creation selected for Ten, an artisan collection from Absolute Sounds

Absolute Sounds embraces the reel-to-reel tape revival

The UK's foremost high-end audio distributor adds Metaxas & Sins' TR-X Tourbillon and Papillon reel-to-reel tape machines to its carefully curated Ten collection of singular sonic artistry

London, England – Absolute Sounds, the UK's foremost high-end audio distributor, welcomes Metaxas & Sins' brilliant reel-to-reel analogue tape machines to its peerless portfolio of exceptional audio equipment from around the globe.

These wonderfully tactile mechanical devices have been selected by Ricardo Franassovici, Absolute Sounds' founder and MD, to join Ten – a carefully curated collection of extraordinary sonic creations from independent makers, which sits alongside the main Absolute Sounds portfolio.

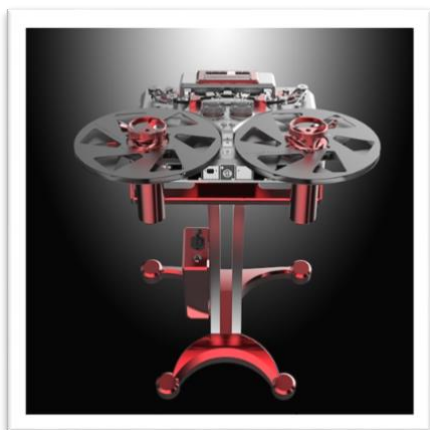
Founded by Kostas Metaxas and based in the Netherlands, Metaxas & Sins is renowned for the quality and originality of its design approach, creating “high-end audio sculptures” and “kinetic art objects” that are as striking to the eye as they are to the ear. Kostas is a renowned artist and product designer whose collaborations with revered luxury brands stretches well beyond audio equipment – pens, clocks and much more besides. He's also a prolific recording engineer who's made hundreds of live concert

recordings using magnetic open-reel tape. These passions meld together in breathtaking form in each unique Metaxas & Sins creation, handmade by Kostas and his sons to create sonic art that deserves to be treasured – “art colliding with audio technology”, in the company’s words.

Welcome to the reel world

Although Metaxas & Sins makes a variety of audio equipment including amplifiers and speakers, its reel-to-reel tape machines have attracted particular attention. For decades, right through to the 1990s, magnetic tape wound across a pair of open reels was the established medium for master recordings in the music world. Although digital recording and storage now prevails, analogue recording on magnetic tape is still preferred by some artists and its use continues to this day. In terms of consumer use, reel-to-reel tape was never a widely adopted format in the manner of vinyl or compact cassette in the pre-digital age and, while some enthusiasts did use the format at home, its use in domestic settings all but died out decades ago. Until recently...

While not to the scale of the vinyl revival, there has been a rekindling of interest in reel-to-reel tape among a passionate group of enthusiasts in the audiophile community. This has been fuelled by increased availability of classic albums on open-reel tape, accompanied by the attraction of hearing the album on the format on which it was made. In sonic terms, reel-to-reel has the potential to deliver the warmth of analogue sound with less processing, greater dynamic range, and better clarity and extension at the frequency extremes than vinyl records. Much depends on how the copy is made – a first-generation copy dubbed in real time directly from the original master tape can get you closer to the entirety of sound captured during the recording sessions for a classic album than any other format... but only if you have a reel-to-reel machine capable of doing it justice.



Metaxas & Sins: the reel deal

Metaxas & Sins makes two reel-to-reel tape machines – the TR-X Tourbillon and the Papillon. Both are designed from the ground up to utilise the finest component parts available today, from the heads to the entirely discrete circuits, and the sound quality they deliver puts ‘classic’ reel-to-reel machines to shame. Although Absolute Sounds will carry both machines, the initial focus is firmly on the TR-X Tourbillon. Designed for 10.5-inch reels, the Tourbillon is a ‘location recorder’ – in other words,

sufficiently compact and transportable to be used in a variety of environments, rather than purely recording studios, with an optional battery box so it doesn't have to be plugged into the mains. Its design revels in the tactile appeal of precision mechanical machinery; in the hands of its operator, with the turn of each dial and the flick of each switch, it performs its function to deeply satisfying perfection.

As is the case with all Metaxas & Sins' creations, the design is horologically inspired. In high-end wristwatch design, a tourbillon (French for whirlwind) is an addition to the mechanics of a watch lever escapement to increase accuracy. The TR-X Tourbillon is the first reel-to-reel tape machine to use the same concept to regulate the speed of the tape – add this to the machine's perfect mechanical design and it's no wonder that Metaxas & Sins says the Tourbillon tape machine represents the point "where horology meets hi-fi".

In the words of Metaxas & Sins: "The TR-X Tourbillon is an entirely newly designed professional reel-to-reel tape location recorder and playback machine that meets and exceeds the highest demands of recording engineers and the most serious audiophiles... combining 2020s technology with 1960s 'soul'."

The TR-X Tourbillon is available in two versions – one for recording and playback, the other for playback only, with UK RRP's of £59,998 and £46,998 respectively. The optional Lion battery box is £3,200; there's also a matching stand at £9,398.



As Ricardo Franassovici explains, the time is right for Absolute Sounds to distribute these fabulous reel-to-reel tape machines – the first such devices the company has carried since its formation in 1979.

"There are two important reasons why I have selected these Metaxas & Sins tape machines to join the Ten collection. The first is that thanks to a number of specialist suppliers, the increased availability of the reel-to-reel format to consumers makes it a viable – and highly satisfying – medium for music connoisseurs. The second – and crucial – factor is that Metaxas & Sins has succeeded in elevating the sound quality from open-reel tape to new levels, wrapped in a package that exudes individuality and flair. Unique, exceptional, highly desirable – these are perfect additions to my Ten collection."

Absolute Sounds is the sole UK distributor of Metaxas & Sins reel-to-reel tape machines.
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About Absolute Sounds and the Ten collection

Absolute Sounds is the UK's leading importer and distributor of high-end audio equipment. The company was formed in 1979 by Ricardo Franassovici, who left a successful career in the music industry to become one of the world's foremost hi-fi entrepreneurs. Ricardo's burning desire has always been to give UK-based music fans the opportunity to experience audio at the highest level, cherry-picking the finest components from around the globe to create a 'hi-fi boutique' overflowing with highly covetable, high-performance products. Like the finest watches and most prestigious motorcars, these brands deliver finely tuned, supremely engineered products that simply ooze desirability.

Absolute Sounds' main distribution portfolio comprises 22 of the world's most revered high-end audio manufacturers, some of which have been distributed exclusively by the company for several decades. 'Ten' sits alongside this portfolio – a distinct collection of uniquely desirable pieces from artisan audio makers, personally curated by Ricardo Franassovici. Metaxas & Sins' reel-to-reel tape machines join preamps and power amps by Robert Koda, Trafomatic and HSE, and speakers by DeVore Fidelity, to form the current Ten collection.



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