

To Infinity and Beyond

The IsoTek EVO 3 Mosaic Genesis

By Jeff Dorgay

One of the most important things you can do for your system, and surely the thing you should do first, is to address the power in your listening room. Unless you live in the middle of nowhere, chances are almost 100% that you've got power coming in that is full of noise and distortion. That's right, distortion. Plug a Fluke analyzer into your AC socket and you'll be shocked at just how much distortion is in the AC power that you're feeding to your components. Even if you had super clean power, there is still a considerable amount around the house from all of your other electronic components and wireless devices. And God forbid your next door neighbor is doing a lot of arc welding in the evening when you're trying to listen to your hifi system.





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REVIEW

Conventional wisdom says that the power supply in your components and its associated filtration should take care of this, and to some extent that is true. The more massive and well designed the power supply in your amp, preamp, DAC and other components is, the better the sound. But you're still starting with dirty power. The suspension in your car filters most of the undulations in the road out, keeping you comfortable, but that same car always rides that much nicer when you hit a patch of smooth, just rolled pavement, doesn't it? Same thing here. The cleaner the power going in, the better sound coming out of your system.

A great power line conditioner should not do anything to alter the tonal balance of your system. What it *should* do is drop the noise floor, remove power related artifacts and in the end allow a smoother, more defined, less fatiguing sound, because your system doesn't have to traverse all of those bumps.

I've been using the IsoTek SuperTitan in my main reference system now for a couple of years, and after trying nearly everything else, it still passes muster in terms of not doing any harm and lowering the noise floor dramatically. The minute I plug directly into the wall, however, I feel the loss of its presence instantly. And even though the SuperTitan does a fabulous job, what if you eliminated the wall altogether? *(continued)*

Enter the IsoTek EVO 3 Mosaic Genesis

Another alternative would be to generate fresh power and start from there. Others have tried this, with modest success, but in our experience have always fallen somewhat short in terms of ultimate dynamics and sonic coloration. As happy as I am with my SuperTitan, I must admit skepticism to this approach when U.S. importer Kevin Wolff was explaining the Genesis. No more than 15 seconds after inserting the Genesis into my reference system—consisting of a Pass Labs XsPre, Xs300 monoblocks, Gryphon Kalliope DAC and Quad 2815 speakers—that skepticism was dismissed.

Because the Genesis regenerates fresh AC power, rebuilding the AC sine wave with distortion figures in the .2–.3 percent range (where a typical US power outlet has 10–50 times this much distortion), if you're anticipating a smoother ride, you've got it. Just like taking a Ferrari with fresh racing tires out on the track, installing the Genesis helps your system to follow the curves, contrasts and other nuances with much less effort.

As good as the SuperTitan is, using the Genesis for the front end of the system redefines quiet for this music lover. With the Quads only requiring 6 watts each, the decision to run one outlet of the Genesis into an IsoTek EVO 3 Sirius power bar to power the speakers proves a good one and the Quads do benefit in the same way that the electronics do from being fed pure AC.



The only bad news here is that the three Genesis outlets can only supply 150 watts of regenerated power. Should you need more, the standard EVO 3 Genesis with 600 watts of capacity is the model for you.

Wolff goes on to clarify, stating “The amplifier section of the EVO 3 Mosaic Genesis is more closely related to the EVO 3 SuperTitan, vs. the amplifier section of the Mosaic, but that makes for a great future upgrade. The SuperTitan is at another technological level that cannot be shrunk and keeps its uniqueness. This form factor was chosen so that if you needed more than five outlets total, you could fit two of them on a rack. The Mosaic Genesis was designed to bridge the gap between absolutely great and the outer ranges of what is possible.”

At \$11,995, the Mosaic Genesis is by no means an entry-level power product and it does include one of IsoTek's power cords in the box. A number of conditioners, even at this price, still make you buy a \$1,000–\$2,000 power cord, so this is a nice touch. In the context of a modest system, the Genesis is most likely an unjustified expense, but in terms of the reference system used here, with a price tag of about \$150k, the Genesis is definitely well worth the cost. The additional liveliness and natural rendition it adds to the presentation would not be heard by adding \$12,000 worth of cable or a fancy equipment rack. The improvement that the Genesis makes to the system

is not really available any other way, so in that sense it is totally unique.

With the Genesis in the system, even heavy rock sounds louder, more impactful, thanks to the lower noise floor. Classical, acoustic and vocal lovers will notice a greater delta between Genesis and no Genesis. Everything rendered sounds more organic, more natural as if another barrier has been removed between you and the music. The Pass now sounds more grain-free, like a passive preamplifier, yet with the dynamic drive of an active preamplifier, if that makes sense. The ultra clean power delivery of the Genesis helps the system to sound less electronic, if you will.

Varied scenarios

With three outlets at your disposal, what to plug in? In my original reference system, the Genesis effect was indeed impressive, so the next two places to try it were in the analog half of the chain and in bringing my four-box dCS Paganini system to replace the Gryphon.

Utilizing the Rogers phono-stage that we reviewed back in issue 62, which is an all vacuum tube design, was positively stunning, and reminds me of every tube component I've ever plugged into the SuperTitan. The noise floor drop with every tube preamp I plugged into the Genesis was greater than any solid-state component, except for the dCS stack. *(continued)*

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Those with a high end digital player and the spare cash to match need a Genesis. While the Nordost cable upgrade to the Paganini was spectacular, again, the Genesis pushes the boundaries even further. Spinning the latest MoFi SACD of the Miles Davis classic *Kind of Blue* is a sheer freak out. The dCS stack has precious little grain or harshness in its presentation that you don't even notice until you pull the Genesis out. Everything gets smaller, more brittle, and less lifelike. I experienced the same thing with my Dylan SACDs played through the stack—his voice is so much more realistic, with more tonal saturation, more decay and more delicacy.

Make no mistake

Call me crazy, but if you have a mega system, you really should audition an IsoTek EVO 3 Genesis, or its big brother, the EVO 3 Genesis. Especially if you've optimized your system as far as you think it can go. If you've taken your system to 11, this will take it to 12. I guarantee you will be so enthused with the results that it will sell itself. ●

REVIEW

The IsoTek EVO 3
Mosaic Genesis
\$11,995

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