

Luminous Audio Technology Renaissance II Interconnect

By Jake Montzingo

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Specifications

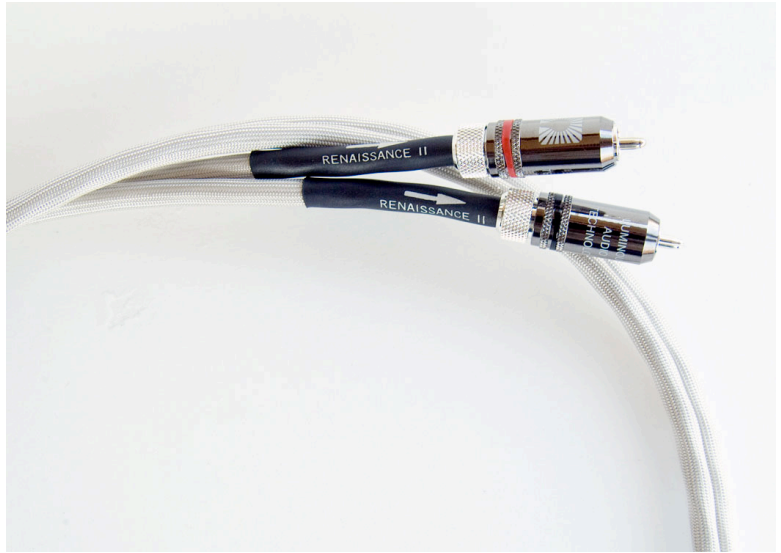
18 Gauge, Solid 99.997% OFC Copper Core Conductor

Virgin Polyurethane Insulation

Locking RCA or XLR Terminations

Price: \$169.00 for 1m RCA

Luminousaudio.com



Audio cables these days come from a multitude of manufacturers in any flavor that you choose. Whether you would like your interconnects made of copper, solid silver, or cheese, I am sure you can find those cables out there. My bottom line as an audiophile and music enthusiast is that I want a product that doesn't mess-up my music; it's that easy. Or is it? The issue with most any type of audio cables is that they are conductors that carry the signal from one piece of equipment to another, and inevitably imparts their sonic signature on that signal. This imparting of sonic signature however does not have to be a bad thing. As someone who does not believe in using an equalizer in my system, I use my equipment (cables included) to shape the sound of my system and the music that it produces. Do you need the bass a little tighter and more impact or the highs a little more airy? More than likely there is a cable or cables that can help you with that; enter the Luminous Audio Renaissance II Interconnect.

The Luminous Audio Renaissance II RCA Interconnect is a very attractive cable with its white fiberglass jacket and black chrome, locking RCA connectors. It has a very smooth feel to it and the RCA connectors are very solid and hold the connection extremely well when screwed into place. The cables have the always helpful directional marking heat shrink with Luminous' logo on it as well as the connectors; just in case you forget what you are using. The Renaissance II is a three-conductor cable that is terminated with the third conductor at the source end of the cable only. Tim Stinson from Luminous Audio claims that tying the third conductor at one end adds a tad to the shielding effect and a bit more capacitance to aid in controlling the top-end. The cables themselves are comprised of three; 18g solid core copper conductors with virgin polyurethane insulation and Cardas silver/copper solder to attach the terminations. Being that these cables do have three conductors, they lend themselves to either RCA or XLR terminations, which Luminous offers at ease. One of my only negatives with these cables, which is also a huge positive, is that the cable is pretty stiff since it does use three solid core conductors. However, as stated before this allows for either RCA or XLR cables, as well as Luminous Audio offers the speaker cable brother to the Renaissance II so that the cable package would be 100% identical. This speaker cable uses all three conductors for one leg of the cable that means that the three 18g conductors give around a 13.5g speaker cable leg; a perfect match to you Renaissance II interconnects!

After I first connected the Renaissance II interconnects, I played through a few classical albums to let them burn in initially. I like classical music for burning in equipment because of its full range of audio frequencies, plus frequent changes in dynamics. On this note, Luminous Audio does offer a burn-in service from the factory for new cables so that you can receive your new purchase already seasoned. Luminous Audio Technology is now equipped with a MO-BIE (Maximum overdrive break-in engine) from T&G as well as a custom designed break-in procedure for their power cords and speaker cables. With all that technology available to you, you no longer need to run your cables through weeks of AM static to try to burn every ounce out of them!

After I hooked up these very attractive RCA interconnects and let them burn in, I sat back with a few albums playing (not simultaneously of course) and listened to some music. The beautiful thing was that the music coming out of my rig sounded like I thought it should, with just a tweak. Since the goal of Luminous Audio with the Renaissance II was to create an interconnect that is bass happy, yet controls the top end to the spectrum, I was anxious to see if Luminous reached their goal. The first album I decided to listen to was *Give Up* by the Postal Service. As I have said before, I really like this album because a lot of the sounds on it were digitally created and it provides a good reference. Granted, many of the sounds on the album are a little unnatural sounding, but they play back consistently and accurately every time. As I cued "This Place Is A Prison", I started to be turned on to the musicality of these interconnects;

the music just flows through this pair of Luminous Audio Renaissance II interconnects. From the first "crunching sound" in the song, the tonality was balanced and the sound was very clear and clean. The bass in the song is present and full, but still tight while the highs and mids are warmly controlled. The force of the overall sound came through very punchy and not at all restricted with the interconnects. The next track was "Nothing Better", and it in fact was. The overall sound continued to be very musical, but the crispness and exactness of all the computer generated sound effects still presented themselves in all their digital-ness. The two voices had very good separation in the song, as well as the sound effects also had separation and distinct places in space. The Postal Service makes some strange music, and the overall soundstage of the song looked like a pair of people being swirled in a mist of electronic noises. It was a very good listen and the Renaissance IIs only helped to bring the picture together.

The second album that I played through was Chris Rice's *Living Room Sessions*. This is an all acoustic piece with Chris' piano being the only thing recorded. It is not the best or most quiet recording since it was done in his living room, but the piano work is great and the music flows from his fingers. Throughout every song on the album, the interconnects presented the natural sound of the piano, with as good a soundstage as that album can provide. All the detail and musical transitions were present, and the woody tone and resonance of the piano was very present on "Be Still My Soul". The only negative I could find with the Luminous Audio Renaissance II ICs sound is that they can be a bit on the warm side. For most of my listening, this came across as a very earthy and musical sound with a highlight to voices; I didn't even initially pinpoint that these ICs had a warm side until this album. However, on the slightly grainy *Living Room Sessions* album, the Renaissance IIs brought out a little too much warmth on that album than sounded natural. The listening experience was still very pleasurable and the hint of warmth did not seem to detract from the overall sound, but it did come across as overly warm. Please keep in mind that this scenario did arise with only this album in my listening, and it probably did not help that I was using my class A Forte 1A amplifier which can be on the warm side already. The bottom line with the Renaissance II interconnects is that they bring your music across in a very musical form, and they have some of the best equipment synergy in my rig to date.



The Renaissance II interconnect price from Luminous Audio may not be the top of their cable line-up, but it is on the top of my cable list.

What I love about the Luminous Audio Renaissance II Interconnect is how they let my system sound very detailed yet musical. They let the natural sound of my system flow out to my speakers, but with a little bump on the bass end and musically tame control on the top. Luminous Audio Technology set out to create a set of interconnects that had a full sound and had full usability. With the Renaissance II interconnect; they achieved both of those goals with fervor. The cables are just as easy to use as they are on the eyes, and the sonic signature of the interconnects does not hold your system back. The Luminous Audio Renaissance II Interconnect looks good and sounds good; I don't need anything else.

Associated Equipment

- PC Music Server
- Matrix mini-i DAC
- Forte 1A Amplifier
- Luminous Audio Axiom Preamp
- SVS MBS-01 Speakers
- Grant Fidelity MSB-1 Speakers
- SVS PC-12Plus Subwoofer
- Esoteric Audio E7 Speaker Cables
- Skywire Audio SE Speaker Cables
- Canare 4S11 Speaker Cables
- Cardas High Speed Data Transmission Cable
- PS Audio Punch Power Cord
- Monster Cable HTS 2500