

## The HiFiCollective Takman Stepped Attenuator

Neville Roberts

The latest stepped attenuator to be added to the HiFiCollective range is an attenuator based on the “REX” Audio Grade Carbon Film Resistors from Japanese company of Takman. Takman resistors are already extremely popular in manufactured Hi-Fi and are renowned for their low distortion, high tolerance (HiFiCollective stock the 2% range) and high quality sound. These resistors are non-magnetic and have brass end caps and oxygen free copper lead outs.

Takman recognises how sound is influenced by the various structures and materials used in the manufacture of these resistors. Magnetism, inductance and electrification caused by contact resistance and vibration all contribute to a flat and coloured sound. This results in an edgy brightness with an overall lack of accuracy and detail. To remove these incidental noises, Takman has developed manufacturing techniques that can be used for mass production, together with the use of superb quality materials to produce these audio grade resistors that offer outstanding specifications.

For the purposes of this review, the attenuator was installed in a GlassHouse Passive Pre-Amp, alongside the Pre-Amp fitted with a GlassHouse Holco attenuator and a variety of known recordings were played.

As anticipated, there was a very marked difference between the two attenuators. The Holcos, being metal film resistors, were significantly brighter than the Takmans. This was expected as carbon film resistors are known for their smooth, warm sound that is very much at home on valve equipment. The Holcos offer a clear and clean sound stage with vocals very much to the front.

The Takmans, on the other hand, provide a warmer sound that is easy to listen to with more depth to the sound stage as vocals and instruments are further back.

However, the overriding feature of the Takmans is their superb bass response. It is altogether tighter and more controlled than with

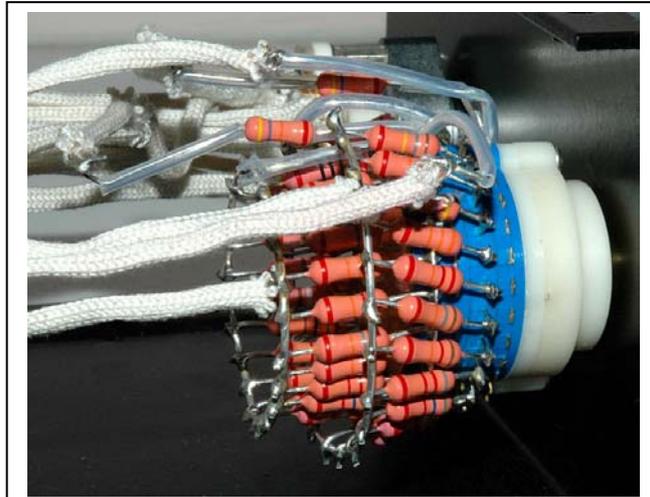


Figure 1. The Takman Attenuator

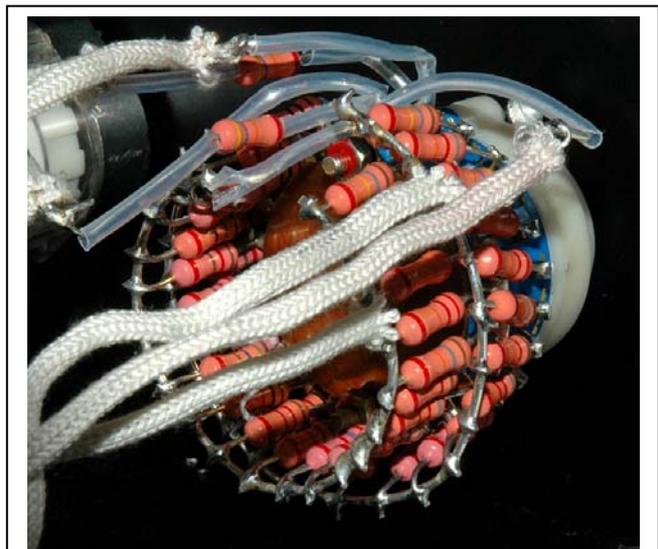


Figure 2. The Takman Attenuator rear view

the Holcos. Drums are punchier and bass lines are more clearly defined. In fact, the bass quality is reminiscent of the Shinkoh tantalums, especially in terms of clarity and balance.

## **Conclusions**

The Takman attenuator is certainly a fine sounding unit and the question that many will be asking is which sounds better – Takmans or Holcos? The truthful answer is “Neither!” – they both have unique qualities and the ultimate choice will depend on the equipment they are to be fitted in and the preferences of the listener.

The Holcos will be your choice if you are looking for a bright top-end with a more forward sound stage and the Takmans if your preference is for a sound stage with more depth and a tight, well-controlled and extended bass where, to be honest, they really excel.

The Takman is another excellent attenuator offering true audiophile performance at a price that challenges any decision to use a potentiometer!

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