

dCS Bartók with
headphone amp
£11,999



phone amplifier promises future-proofing, whatever forms digital music may take. This device can play any format of digital music at an exceptional quality, meaning existing devices with digital outputs – CD, DVD, Blu-ray and SACD players, mobile phones, tablets, streamers, computers – are not just exploited, but improved by the power of this digital processor.

Whether physical discs, downloads or streaming, the all-British Bartók can handle any digital signal. Its processing supports a host of formats, and as a network player, the Bartók is compatible with AirPlay and the MQA streaming service, but the big news is that, since May, it features dCS Mosaic, a new, pro-prietary streaming audio platform.

Why is this a game changer for music lovers? Mosaic presents an interface for both Android and iOS, with absolute feature parity between them – a boon if you use, say, an Apple iPad and a Samsung phone. Streaming compatibility is assured from Spotify et al, as well as internet radio, podcasts and locally attached USB storage. If you refuse to compromise sound quality, are burdened with legacy hardware or simply want to avoid obsolescence, this could change the way you play.

WHAT A PLAYER!

Despite all that digital music has promised, there remains scope for improvement. Audiophiles have been shouting this from the rooftops since CDs first appeared in 1983, but the perpetual quest for better sound has been accompanied by a confusing plethora of formats.

Now, though, dCS's Bartók DAC (digital analogue converter) with head-