



Audience "powerChord" (\$449/6 ft. length)

We are living in an inflationary universe. Cosmologists and avant-garde theoretical physicists, such as Alan Guth and Lee Smolin, are hard at work to show us ever new mysteries in the evolution of time and space. While it appears that the universe is about fourteen billion years old, it seems (paradoxically) to be a hundred million light years across.

I cannot reconcile those numbers, but it is clear that the inflation of time and space that defines our cosmos is not at fault for the inflation that we find in the world of high-end audio. That may be a result of market forces, and yet I think it is a result of many people thinking that a high price tag reflects outstanding audio value.

Sometimes that correlation holds true; not always. Thus, I've chosen to view the editor's request for a nomination to the "most wanted components" list as an opportunity to select an audio/video-related product with truly outstanding value.



The "powerChord" from **Audience** is a remarkable addition to components that allow for A/C upgrades. Not everyone is ready to spend hundreds of dollars -- in some cases a thousand dollars and more -- to improve the performance of an audio or video unit. At \$379 for a 6 ft. length, this enhancement is within reach of many audio budgets.

Perhaps the most expected audio boost from a power cord upgrade resides with an increase in audio dynamics and video resolution. The varieties of such nuances are nearly limitless and the best power cords have a wonderful way of making a good component very much better in ways that are both subtle and (sometimes) dramatic.

The essential set of enhancements to be discovered from the Audience "powerChord" can all be grouped within that elusive notion of MUSICALITY. I have heard power chords that are more detailed and more vividly enhancing of soundstage resolution. I've not yet heard any power chord that accomplishes such an engaging reinforcement of genuinely musical values -- the pace, relaxation, and tonal elements that define the heart of seductive musical experiences -- at such a modest price.

It is not surprising to find that the folks who created the AURIC ILLUMINATOR digital disc enhancement technique score so highly with their power cord design . . . no surprise, just musical pleasure: a splendid product that truly increases audio and video enjoyment without inflating the listener's a/v budget. We may live in a cosmos that is expanding well beyond our comprehension. But the Audience "powerChord" has found a way to slow the inflationary audiophile cosmos to a human scale -- an event worth exploring at a bargain basement cost. 