

# Voodoo Labs Witchcraft

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REFERENCE - Platinová nota

Voodoo Labs



## REFERENCE!

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## FULL TEXT

The hi-fi realm is full of peculiarities, often bordering on esoterica (there are other possible names for it, but let's stick to the polite ones). When a company

decides to name itself Voodoo Labs and christens its flagship product Witchcraft, maintaining a serious demeanor is not easy. However, the main developer here is Jan Geschke, a man who has been working for the Dynaudio brand since 1990 and has consulted for companies like Burmester, PEAK, Dali, NAD, and Audionet. The last of these uses his licensed cable carrier construction under the name Gauss. Based on this idea and its physical principles, the Witchcraft loudspeaker cable project was born – although the point is that "it's not a cable but a transmission system."

Geschke states that practically all cable constructions (both signal and speaker) on the current market are "somewhat wrong" because they do not consider how the signal transitions from the amplifier to the speakers. This is not about the "flow of electrons," as is often said – particles certainly do not flow anywhere; electromagnetic fields are at play here. According to Voodoo Labs, it requires adequate space. In other words, hanging cables in the air so that they do not touch ideally anything, but definitely nothing wooden or metallic.

Witchcraft is a system of stands made from a specifically developed material by the manufacturer, and hexagonally shaped grids attached to them. Through these grids, three conductors for each pole of each channel are led at a sufficient distance (six cables to the right, six cables to the left). No connectors because they supposedly increase transition resistances by at least 30%, somewhat negating the overall purpose of the construction. A specific cotton braid is used because it has the best dielectric properties in combination with plenty of air around. No shielding, as it introduces additional unwanted interactions into the transmission, and Voodoo Labs claims they have never recorded any measurable impact of air-propagating waves through listening or measurement. Pure copper with external tinning is used because it simply has suitable transmission properties for the electromagnetic field, better than the most expensive other metal or a more complex alloy.

The point of the chosen (and patented) arrangement and composition in many experiments is to maintain an unaffected magnetic field, ensuring perfect signal transmission from the amplifier to the speakers. Unlike classic cables, Witchcraft has a significantly larger effective cross-section (from an electromagnetic perspective) - a full 44 square inches, or 284 cm<sup>2</sup>.

The goal is to "liberate" the connection between both end elements of the hi-fi chain from commonly occurring undesirable influences and disturbances. At the same time, there is an absolute minimization of internal resistance, capacitance, and loss. Due to the construction principle, there is also no risk of microphonics.

Voodoo Labs further states that since the signal travels 95% in the dielectric and 5% in the upper 1mm layer of the cable, the chosen cross-sections and the concept open the way for it. They also refer – somewhat in line with the name of their company – to an understanding of the harmony between the constant

magnetic field of the universe, the dielectric constant of matter, and the behavior of valence electrons in the atoms of materials. According to them, thick cables inside (under the mentioned millimeter-thick upper layer) carry only electromagnetic field swirls and, with them, undesirable transmission influences. Therefore, it is not desirable to use a "thick hose."

Everything is handmade in Germany from German and Danish raw materials. A specific metal alloy, defined by Geschke based on experiments, is used for the production of stands and grids, with the help of an industrial additive laser, followed by a lot of manual work.

Voodoo Labs does not provide specific technical parameters, stating that they can be misleading if the context and physical properties and necessities are not well understood. However, they mention minimized internal resistance and capacitance, which, they claim, surpass anything else on the market.

We primarily listened to Witchcraft as part of the main editorial setup, comparing it with Nordost Heimdall 2. The rest of the chain consisted of IsoTek V5 Sirius, Métronome DSC, Norma Revo SC-2 LN, and Norma Revo PA 160 MR, with listening done on KEF Blade One Meta. It was connected with a mix of Nordost Valhalla 2, Nordost Heimdall 2, and KrautWire Super Symmetric Gold cables.

We also tested the stands as supports for the speaker cable (since the shape and termination seem to suggest it), and it must be said that a difference was noticeable compared to Nordost SoftLift – there was added focus and detail, but also hardness and brightness.

Nordost, known for its fast and precise cables, delivered a salvo of bass tones in the eponymous track "Gentlemen" (The Afghan Whigs | 1993 | Elektra | 0075596150125) with a somewhat more resonant, full, but also more coherent manner. The introduction of Witchcraft acted as a catalyst, evolving the sound and making the bass guitar rebound as if it had jumped off a kicker, the tones stood out, but in a completely effortless way that might not be immediately appreciated. If the bass was characterized by something, it suddenly acquired a smooth, unstressed bravado, simply floating, swaying, and rhythmically pulsating with a confidently outlined structure. The balance of frequencies – a certain emphasis on low rhythmic frequencies chosen by the sound engineer to enhance the rock impact – remained unaffected, just as the bass did not harden or transform into an entirely different style. It just became better, more audible, intensifying the amplifier's and speaker's character, and the source of the signal, somewhat more intensely and much, much more easily.

This also applies to Grace Potter's vocals in "Love is Love" ("Daylight" | 2019 | Fantasy | 0888072117396). It was clear, placed more forward, better separated from the instruments, and more specific than ever. Moreover, it seemed that all mechanical aspects disappeared – Anglophone nations like to call it "easy flow," and the Czech term "fluidity" doesn't quite cover it. The recording sounded

light, simple, lively, yet harmoniously calm and kind. Grain and hardness, typically present in higher midrange frequencies, were lost. Suddenly, there was a significantly greater inclination to listen, immerse oneself in the music, and enjoy it. Going back to Nordost resulted in a flatter, somewhat recessed voice and an overall presentation as if you reduced the gain and the desire to play. KEF Blade One Meta can showcase the highs in "Moon Song" by Cécile McLorin Salvant ("Ghost Song" | 2022 | Nonesuch | 0075597914672) very beautifully and informatively even in the standard configuration. However, connecting Witchcraft brought a plethora of new subtle details, a significantly more specific view of cymbal textures, and a sense of a clean yet refined and cultivated reproduction. It felt as if there were more of them, but the best part was undoubtedly the feeling of an exceptionally concrete localization of individual sounds and their amazing presence. Here, it accelerated as if something finally "clicked," and the reproduction became terribly easy, truly and entirely natural, and almost tangible.

Wagner's "Die Walküre" (Leonie Rysanek / Karl Böhm / Bayreuth Festival Orchestra | 1997 | Classic CD | 81) truly breathed dynamically through Witchcraft. It was as if the system charged with energy and was willing to deliver it in an unprecedented amount, while playing both soft and powerful passages more confidently. Non-technically, entirely calmly, utterly relaxed. Like when the sun breaks through the cloud layer or when you finally unwrap a Christmas gift and get inside – it's a more direct contact with what you want. Especially interesting was how the reproduction seemed to "relax." Pianos and guitars in "Eclipse" ("Dream House Quartet" | 2023 | Deutsche Grammophon | 00028948588329) were occasionally recorded more vigorously, but more resonantly and distinctly – or at least that's how it seemed to us. Witchcraft allowed each of the four instruments to sound more specific, perhaps because the sound is faster, and the control of speakers, thanks to the minimal "obstacles" along the way, is better. At the same time, it felt smoother, without a trace of hardness or, rather, frugality. Of course, you perceive that keys and piano hammers or string metal are not entirely soft sounds, but they still seem incredibly easy and pleasant. The readability of each tone was light, everything had order and organization. Going back to Heimdall 2, which is by no means uninformed, felt a bit like closing doors and leaving the recording studio, hearing the music behind – not unintelligible but still "further away."

Thanks to that overall impressive presence, or perhaps more accurately immediacy, it seemed that Collins's "You Can't Hurry Love" ("Hello, I Must Be Going!" | 1982 | WEA | 299263) was significantly clearer and brighter. Not more exposed or emphasized, just clearer, shown more plastic and more concrete, somehow closer on a larger scale. Perhaps the presence that Witchcraft offers comes truly from enabling amplifiers to interact faster and more easily with speakers; in any case, it really works.

And why is Witchcraft truly an interesting cable/non-cable, was also demonstrated by the radio-dance track "Help Yourself Out" by the energetic South French band Hyphen Hyphen ("C'est la vie" | 2023 | Parlophone | 0190296150043). Its rhythm was emphasized and refined, yet the focus leaned more towards a swaying drive than any urgency. It was as if Witchcraft could distill the sunny charm from the essence of the recording - so many sounds, so much energy, and such good form. You can simply revel in what your system can do and how easily it handles playing. Suddenly, a lot of joy enters your listening room, which may not have been there for a while, and everything feels like it loosens up and improves your mood.

The cable (or, to maintain etiquette, the transmission system) Voodoo Labs Witchcraft may look bizarre and certainly is not for the faint-hearted, however, it managed to bring "something extra" into our usual listening setup that even the most ardent denier of any cable influence would have to acknowledge. The amplifiers seemed to grip the speakers like transducers more firmly, the music flowed more effortlessly, precisely, flexibly, and naturally - poetically speaking, with Witchcraft, the listening experience was significantly more emotional and spoke directly to the soul. It lost the technical elements and "lit up." Despite its name, it doesn't invent any magic or spells. On the contrary, it disrupts many established high-end procedures - no cosmic materials, no complex shielding or polarized dielectrics, and no ultimate connectors. None of that is present here, and evidently, it doesn't matter. The concept, flipped on its head in this way, works exceptionally well, except for when you have to reconnect the cable occasionally because the absence of connectors and the need to keep individual strands apart require a bit of care and patience. But Witchcraft can gift your setup with openness, musicality, and a captivatingly positive "ease," making you listen to everything with a significantly broader smile and joy.

EUR 9,690,- / any length up to 2x 2.5 m incl. 3 supports for each channel (incl. 19% German VAT)

Approximately 202,000,- CZK / any length up to 2x 2.5 m incl. 3 supports for each channel (excluding VAT)

EUR 1,000,- / additional 2x 50 cm