

## Groovetracer Mods for Your Rega And Magna Riser Stands for Maggies

Equipment report

by [Wayne Garcia](#) | Oct 29th, 2020

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As I write this San Francisco is entering its fourth month of shelter-in-place, as our nation's grim death toll continues to devastate families and communities. During this sad and surreal time for our planet I remind myself that in countless ways we're among the lucky ones.

I also think about my drawerful of recently cancelled concert tickets and wonder when we might once again safely gather for live music events. At the same time, I've come to appreciate a fine home sound system more than ever before. Music is powerful stuff, and in the absence of gathering at concert venues our home systems can bring us much needed emotional pleasure and mental health benefits.

Of course, as many of us now have extra time on our hands, this is also a great time to tweak our systems, especially as it seems that the "new normal" will continue to be defined for the foreseeable future.

With that in mind, allow me to draw to your attention to some impressive mods I've recently discovered for two of audio's most popular—as well as highest-value—brands, Rega turntables and Magneplan loudspeakers. I'm very familiar with both, having used a wide range of their products since I was in my late teens, not only personally but also professionally throughout my years in high-end retailing as well as during my stint as an audio writer.



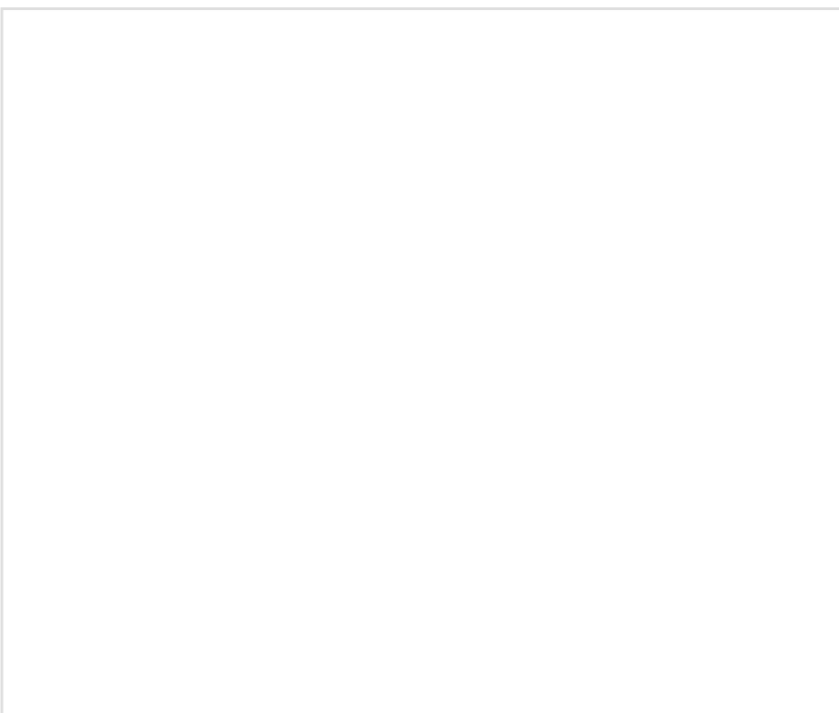
The items under review here are, not surprisingly, made by men with an unusual passion for the products and companies they've dedicated so much of their time pushing to new levels. I can tell you they aren't in it for the money. Their efforts to achieve excellence, their commitment to craft and customer service, and the relatively modest amounts they're charging for their wares are aimed at improving what we, the end users, can expect to hear from components we already derive great pleasure from—and to do this at a fair price.

### Groovetracer

Roughly 40 miles south of my home in San Francisco, Frank Smillie operates an aerospace machine shop. A longtime fan of Rega tables, like many of us he loves their musical performance, appreciates their strong value, and also recognizes that in order to achieve that value certain compromises are necessary in the manufacturing process.

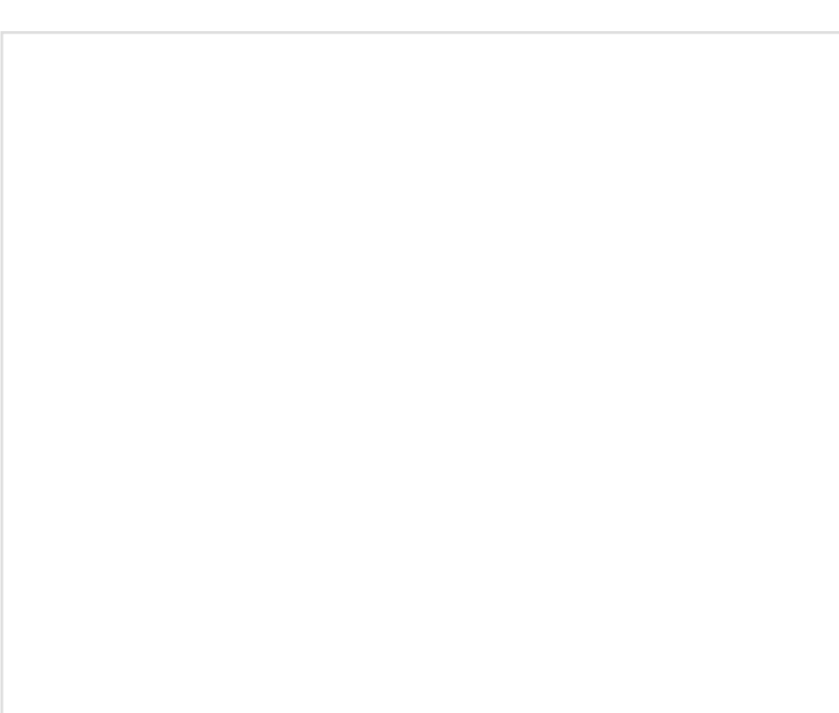
Now, Smillie is hardly the only guy out there to recognize, as any user of Rega's moderately priced models can see, that the subplatter is perfectly fine for what it is, but what it is is an inexpensively molded part made from a phenolic resin material. Other necessary monetary compromises—from the bearing to the platter and so on—have been made too, and via the wonders of cyberspace it's easy enough to explore a variety of aftermarket options to tweak whatever Planar model you may own. (This discussion does not include Rega's upper-end, built-to-the-max designs.)

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- Turntable set-up tools
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