PROTON

Mike Savvas is the Free State citizen who is one of the brains behind the slinky SA-made Genesis Project Proton interlink. The single-ended interlink is the result of hundreds of hours of painstaking development work, but the end result must vindicate that effort.

At face value, the Genesis looks much like any other quality interlink, with the exception of unusual wooden bobbins at either end, inscribed with the Genesis Proton logo. Also, the goldplated RCA connectors look and feel expensive. And they are: they are in fact eutectic brass, gold-plated units.

But what's really fascinating is the construction of this interlink under that innocuous black sheath. It employs a combination of silver-plated, pure-copper wire, Teflon insulation, a copper braid and aluminium screening layer, and a layer of megamide braiding.

It's the special braiding, developed by Savvas, that is at the core of this design -- and is credited as a primary reason for its quite extraordinary performance. And that's really the only way to describe it: extraordinary.

This is an interlink that opens a new window to the music, revealing nuances and details on recordings that I thought I knew well. There is greater focus, tauter control and rich detail. Best of all, the Project Proton interlink never sounds edgy or aggressive: any brittleness will be the fault of the source material, or the rest of the system. It is certainly revealing enough to sniff out and highlight even small flaws. However, it's equally quick to reward good productions, and good ancillary components.

Above all, there is a sense of honesty here: flaws are pointed out rather than rubbed in, while good music is acknowledged rather than lavishly praised. What this cable reveals is, one thinks, the real thing. And it is just that.

In terms of purity, clarity, detail and transparency, this is one of the best single-ended interlink designs, regardless of price. It is also a proudly South African product, and one that again underlines just how competitive local innovators can be. Simply classy -- and simply great!