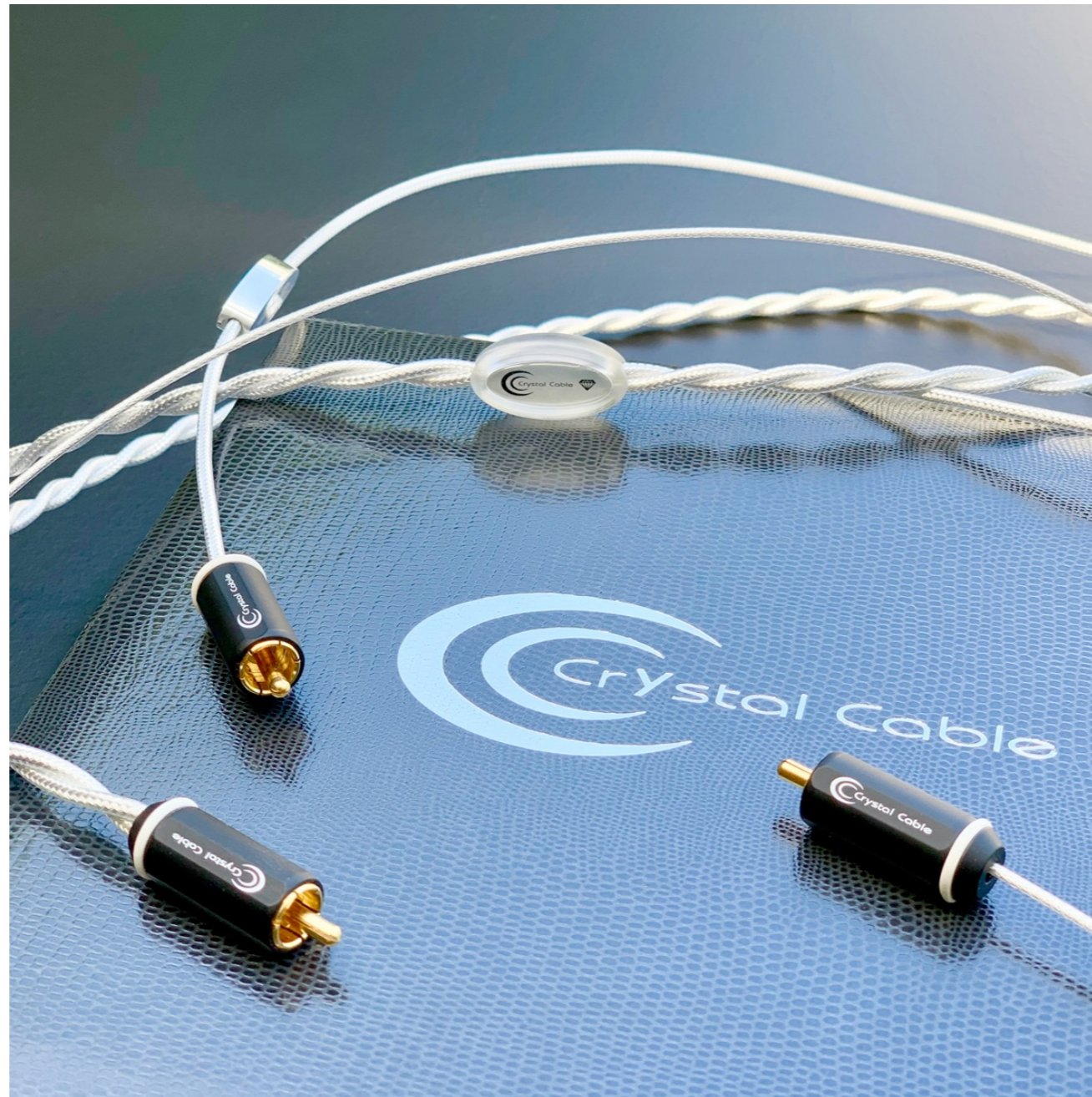


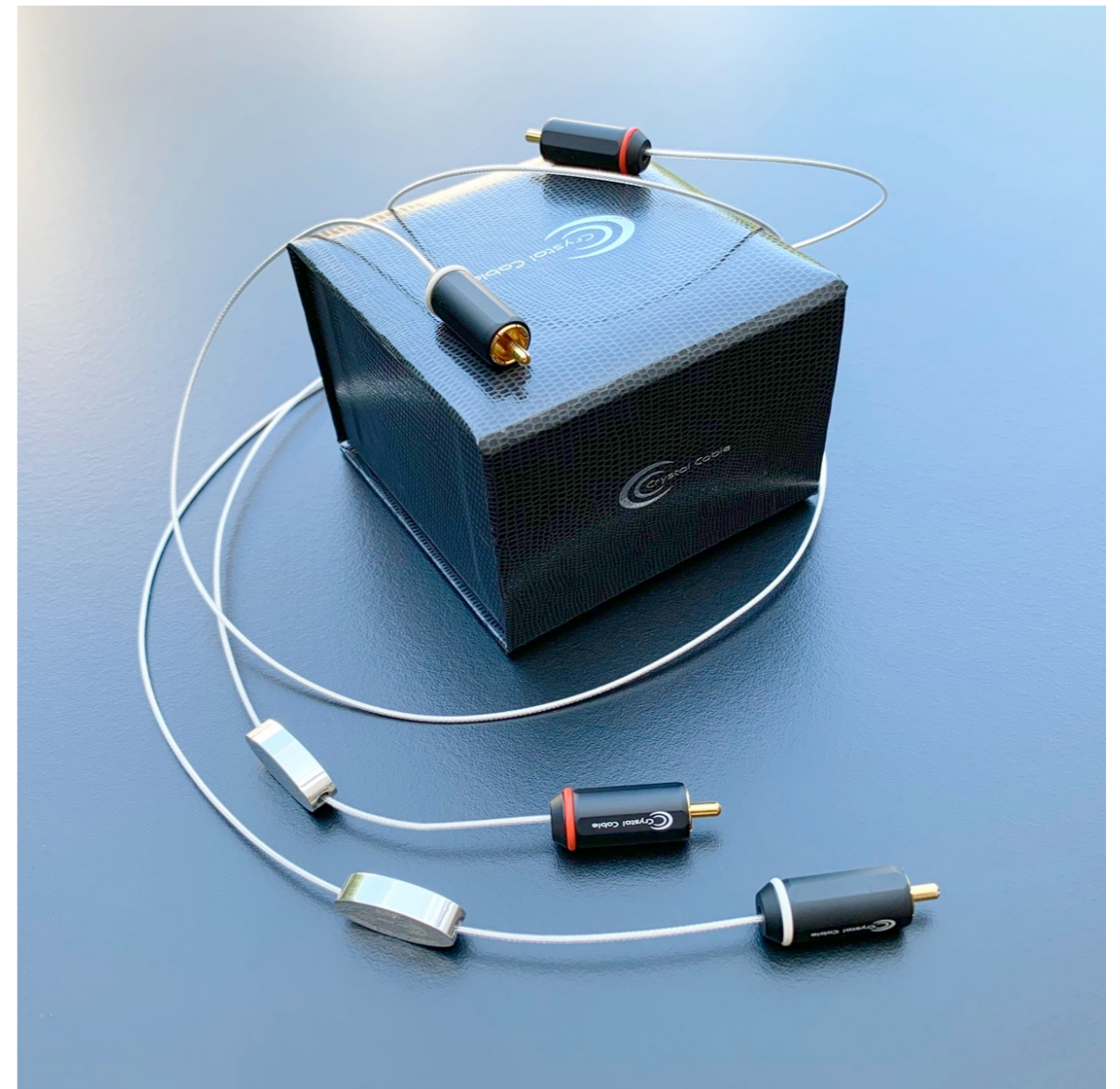
Crystal Cable Diamond Interconnects

Music jewellery of Dutch Heritage



Crystal Cable Diamond Interconnects

By now we consider it a well known fact that Crystal Cable is the more graceful sister of Dutch cable brand Siltech. It uses the same conductive material (silver with gold ions 'injected' between the silver crystals in its conductors) but also some proprietary technology that makes it possible to realise a much slimmer cable profile. Because of this, Crystal Cable presents itself more emphatically as a female friendly cable brand. But make no mistake! Its sonic performance is not to be taken lightly and those who may think that the sound quality of Crystal Cable is subservient to its fabulous looks is grossly mistaken.



The Setup

For this aural review (those who crave technical information may find it at the Crystal Cable [website](#) we compared the four analog interconnects in Crystal Cable's Diamond Series. So your attention please for the Piccolo Diamond, the Micro Diamond, the Reference Diamond en the Ultra Diamond. The Piccolo is the affordable entry to the world of this fabulous looking music jewellery, but for the Ultra you need to slaughter a rather more fattened piggy bank.

The Crystal Cable interconnects in this review were auditioned between a Linn Klimax DS streamer and a Linn Klimax preamplifier. The preamp was connected to the power amp via Crystal Cable Piccolo Diamond

interconnects, with Crystal Cable Piccolo Diamond loudspeaker cables feeding the Wilson Benesch Trinity loudspeakers. All Linn components were connected to power with the latest generation AudioQuest power cables.

As usual we selected two tracks of different musical signature to be able to hear all the differences. The intimately recorded and very sensual jazz by Melanie De Biasio (Lilies, from her album with the same name) has a very directly recorded and utterly natural sound, especially the voice and the piano, but there is a lot more going on in the background. We were curious to find out how much more of that we could extract with more expensive cables. The second track was Inner Structure, from Martin Nonstatic's album Ligand. In this electronic track, we would focus on width and depth, the texture of small synthetic sounds that whirl through the image, and a tight, deep bass.



Warming up with the AudioQuest Water interconnect

To get used to the set as a whole we listened to various tracks, with our 'regular' AudioQuest Water interconnect between streamer and preamp. This interconnect has copper conductors and is in the same price range as the all-silver Crystal Cable Micro Diamond. Once acclimatised, we started with our musical test selection.

Martin Nonstatic's track sounded wide and spacious, with a pleasantly 'elastic' deep bass and an overall coherent sound with quite a lot of micro-information. There was absolutely no over-detailed whiteness, a trait often attributed to silver cables, but falsely so as we would find out later.

The music had a certain fluidity. Melanie De Biasio's song sounded intense and direct. We could clearly hear that she deliberately used a cheap Shure SM57 microphone during the recording sessions, in order to give the music a certain 'rawness', but there was enough color and pressure in the sound of the piano, and a decent amount of space around it. In the background we heard a kind of shimmering noise that could have been a slowly hammered gong or large cymbal, but we could not determine that with certainty.



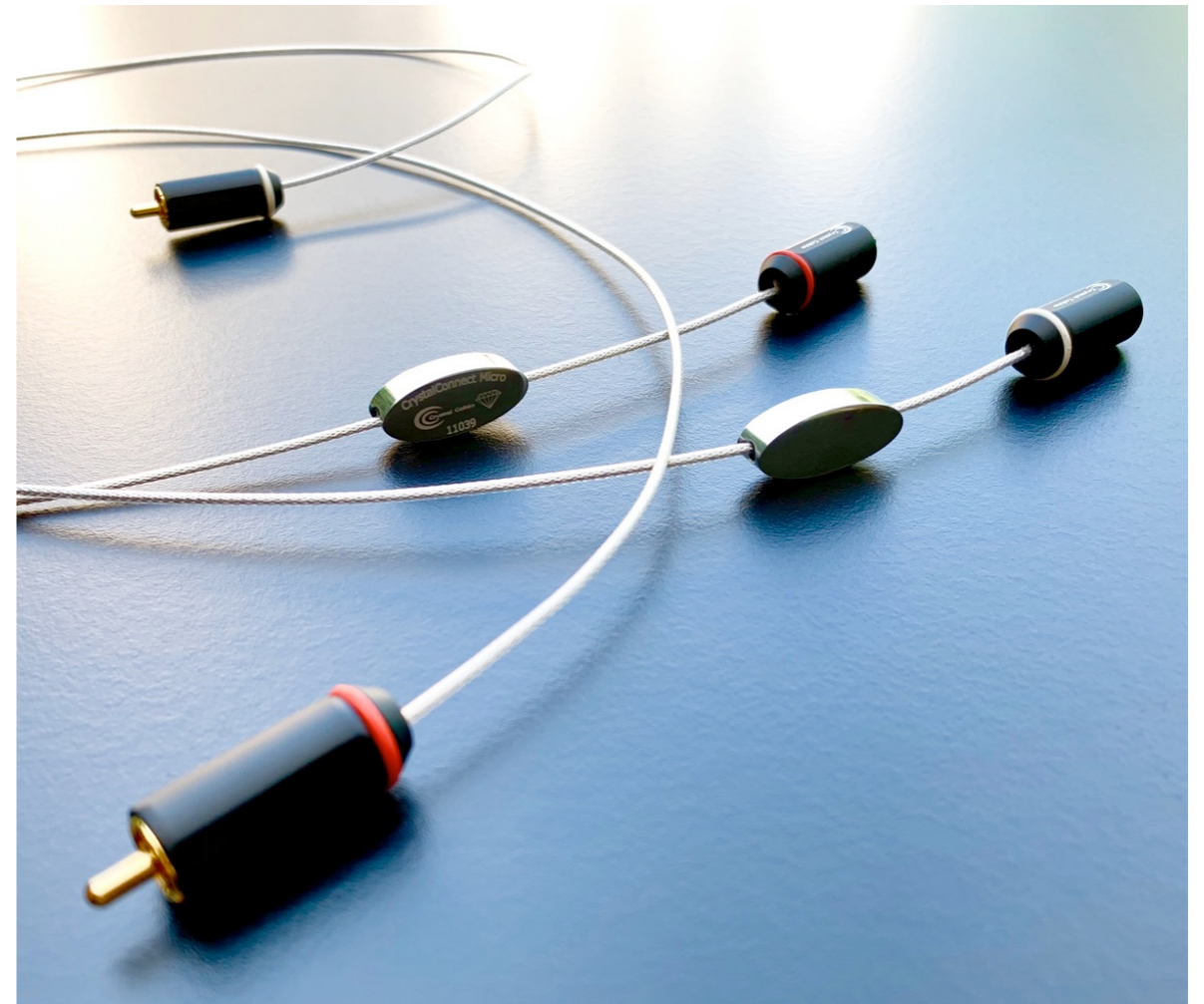
Crystal Cable Piccolo Diamond

The very thin Crystal Cable Piccolo Diamond surprised us with a coherence that matched that of the AudioQuest Water. The music sounded just as supple and fluid, there even was a little more tranquility that made little details like intakes of breath or little sounds of the mouth stand out more. The piano and voice had a little less color than with the AudioQuest Water, but you could also call that 'more neutral'. It probably comes down to the rest of your setup if the more intense performance of the AudioQuest Water will give you a better balance. The 'noise' in the background became more prominent, but still no clue as to its origin. The track by Martin Nonstatic showed more difference. There was more spatial information, and because of that the track appeared to start a few seconds earlier. Placement in the sound image was more 3D and the bass became a tad leaner - but therefore a little more precise - which added up to a somewhat dryer presentation.



Crystal Cable Micro Diamond

The slightly thicker but still very elegant looking Crystal Cable Micro Diamond made the Melanie De Biasio track sound more layered and colourful. At the same time, the voice sounded more neutral and that improved its intelligibility. There was more pressure in the piano, especially in the lower registers, and (there it was!) the noise in the background revealed itself as a slowly hammered gong like we had suspected. With the Martin Nonstatic track, the Crystal Cable Micro Diamond revealed more detail. If we had to quantise it we would guess some 25% more. The deep bass got more energy and pressure, but it also became more elastic, which resulted in a very good balance and coherence.



Crystal Cable Reference Diamond



The Crystal Cable Reference Diamond bested the performance of the Crystal Cable Micro Diamond, but not by the same magnitude as the Micro improved over the Piccolo. We got more of all the good properties of the Micro, but less spectacularly so. The Crystal Cable Reference Diamond introduced a certain loftiness that we liked a lot. With Martin Nonstatic however, there actually was a little more spectacle. The spaciousness became almost holographic and transformed itself into one of those coveted 'sound bubbles' with depth, width and height (!) in which we heard a great deal of detail that had very natural colours. In our notes we wrote the word 'transparency', underlined and with exclamation marks.

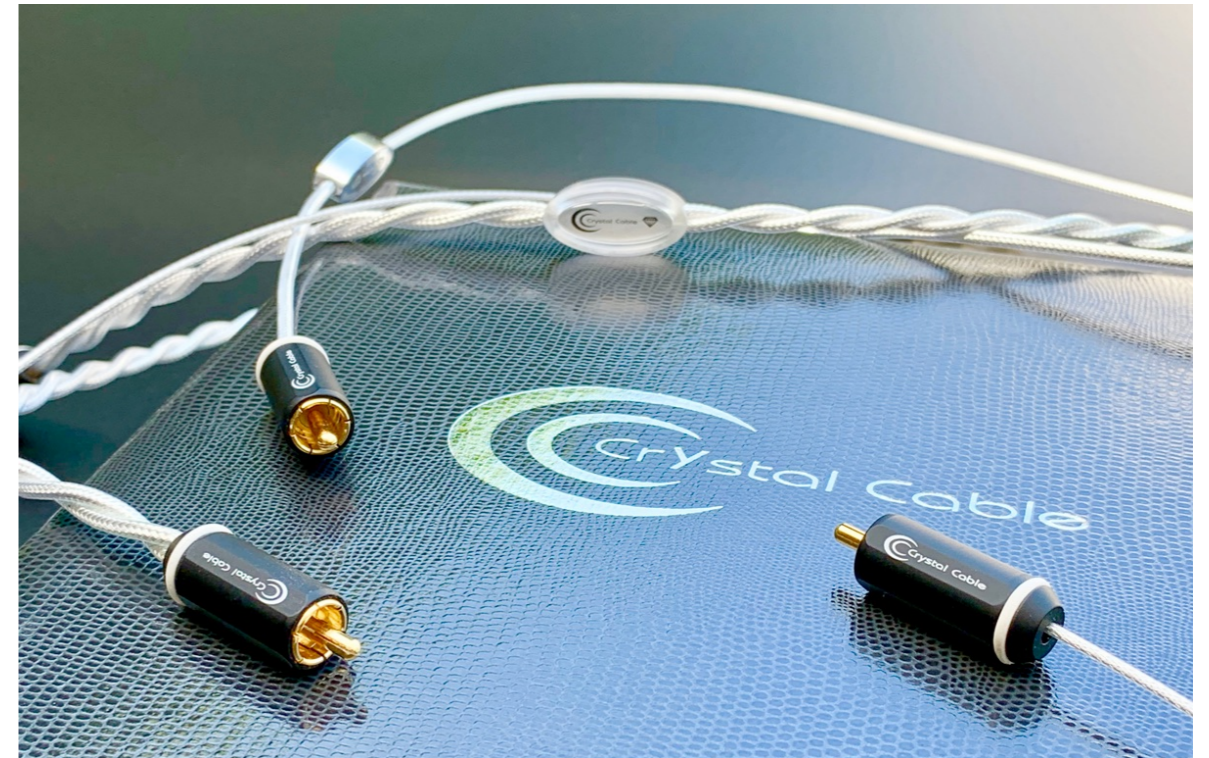
Crystal Cable Ultra Diamond

The Crystal Cable Ultra Diamond is an expensive cable, but man... it delivers! And then some! All of a sudden the Martin Nonstatic track was about completely different things than lows, mids and highs. Even properties like spaciousness and placement, that are much more difficult to get right, became subordinate to more abstract things like Tone, Intensity and Music. The performance got that 'tubelike' fullness and smoothness that took some moments to get used to, but turned out utterly sumptuous! Melanie De Biasio was - forgive our arousal - almost physically present in the room. When we closed our eyes we sat so close to her that it felt intimate in an almost obscene way. There was much more texture in all sounds, very small modulations in the tuning of the piano suddenly became apparent, and that really boosted the feeling of realism. This Cable will set you back a load of dosh, but you get loads of musical pleasure in return as well...



Our final thoughts

It must be obvious that we really enjoyed the musical performance of the Crystal Cable Diamond interconnects. Even the cobweb like Piccolo Diamond had some properties that we would like to add to our somewhat earthier sounding reference. If we had to indicate a 'family sound' of these Crystal Cable interconnects, we would choose 'refinement' as their most prominent trait. The entry level Piccolo Diamond and its closest sibling Micro Diamond are a little more light-footed than our reference, but when you prefer acoustic music with great and natural spaciousness you should definitely give them a listen. When judged solely by its sonic merits, the Crystal Cable Ultra Diamond has to be the winner of this review, but the Sweetspot Award for best price to performance ratio goes to the Crystal Cable Reference Diamond. That interconnect will give you almost 90% of the Ultra's performance at a little over half its price. As always, the ultimate improvements will cost you the most. That is - and always will be - the bittersweet fate of the audiophile inclined music lover.



Music and Information

More information and prices about the Crystal Cable Diamond interconnects can be found in our webshop:

[Crystal Cable Diamond Interconnects](#)

Spotify

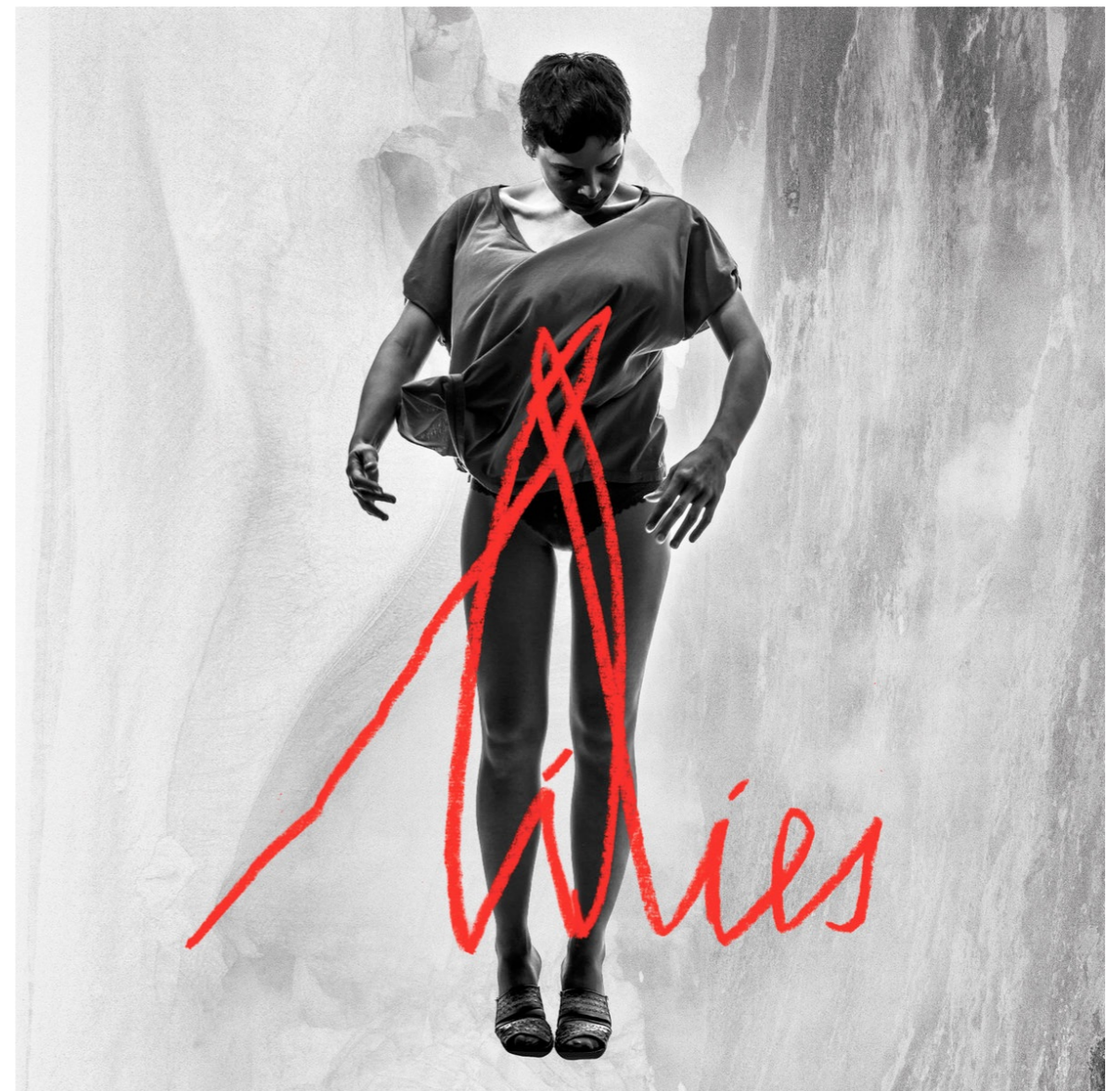
[Melanie De Biasio - Lilies](#)
[Martin Nonstatic - Ligand](#)

Tidal

[Melanie De Biasio - Lilies](#)
[Martin Nonstatic - Ligand](#)

Qobuz

[Melanie De Biasio - Lilies \(Hi-Res\)](#)
[Martin Nonstatic - Ligand](#)





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