



# FIDELITY

DAS BESTE AUS 10 JAHREN



Die High-End-Highlights

Die 25 Top-Stories

editor's cut

digitally remastered

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FIDELITY is celebrating its tenth anniversary and invites you to join in the celebration with this artbook, released by Germany's leading high-end magazine. Out of more than 1,000 articles created over the span of an eventful decade, our editors have compiled the most outstanding ones. The goal is nothing less than to convey the most moving, exciting and thrilling music on this planet in a way that is equally compelling, gripping, emotional and as authentic as possible. There are many ways to achieve this goal, and 25 of them are assembled in this book. On top of that there is also a groundbreaking innovation that has the potential to imprint its mark on the topic of „HiFi“ for decades to come. There can be no doubt about it: High End is alive and kicking. And the future looks promising indeed.



»Perfection is finally attained  
not when there is no longer  
anything to add but when  
there is no longer  
anything to take away.«

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

\* 29.06.1900 † 31.07.1944

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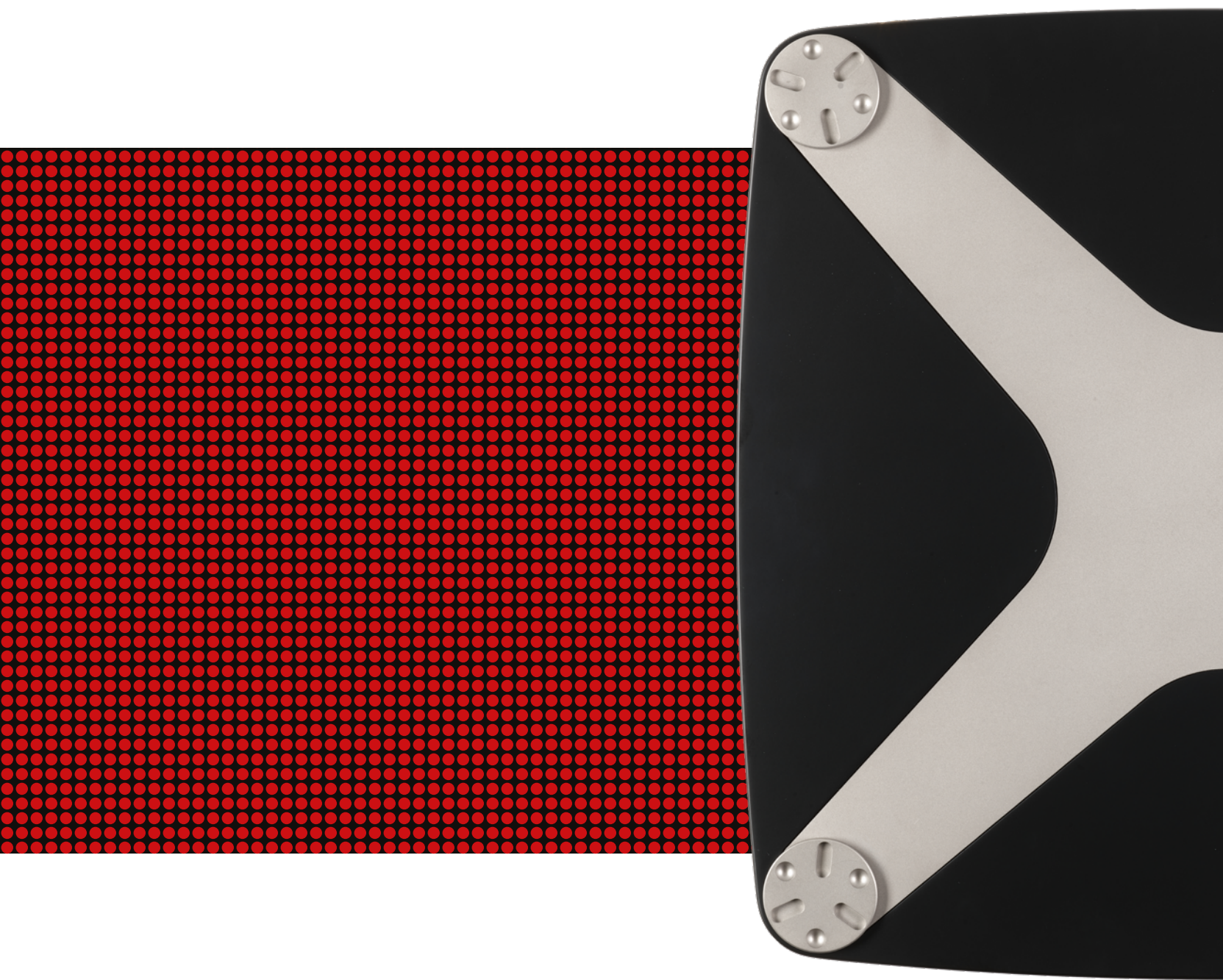
The  
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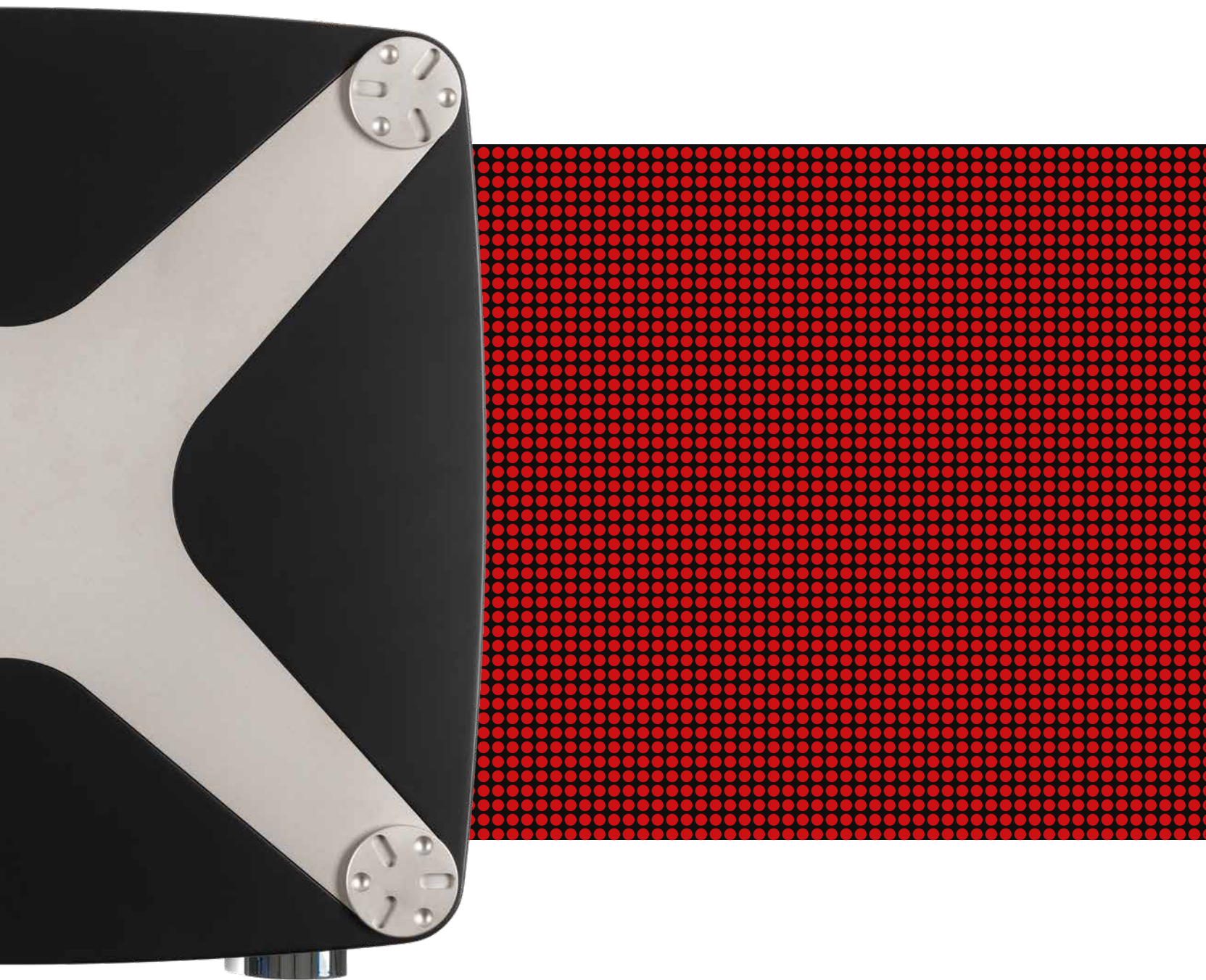












### Aavik has a run. And we the pleasure. Permit me to introduce: the I-580

— The U-380 model from Danish manufacturer Aavik took my listening room by storm. Strong design, superior sound, and workmanship worthy of a Concours d'Élégance of safe manufacturers. Beneath the thick aluminum cabinet segments were a world-class D/A converter and an outstanding phono stage that was comprehensively adaptable to the cartridge.

You'd have to be Michael Børresen to question everything after that and put a new integrated amplifier on its metal feet that seems to contradict everything that made the U-380 a success.

The three new integrated amplifiers are named "I-180", "I-280" and "I-580" and are all based on the analog high-level amplifier section of the U-380 in a new housing concept. The Class-D amplifiers are housed in lightweight enclosures with minimal metal content, even saving weight on the connections and relying on the very special interference suppression technology from sister company Ansuz. A key reason for the new separatism is to lighten the load on the power supply. Removing the DAC and phono section from the amplifier leads, Børresen explains, to "overwhelming" sonic progress. As of now, there are stand-alone integrated amplifiers, DACs, phono preamps and streamers.

As Børresen emphasizes, "Materials matter!" For the Darkz resonant absorbers, Børresen worked his way from pure aluminum to titanium. Each material, each metal, he says, colors the sound in a characteristic way. The Dane attests to titanium's special tonal cleanliness. Aluminum, on the other hand, the body-and-gut material of the global high-end community, is not the best choice as a paramagnetic material. With the 180/280/580 series, he draws the appropriate conclusion and uses as a base material an MDF-like, guaranteed metal-free material. The I-580 comes along as pleasingly lightweight. All metal parts of the I-580 are made of titanium.

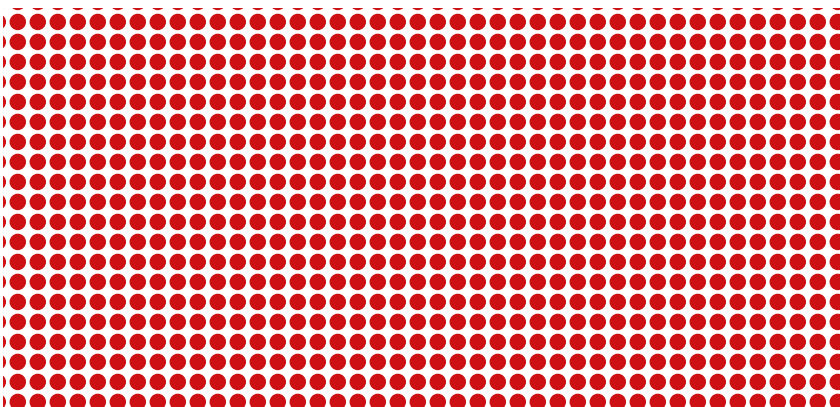
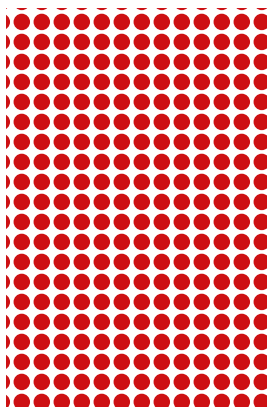
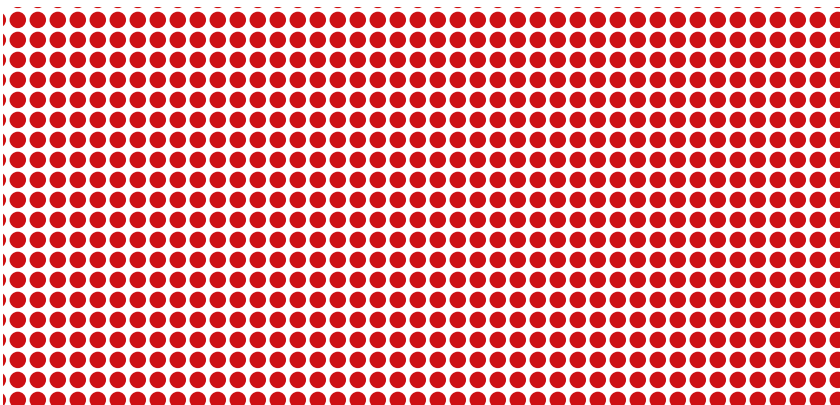
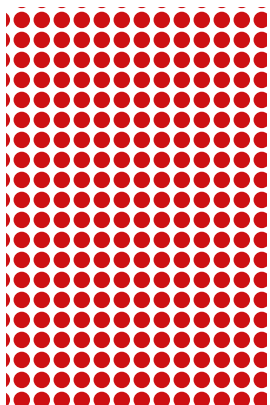
Class D modules from Pascal are also used in the I-580. Their fine tuning makes all the difference; the smaller siblings I-180 and I-280 are also equipped with the same Pascal boards. The Aavik I-580 has an easy-to-read dot matrix display made of red glowing LEDs. It is operated via three multifunction buttons and a large rotary knob (or via an included Apple remote control). The sockets on the back are of the rather lightweight variety. This has been found to be sonically superior to solid construction, Michael Børresen states.

Ansuz tuning is available in abundance. On offer are active Tesla coils, active rectangular Tesla coils, analog dither circuits and "Anti Aerial Resonance Coils." Of the three new I-Series integrated amplifiers, the I-580 has the largest number of these ingredients actively acting on the audio circuits.

Rarely has a component integrated into my chain as smoothly, virtually frictionlessly, as the Aavik I-580. It felt strangely familiar to place the compact unit loosely on the rack and connect the sources—turntable, CD player, DAC—to the analog high level inputs. Then the exciting moment of truth: absolute coherence right away. The bandwidth is there, the spatiality, the timbres, the dynamics.

Last year I found a record that to this day is one of my most cherished: *Origami Harvest* by US jazz trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire. It's an insane mix of modern jazz, rap and string quartet. Rarely can sound and groove, composition and artistic message be experienced in such captivating unity. The I-580 does full justice to all facets of this recording (Blue Note). The Dane effortlessly manages the balancing act of making music that is simultaneously immaculately controlled and loosely swinging. This test is pure pleasure. There is no "somewhere there" here. *Buena Vista Social Club* sucked me into the warm dim light of a Cuban dance hall. With the raw studio-captured song sketches that Jason Mraz has captured on *We sing. We dance. We steal things*, it's the up-close presence of the singer and guitarist that becomes a goosebump-inducing event.

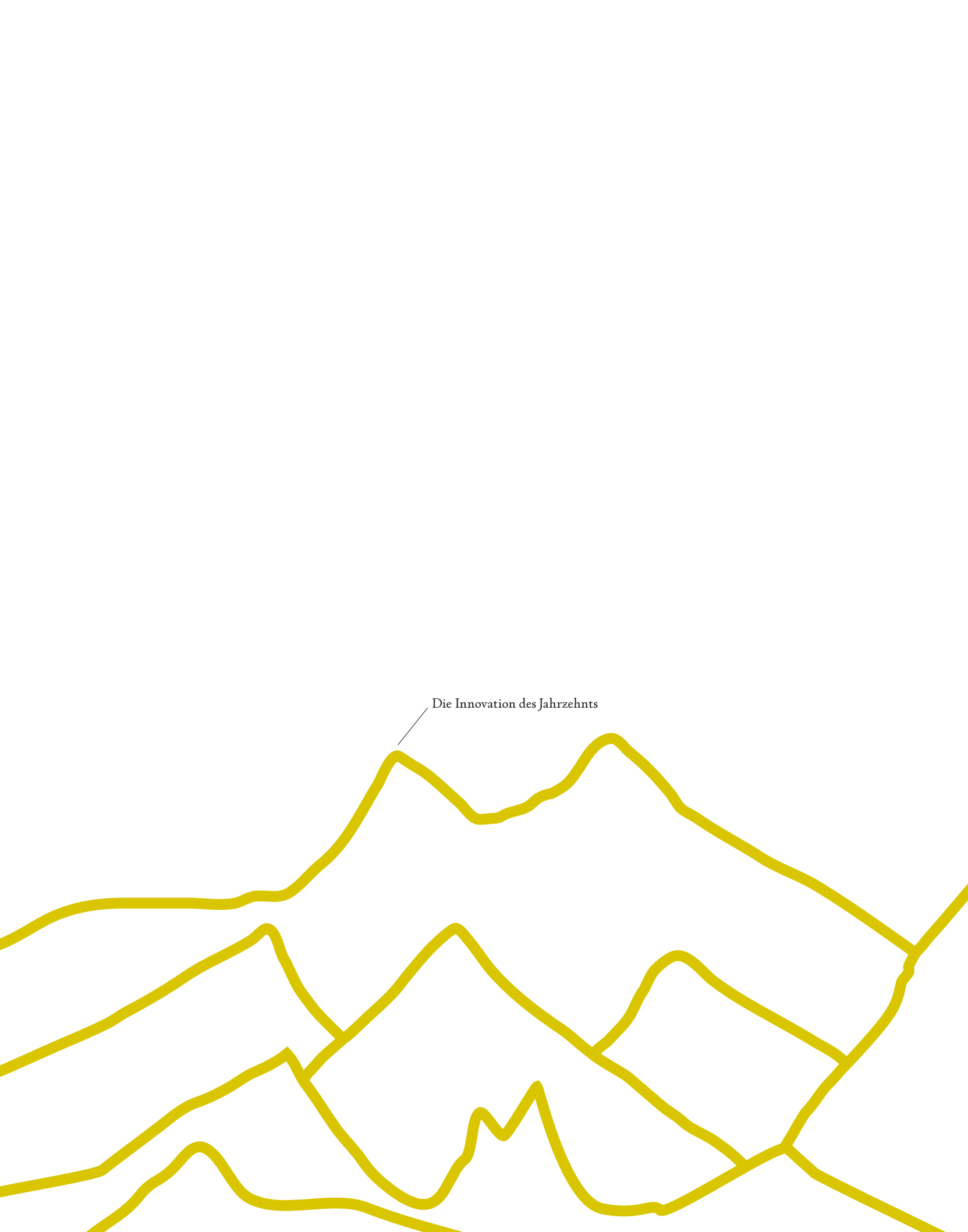
Michael Børresen's latest amp coup is easily as unconventional as it is expensive, but exceedingly deliberate and purposeful. Listen, enjoy—the Dane makes it easy on you. ●











Die Innovation des Jahrzehnts