

# KLEI gZero2 ICs by Steve Reeve (Fine Art)

Over the past year I've reviewed a majority of the products from KLEInnovations and been pleasantly surprised, in that each successive item reviewed to date has achieved some very discernible improvements over its predecessor.

So when KL (Keith Louis Eichmann) asked me to review his KLEI™gZero2 ICs I was quite happy to do so, even though I thought the request a little odd. After all, the KLEI™gZero20 ICs was the last analogue model I reviewed and it just seemed like I was taking a step "backwards" to review a model that, from a performance perspective, is several levels below it.

However, I've learned that with most things from KL, they often turn out to be more rewarding than he would have you believe.

But this request was a little different – from KL's "tone" he actually seemed quite excited.

What's Special? The KLEI™gZero2 ICs utilizes a revised [KLEI™gZero Architecture](#) that has evolved from continual R&D efforts within KLEInnovations. The revised architecture has a designation gZeros for ground ZERO state which is basically a more advanced application of the original KLEI™gZero Architecture.

Now, where many companies would have used this type of advance in product development to introduce a whole new line of products.

- KL has decided to incorporate the new architecture into most of the existing models of the current product line.
- By restricting their product line to a very concise model range, reduces production costs, which in turn, is also a benefit to the customer.
- This leads me to believe that KL is more focused on providing real value to his customer base.

What's Different? The KLEI™gZero2 ICs sport the same black nylon sleeving with the same KLEI Copper®Harmony RCA plugs attached, just like the very first KLEI™gZero2 ICs.

- The only tell-tale sign of a product change is the slightly larger girth of the cable itself
- Under the label bearing the KLEInnovations Logo, there is now a purple sleeve, in place of the previous blue sleeve.
- It has also been re-packaged in a nice "Eminence Purple" bag

On initial installation of the KLEI™gZero2 ICs I was immediately taken by a significantly more forward presentation of the image, ie when compared to most other gZero models having the old architecture. Also, everything across the board sounded bigger, fuller and warmer and very much like the previous/old [KLEI™gZero6 ICs](#), which I had found to be very enjoyable.

Step back in Time. To get an appreciation of just how well these interconnects were performing I reverted back to a pair of the previous/old [KLEI™gZero6 ICs](#) having the original KLEI™gZero Architecture, still on loan from KLEInnovations, and to my surprise, the similarities were quite startling. Here was the KLEI™gZero2 ICs performing almost to the same level as a sibling interconnect two levels above it in the product line.

The only real difference seemed to be that the KLEI™gZero2 ICs was not quite as adept at...

- reproducing the details, dynamics and clarity, for instruments having an upper register that occupied the higher frequencies of the audio spectrum, such as violins, triangles and cymbals.
- the reproduction of the micro details that contribute to the realistic presentation of the acoustics specific to a venue.

Step back to the Present. So it appears that at low and mid frequencies and the dynamic performance of the KLEI™gZero2 ICs has improved, providing more punch to drums and more slam to bass lines, but they do not quite possess that same level of detail, crispness and sparkle at the very top end.



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Another area where I noticed a marginal difference, ie compared to the previous/old [KLEI™gZero6 ICs](#), was in the spatial imaging...

- as stated earlier, the KLEI™gZero2 ICs seem to present an image that is more forward
- the width of the image was, for the most part, unchanged
- the depth of the image also seemed unchanged
- so basically, the entire image now sounded closer to the listener

Closely related to imaging, another nice quality of the new architecture is the improved/lower noise floor, which for me translates to enhanced clarity and hence a more precise image rendition.

- Previously, I've often found that on orchestral tracks, where large numbers of instruments are in play, the overall presentation can become a little "muddled"
- However, with the improvements in clarity, I found that they now sound much cleaner and I can now listen to those tracks at louder volumes.

Another noticeable improvement was their bass performance.

- bass response now reaches into the lower, almost subsonic frequencies, a significant improvement over earlier models
- the textures of those low frequencies were nicely presented
- but I didn't find it quite as controlled as the previous KLEI™gZero6 ICs, which is still very much a personal favourite from that perspective

SUMMARY: The new KLEI™gZEROs Architecture/Technology has achieved some very significant improvements to the KLEI™gZero2 ICs and has still managed to maintain the superb neutrality that the KLEI™gZero product range has become renowned for. Some might consider comparing the KLEI™gZero2 ICs to the previous/old [KLEI™gZero6 ICs](#), to be a little unfair?

- The reality is that the sonic performance of these two ICs, ie new to old, is much closer than one might expect.

## CONCLUSION

The new KLEI™gZEROs Architecture/Technology, which will continue to be termed as KLEI™gZero architecture, elevates the KLEI™gZero2 ICs to almost the same level of performance as the previous/old [KLEI™gZero6 ICs](#), which for me still has the edge in the areas of upper frequency extension, upper frequency dynamic performance, upper frequency clarity and imaging.

However, the KLEI™gZero2 ICs is fast, detailed, well controlled and spacious, with an improved clarity and an improved bass performance, that is very well controlled and drops "into the basement".

As stated earlier, the new KLEI™gZEROs Architecture/Technology has been applied to all models from the KLEI™gZero2 ICs upwards.

- So, if the improvements observed in the KLEI™gZero2 ICs are also present in their new KLEI™gZero3, 6, 10 and 20 models, then I think KLEInnovations has just thrown down the gauntlet to the rest of the industry.

KLEI have introduced an architecture/technology to an existing product line that has elevated the performance of the KLEI™gZero2 ICs and possibly each successive model, ie updated Blogs are coming, and that's something most manufacturers will not even entertain, let alone put into practice!

Kudos to the KLEInnovations team, who seems to care about providing value to their customers – thank you



*A highly recommended product*

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