

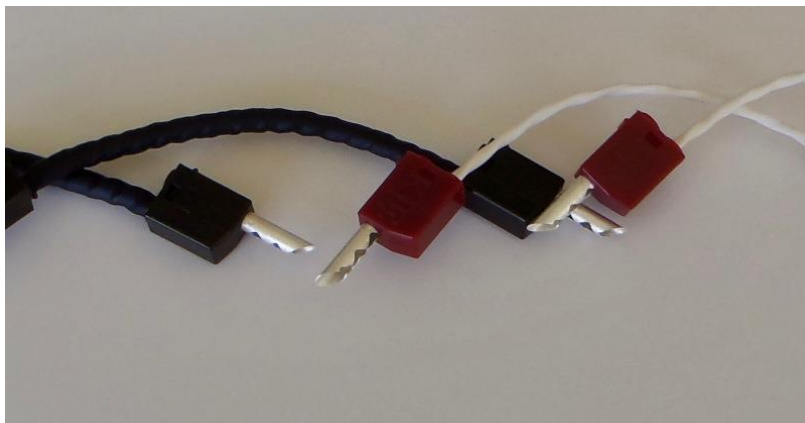
# KLEI QFLOW7 Jumpers & KLEI Classic Harmony Bananas by John Ransley (Totally Wired)

It's all about the new **QFLOW7 Jumpers** and **Classic Harmony bananas** from Keith Louis Eichmann Innovations (KLEI) at Totally Wired.

Find out why this is the best and most affordable upgrade for almost all stereo speakers that you can make. The story starts with a simple banana plug...

## The new KLEI Classic Harmony Banana plugs

I've got a lot of time for Keith Eichmann – he's very quietly spoken but endlessly enthusiastic about sound quality. Since the introduction of his original Eichmann Bullet plug we've been on board with his cable and connection products.



This has taken us places we'd never expected to be: His best cables – speaker, interconnect and power – offer stellar levels of performance that have redefined what we thought was possible,

not just from the cables, but the systems into which they have been connecting. Possibly even more importantly, his entry level options deliver the highest levels of performance we've heard at easily affordable prices.

Now he's delivered a speaker cable banana that is quite possibly the very best available, yet so reasonably priced.

And a design it is deceptively simple to the point where it doesn't appear to be anything special – the complete antithesis of many things in high end audio. But as with all things from KLEI there is much more to the story than that.

It would have been easy for Keith to go back to a previous speaker cable banana design – the Eichmann Bayonet plug – which was very good. But the new plugs, outside of fitting into the same standard 4mm binding posts/sockets found on almost all amplifiers and speakers, are completely different and better in all regards – sound quality, durability, ease of connection and most staggeringly of all, are less than 1/4 of the cost of the previous benchmark.

*'The KLEI Classic Harmony Banana appear to allow every detail and nuance of the recording to be conveyed with amazing clarity and dexterity – something I have not observed to this level in any similar product. They really are – the last thing you want at the end of your speaker cables!'*

The above comment is from a [full review](#) of the new KLEI Classic Harmony bananas – I really recommend you read this as it is well written, comprehensive and informative. I'd have been happy to get these plugs just on the basis of this but having now got them in my hot little hands there are a few things we can add.

The design of the conductor is origami like – a single flat piece stamped out from a sheet then rolled and pressed. There is no more metal than there absolutely needs to be and a minimum of machining. It could almost be described as ribbon of cable shaped to fit a 4mm hole. Every other banana suddenly seems needlessly complicated and compromised.

But what it's actually made of is the key – the KLEI Harmony bananas are made in a similar way to the KLEI Harmony plug pins where the metals used are formed and layered in a very specific manner – The metallurgical processes that we use provides and maintains mechanical strength and the very high %IACS ratings – we are talking conductivity levels of more than 25% above gold. Read more [here](#).

In the past I've been able to compare SlinkyLinks with both standard gold plated plugs and some special silver plated and cryogenically treated versions – the difference was immediately apparent with increased detail coupled with improved smoothness. What I'm hearing from the new KLEI Harmony bananas goes well beyond this – the sound is much more lucid and engaging from the outset and just gets better with time.

If you have any speaker cables you regard as good – Kimber, SlinkyLinks, QED, Audioquest, Nordost, and the like, you really want to fit some of these plugs as it will be one of the greatest upgrades you'll ever make for so little. Even more surprising is that for cables with existing bananas soldered on you can use the new KLEI Harmony bananas as an adaptor and still have a worthwhile gain.

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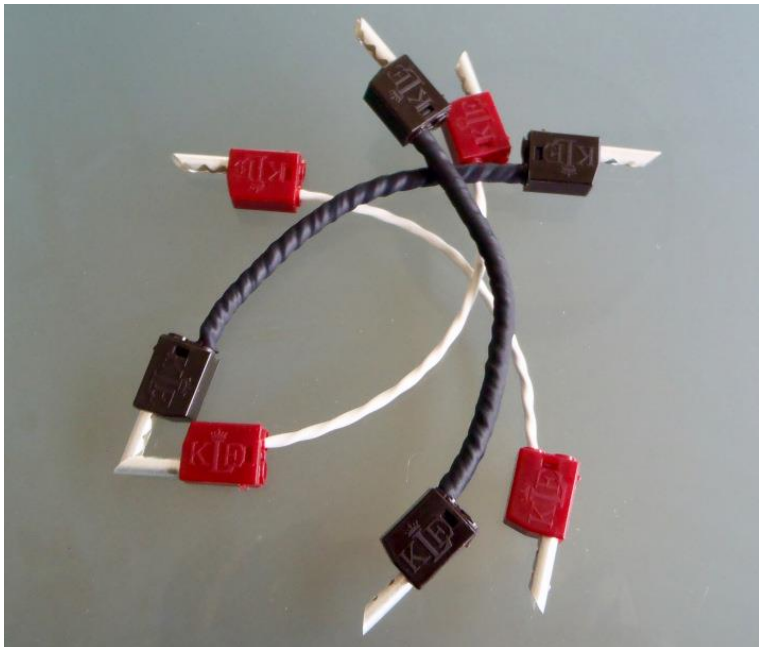
*I have inserted the existing banana connectors, which are already attached to the Nordost Blue Heaven speaker cables, into the Classic Harmony bananas. I wasn't necessarily expecting much (if any improvement) since the addition of Classic Harmony bananas, as adapters, are an additional connection with the existing bananas. However, I have used them for approximately 45 hours of play time and the addition of the Classic Harmony bananas, as adapters, are making a noticeable improvement to my system. That is more clarity, better balance, improved tone, slightly more depth to the sound image, more specificity to the sound image.'*

Of course the moment you take the old bananas out and cleanly re-terminate (or get me to do this for you with high quality silver solder) the end result is going to be a whole lot better again.

At home I've replaced the original gold plated instrument plugs on our demonstration sets of KLEI gZero6 and zPurity speaker cables – it proved to be a lot easier than I'd thought and the gain was vast.

I've never heard anything remotely like this with bananas of any breed on any speaker cables. It's not that there was anything wrong with the originals (just about every set of SlinkyLinks employs the same banana) – but the improvements in detail, sound staging and just general flow of the music are so in your face as to make the only question... why didn't I do this sooner?

One night later, as the newly attached KLEI Classic Harmony bananas burnt in, the improvement was even greater so there is no going back. Just by way of comparison there are plenty of bananas that cost more – most are gold plated brass – which if you've been paying attention to what we've learnt about conductivity is pretty terrible. As a proof of concept the premium WBT 0610AG 4mm banana employ their 'nextgen' principle of low mass which is straight out of Keith Louis Eichmann's design philosophy (the original Bullet Plug) and are platinum plated silver rather than the gold plated copper of their lower cost versions. The KLEI plugs are NZ\$20 each – the WBT 0610AG are NZ\$95 each.



And (as if this isn't all enough) these bananas make bi-wiring easy as the plugs can nest into each other.

Which leads nicely into an application for these bananas and I'm going to be the first to cover this in detail – the new KLEI QFLOW7 Speaker Binding Post Jumpers. I thought the KLEI Harmony bananas were good but this is next level again.

Most speakers now feature two sets of terminals to allow bi-wiring (or bi-amping). And there is no doubt that two sets of speaker cables sound better than one. But – and this is the big but – bi-wiring costs exactly twice as much and there is some debate as to whether this is in fact the best option when compared with a better quality cable for around the same end price.

We also know that almost all speakers with bi-wireable terminals come with jumper bars or cables to connect the two sets together for single speaker cable use and that this connection can be far from ideal.

## **The new KLEI QFLOW7 Jumpers solve 3 critical issues at once.**

1. *The cable used – Keith's new QFlow7 series speaker cable is astonishingly good – this dramatically improves transmission of the musical signal between the two sets of terminals. The nature of the cables used – differing for positive and negative, means that the recommended connection may be not what you'd expect.*
2. *The plugs used – the new KLEI Classic Harmony banana make this connection set up possible and contribute greatly to the sound quality.*
3. *By greatly improving the performance of the speaker, the benefits of a higher quality single speaker cable run over bi-wiring are magnified – the longer the cable run, the greater the cost benefit ratio.*

There is clearly a lot going on here – the quality of these jumper cables is far ahead of almost all speaker cables produced by every other cable designers out there. Think of them as a speaker upgrade and you can't go wrong – that makes them one of the very best value improvements possible.

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The moment Keith told me about these jumper cables I was excited. Would they make the new Monitor Audio speakers we've been listening to sound even better?

Since first reviewing the [Monitor Audio Silver 6G 300s](#) (an elegant 3 way floor stander), I've been quietly improving the system they are connected to, working on placement and getting them almost to the point where they are run in.

Suffice to say we've been more than happy with the results and the series of incremental improvements have bought the system to a level of transparency that would have previously cost a lot more. And I'm really enjoying the bass that comes from a full sized speaker. Both amplifier and speakers are only a little over NZ\$3000 each so we're not talking silly money and there is every chance that your own system may be better, so what I'm hearing could well be just a start for you.

As we've intimated above, I was first able to listen to the bananas in isolation and the improvement made by the Classic Harmony bananas alone is greater than many I have heard. But it's only the start.

The Monitor Audio 6G series have the same almost generic jumper arrangement that you'll find on most speakers – gold-plated flat bars with some indeterminate substrate that clamp into place between the twin sets of binding posts. Really no better or worse than anything else out there so I won't pick on them.

So – out they come and in go the new KLEI QFLOW7 jumpers. The 100mm set are perfect – the cable in the negative set is markedly thicker and of an obviously different construction to that used in the positive leg but there was still plenty of flexibility and neither cable was either stretched or stressed. The bananas fit snugly and there is a really tactile sensation as they slide in and make firm contact.

Then the existing speaker cables are plugged into the back of the jumper cables – this is where you'll have to pay a little more attention. First, the cables you are using should be fitted with banana plugs – for the moment, it really doesn't matter too much which you are using as you can probably see where things will eventually go.

Note the configuration of speaker cable inputs into the KLEI QFLOW7 Jumpers.

First – take the positive (usually red or white) banana of your existing speaker cables and insert this in the top positive KLEI jumper banana already in the top (HF/Treble/Mids) binding post of your speakers – this connects to the tweeter (and sometimes midrange). Next connect the negative (black) banana into the lower (LF/Bass) negative binding post of the KLEI jumpers. This completes the circuit. Do the same with your other speaker and you are good to go.

There will be an immediate upswing in clarity, sound staging, fine detail, and bass. Simply put you'll hear more coming from your speakers. But as I've found all KLEI products, this is just a taste of what is to come.

The KLEI jumpers are made from their new premium speaker cable – the QSeries – which may well be on the nice to do list (but more on that later). These cables specify a run in period of 300 to 450 hours – that's around 18 days of continuous 24 hour playing. Despite being much shorter, the run in period for the jumpers is the same.

In the first day and evening of intermittent listening the sound literally improved between albums – the level of change I was hearing is directly comparable to that of a the Purity level speaker and interconnect cables that have previously seduced me. I started listening at 40/100 on the amp which was as we were prior to the arrival of the jumpers – it was startling how much more was coming out of the speakers – as if there was a significant increase in amplifier power.





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Carolijn noted that even listening at her desk at the other end of the long living room that the sound was carrying in a way that it never had before from the system – voices were much clearer and lyrics were suddenly making sense – you could hear the poetry rather than just a bunch of words.

I found that instrumentation – the picking of guitar especially became more lucid and defined. With more information flowing, the apparent pace of the music picked up, and I was suddenly re-engaged with songs that I'd played to the point of over familiarity.

It was like the arteries of my music system were being progressively unblocked – with every hour it was faster, fitter, more responsive. Given all the music being played, at this stage, was predominately a mixture of MP4 and MP3 downloads of New Zealand bands – the effect you'll hear from better analogue or other types of music is going to be much greater again. But hey, I was having so much fun we didn't want to stop.

Getting away from indie bands to some film soundtracks showed greater depth to the sound. Piano keystrokes took on a softer more analogue tone and low bass gained definition to almost growl at times.

It's easy to differentiate between the effect of the new KLEI Classic Harmony bananas which are used at both ends and the Jumpers as a whole. The improvement made is an order of magnitude greater and while there is a worthwhile gain over time with the bananas alone, the Jumpers performance tracks upwards at a far faster and more obvious rate with new parts of recordings being constantly revealed. All I want to do as I write this is put another album on to see what will happen – it's as if my collection is being progressively renewed.

These are the original jumpers, replaced and not missed.

A good analogue comparison is to that of a high quality record cleaning machine – for those that have had their vinyl records properly cleaned, you'll know the decrease in background noise combined with revelations in detail are nothing subtle. Unlike record cleaning this is a whole lot easier and less costly.

What I'm hearing is akin to replacement of a complete set of speaker cables. This could sound a little crazy but it's really no different to what we have found with the KLEI AC cables – for all we can talk about of the supposed inadequacy of many metres of AC cabling in the walls and out to the street, as so far as our system components are concerned, what they really see is the first metre or so, that they are attached to. It's in this way that I think the KLEI jumpers are able to produce a disproportionately great improvement to the sound of speakers- it doesn't matter whether you have long or short cables that are state of the art or just competent, by upgrading the first step from your speakers you'll unlock performance that was previously congested.



Some of Keith's cable design science does fly above my head despite being at this for many years – yet once you hear and see them in action it all makes more sense. The unusual configuration of effectively forcing signal flow through all parts of the cable as a complete circuit rather than the conventional approach of effectively parallel connection, especially between bass and treble paths.

This means that you get the full benefit of Keith's unique cable designs – while you could briefly argue making the same configuration with normal jumpers, going via what we know to be compromised materials could in fact be even worse as you'd effectively double the path length and lose what may be an optimal connection for either the bass or treble.

I was pondering the apparent increase in volume – but when we look at the huge differences in conductivity between a set of conventional jumpers and the new KLEI ones, I know what I'm hearing is not just an impression but grounded in real science. If the performance of the bananas is plausible to you then the cable will be even more so and the combination of the two becomes a literal no-brainer.

No-one disputes the efficacy of bi-wiring – there are plenty of straight forward reasons why it sounds better, yet everything I'm hearing with the KLEI jumpers tells me these are a better solution for the vast majority of systems. You get a greater benefit from both the bananas and cables used and I'm starting to get the feeling that the improved signal path gives a greater degree of coherence between the low and higher registers.

Going to smaller stand mount speakers, Sonus Faber Venere 1.5s, with the KLEI QFLOW7 jumpers connected into them, the improvement wrought by the introduction of the KLEI jumpers was every bit as compelling. If anything the degree of enhancement to midrange clarity was more marked. Again the sound was able to better carry and fill the

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room. The upswing in vocal clarity was uncanny – never before have I heard these entry level speakers perform in such a way and it reminded me why I've always like them.

By day 4 the rate of improvement had not slowed – every album played was effectively new. And this was consistent when swapping between speakers, even taking into consideration that there is a settling in period with making such changes.

In 30 years I've sold countless pairs of speakers with bi-wire terminals, kilometres of speaker cable and endless banana plugs of every breed. Suddenly we have a single product which will lift the performance of every one of these systems. And that means yours.

While the idea of a better jumper cable isn't new and a number of options are already on the market, these all fall short of the new KLEI QFLOW7 Jumpers – remember that what you get is a radically better banana, some very special cable and a smarter configuration enabled by the construction and differing cable architecture in the two parts.

Keith really has done something special here and it is a combination of things that could never have happened before. The new Harmony bananas have been a long time coming and the rapid development of Keith's unique speaker cable designs, his obsession with metallurgy and conductivity all combine into these 100mm long jumpers.

It never occurred to him to make a lesser version, yet he's kept the price down to a level that only gives partial payback on the development of the constituent parts. I've got a very good idea of the material value of these if I didn't have a red flag hanging in my office it would be easy to demand a much higher price that reflects the performance gain.

There is no down side to this. Improve the sound of your system with the KLEI QFLOW7 jumpers and you may well be perfectly happy and stop there – but if you want to take advantage of this new found transparency, just replacing the bananas at the amplifier end of the speaker cables is going to be the literal icing on the cake. If you haven't already, we're hoping that you'll explore the [other cables in Keith's range](#). It's been a little hard to keep up over the last 4 years but we've gone from the introduction of the KLEI Harmony plugs which replaced the original Eichmann Bullet plugs to the comprehensive range of analogue and digital interconnects, speaker, and AC mains cables – every single one of which is a performance statement in itself.

That the KLEI QFLOW7 jumpers are a distillation of all this is great to know but it's the sound you get that really matters. It's a fact that I'll never want to listen to my speakers without them again.

Given that I'm still a long way from full burn in, this is not the last word on the KLEI jumpers. My experience (which is also shared by many of our clients) with all the other cables tells us that 3 and even 6 months from now there will still be little revelations.

The pattern of what I'm hearing is consistent with all the other KLEI products.

The cable used, the new QFLOW7, sits at a level slightly above that of the [KLEI gZero 6 speaker cables](#) (which are improved upon by the new Harmony Bananas) and so there will be very few systems out there that have a better cable.

For all my listening to of cables (and components) over the years, I've never heard anything like this level of performance enhancement for so little. The same amount will otherwise only get you the entry level interconnect, a set of barely adequate speaker cables, and not even come close on a decent mains cable. It's a competent MM cartridge or a low end mobile pressed into play as a music source. Yet the KLEI jumpers will work their magic in almost any system, never wear out or be the weak link and basically make you a happier more relaxed human being. And that, my friends, is possibly the best recommendation I could ever give.



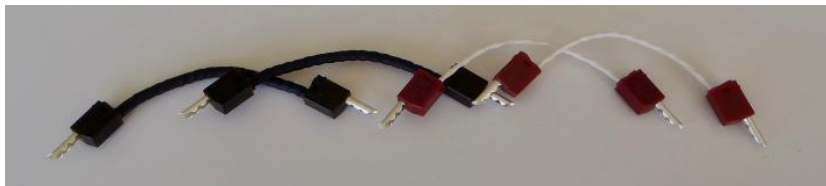
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## KLEI QFLOW7 Speaker Binding Post Jumpers

Customer review –

*'There was an immediate improvement in clarity, bass and detail and, quite noticeably, in the sound stage. As you found, there was an improved sound projection into the room and that produced a greater sense of stage positioning, including three-dimensional depth as well as spread. The increased dynamic (the implicit increase in amp power you described), certainly gives a greater sense of speaker control in all frequencies with more responsiveness to shifting dynamic levels; and the detail in soft passages is just exquisite.'*

If you're committed to the very best sound quality and have an appropriately well set up and transparent system Keith is offering a premium version – these will utilise the top of the range QPURITY level speaker cable and the new PureQ banana – this banana plug will not be available separately other than in Keith's own QFLOW and QPURITY speaker cables. These are not yet completely developed so we don't have a price but we're going to be giving a clean trade up deal for anyone who gets the new QFLOW7 jumpers, likes them then wants to take the next step – at worst we'll get back a partially run in set which is hardly a problem for us.



It's possible that I do sound like a KLEI true believer. It's a label I really don't mind as I've listened to many cables over the years. I started with QED, became a Monster advocate, learning about the improvements delivered by advanced dielectric and conductor design. I've had the revelation of first hearing Kimber when I was a confirmed Linnie and realised Frank was right. Worked my way through the Kimber speaker cables, was converted by the AG interconnects then Select models.

When the NZ made SlinkyLinks came on the scene it was obvious that these offered something equally special and these provided our introduction to Keith by way of the Eichmann Bullet plugs, which was a big part of the SlinkyLinks story and performance. It's no accident that they share the less-is-more approach with speaker cable bananas, and that silver does wonderful things, when correctly used.

But it's the responses from our clients that have proved most convincing – these are just some.

*'...the inclusion of the gZero6 SCs (speaker cables), has just brought the whole system on song. I truly believe that these KLEI cables have been the most substantial upgrade for the money invested in our system! I feel all our components have come together at their full potential. As a whole, the KLEI cables have transformed our music with tremendous smooth detail, speed, tightness & space, not least improving the bass beyond what I thought was possible.'*

*'To say the KLEI interconnects are quite remarkable, is nothing short of a fact. I was expecting an improvement of some sort, but was not quite prepared for the magnitude of what was to come! Detail, speed, ambience & a total sense of space, around each individual instrument & voice. Notes that used to just end abruptly, now have an ambient trail of decay, as if you can sense the size of the room the instrument was recorded in. So thank you John, for your always sound & tested advice & guidance. Every comment & description you spoke of about these cables is spot on. Totally Stoked!'*

*'They make a huge difference, so once again the Eichmann cables are showing their worth. I'm quite convinced that what I now have are making an amazing difference to the system in terms of clarity, distinction between instruments, complexity of tonal quality, particularly in the areas of mid-harmony and support parts, and a general improvement to the soundstage, notably in the middle area between the speakers, bringing it forward and removing any sense of sound being generated from two sources. It's all coming together wonderfully well I think and with 300 odd hours of improvements to come as the cables are run in.'*

If you are going to take a punt on any KLEI product, these new jumpers would be the perfect introduction. For any existing owner, they will be the literal icing on the cake.

So you can see that it's been a progression and along the way I've learned a lot but as is often the case, the more you know, the more questions you have. And every so often we find an answer... Keith Louis Eichmann – take a bow.

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## KLEI™QFLOW7 Jumpers & KLEI™Classic Harmony Bananas

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