

PHONO PREAMPLIFIER



REFERENCE PHONO 2

VACUUM TUBE PHONO PREAMPLIFIER

Reference Phono 2 Vacuum Tube Phono Preamplifier

After our original Reference Phono preamplifier was discontinued in 2005, the demand for a Reference-level successor never declined. Not satisfied with introducing a replacement that would be incrementally better, we were determined to develop an all-new vacuum-tube phono preamplifier that would truly advance the state of the art. Years of development have come to fruition and we are proud to introduce the fully balanced Reference Phono 2.

Physically, the Reference Phono 2 is similar to our other Reference preamplifiers, with slab side panels, a vacuum-fluorescent display, and the same height and depth as its predecessors. The front panel has six control buttons for Power, Input, Gain, Load, RIAA and Mute. New silver handles are standard on natural-anodized units, while black handles come with black-anodized units. For owners wanting to match other Audio Research components, black handles are available, just as new silver handles will be available for most other Audio Research components.

The feature set of the Reference Phono 2 is extensive. There are two separate sets of inputs, with gain selectable between Low (51dB BAL / 45dB SE) and High (74dB BAL / 68dB SE). There is a choice of seven loading selections including 47K, 1000, 500, 200, 100, 50 ohms, and Custom, which we can factory-set according to your need. (If not specified, the Custom load is 47K.) In addition to standard RIAA phono equalization, the Reference Phono 2 also includes early stereo Columbia and Decca equalization curves. The display will show all selected functions (Input, Gain, Loading, EQ, Mute, Tube Hours), and its intensity can be adjusted to one of six levels, plus off. When the display is off, nine small pixels will remain lit in the center as a discreet reminder that the unit is powered on – touch any button, and the display comes on for ten seconds. The microprocessor will remember the independent settings for each input, and the supplied remote will control all of these functions.

The Reference Phono 2 is a fully balanced design with an input circuit that allows its RCA inputs to operate in a balanced configuration without requiring an inverter. It shares the same tube complement as the Reference 3 and Reference 5 line-stages, and also the Reference CD8 compact disc player; four 6H30s in the gain stage with a 6550C and 6H30 in the power supply. The Reference Phono 2 also features the same basic analog stage as its acclaimed siblings. Rather than using a step-up transformer, special high-gain, extremely low-noise FETs are used in the high-gain section. This approach is costlier than using a transformer, but it is well worth it for the dramatic increase in performance. There are new, proprietary capacitors throughout, the transformers are new, and there are eleven stages of power supply regulation.

Connections on the rear panel include two sets of RCA inputs with ground post, XLR and RCA outputs, and a 20A IEC connector.

Sonically, the performance of the Reference Phono 2 is in another world – it is so transparent and vivid in its presentation, and just sounds so musically beautiful, that it will take your breath away. There is a master tape-like quality in which instruments stand in bold relief before a black background, with the space of the recording environment reproduced with uncanny realism. Saying that it achieves "new levels of resolution and dynamics" sounds clichéd, but these are authentic attributes. The Reference Phono 2 truly provides a clearer connection to the music. And, in a world filled with remarkable turntables, tone arms and phono cartridges, the not-inexpensive Reference Phono 2 is a bargain relative to its exalted performance.

More than twenty-seven years after the introduction of the compact disc, we continue to discover how much wonderful musical information is buried in the grooves of our beloved vinyl collections. Hear for yourself why this is truly the golden age of analog playback, and call your Audio Research dealer to audition the Reference Phono 2. It will be a breathtaking experience.



Reference Phono 2 Specifications:

FREQUENCY

RESPONSE: ± 0.2 dB of RIAA, 10Hz to 60kHz: 3dB points below 0.5Hz and above 300kHz.

DISTORTION: .002% at 1.0V RMS 1kHz BAL output.

GAIN: Selectable 51 dB (Low), 74 dB (High) at 1 kHz BAL; 45 dB (Low), 68dB (High) at 1 kHz SE. (MC & MM compatible).

BUTTONS: Front (6) Power, Input, Gain, Load, RIAA, Mute. Remote adds "hours" and "Display".

POLARITY: Non-inverting.

OUTPUT IMPEDANCE 200 ohms SE, 400 ohms balanced. Recommended load 50K-100K ohms and 100pF. (10K ohms minimum and 2000pF maximum.)

MAXIMUM INPUTS:

250mV RMS at 1kHz (680 mV RMS at 10kHz).

RATED OUTPUTS : 0.5V RMS 10Hz to 20kHz, 100K ohm load (output capability is 80V RMS BAL output at 1/2% THD at 1kHz, 40V SE.)

POWER SUPPLIES:

Electronically-regulated low

NOISE: 0.22uV equivalent input noise (High Gain) (65dB below 0.1mV 1kHz input).

TUBE COMPLEMENT(4)

6H30 dual triodes, plus (1 each) 6H30, 6550C in power supply.

POWER

REQUIREMENTS: 100-135VAC 60Hz (200-270VAC 50/60Hz) 140 watts maximum. 2W standby. Line fuse 5A SLO BLO (T2A SLO BLO 230V).

DIMENSIONS:

19" (48 cm) W x 7" (17.8 cm) H (standard rack panel) x 15.5" (39.4 cm) D. Handles extend 1.5" (3.8

INPUT IMPEDANCE 47K ohms and 100pF SE. Additional selectable loads: 1000, 500, 200, 100, 50 ohms and Custom. (Custom loading value is factory set at 47K ohms unless specified otherwise.)

PHONO EQUALIZATION:
(Selectable) RIAA, Columbia, Decca.

and high voltage supplies.
Line regulation better than .01%.

cm) forward of front panel.

WEIGHT: 27 lbs. (12.3 kg)
Net; 38 lbs. (17.3 kg)
Shipping.

Specifications subject to change without notice.

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