

AUDIO HUNGARY QUALITON PHONO PREAMPLIFIER REVIEW

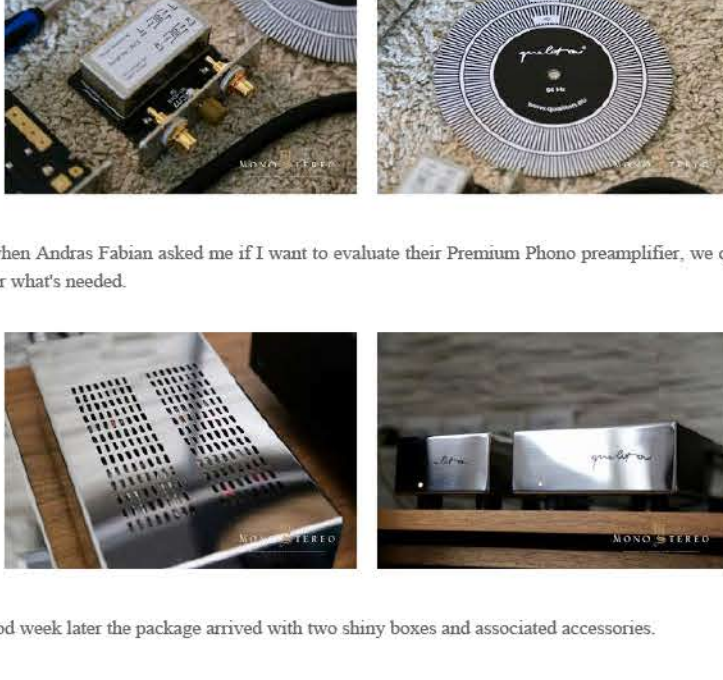


Weekend is here with a lots of fun ahead! Audio Hungary Qualiton Phono preamplifier just arrived for a test and review directly from their headquarters in Hungary.

In very short time, Audio Hungary managed to create quite a presence on the high-end audio market and there are many positive reasons for that.

I've already reviewed Audio Hungary Qualiton APX 200 power amplifier and Qualiton APR 204 Qualiton tube preamplifier [here](#) and happily awarded them with Mono and Stereo Highly Recommended Award. Both amplifier and power amplifier have proven to offer not only a lot for the

money, but highly engaging musical experience, that is not on the everyday audiophile plate.



So, when Andras Fabian asked me if I want to evaluate their Premium Phono preamplifier, we quickly set for what's needed.

THE QUALITON PHONO

The housing of the Phono is made from the same mirror polished stainless steel as with all of the Qualiton A series. This gives both units a distinguish and eye pleasing value. They look stylish and reflect a certain aura, especially when the tubes start to glow gently through the wanted ports on the top cover.



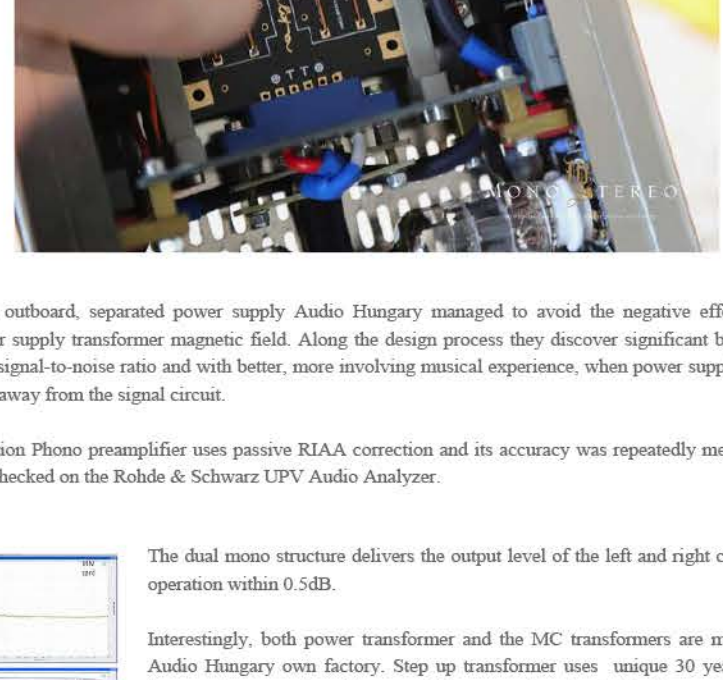
Audio Hungary Qualiton Phono was designed from the ground up as a premium category vacuum tube phono stage with extreme low noise and distortion level. It was made to complement the A series of Qualiton products.



The MM card is installed by default. MC card is an extra and cost a bit less than 400 EUR. The slot on the back of the main unit's chassis offer an easy installation of MM and MC cards, for lower and higher impedance cartridges. Any card can easily be swapped with simply unscrewing of the four screws, removing the MM module and with insertion of the MC board into the connector inside of the phono. When module is locked, you only need to tighten it back with the screws.



In the signal transmitting circuit the audio processing is done via Tungstram ECC83, as well as Tesla E88CC double triodes. The standard RIAA correction is implemented with the use of classic passive network between the amplifying stages. No negative feedback is applied with this particular design. The nominal input sensitivity is 5 mV and nominal effective output signal is 500 mV.



The stabilised power supply is separated not only for the lower noise but also to deliver better thermal operation. Both units are connected to the military grade power supply connectors.

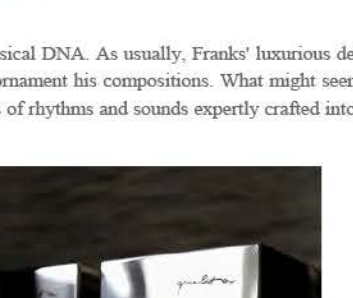


And the most important part. There are only tubes in a signal path. Audio Hungary has chosen a premium selection of NOS Tungstram ECC83 and Tungstram (or Gold Lion) E88CC valves.

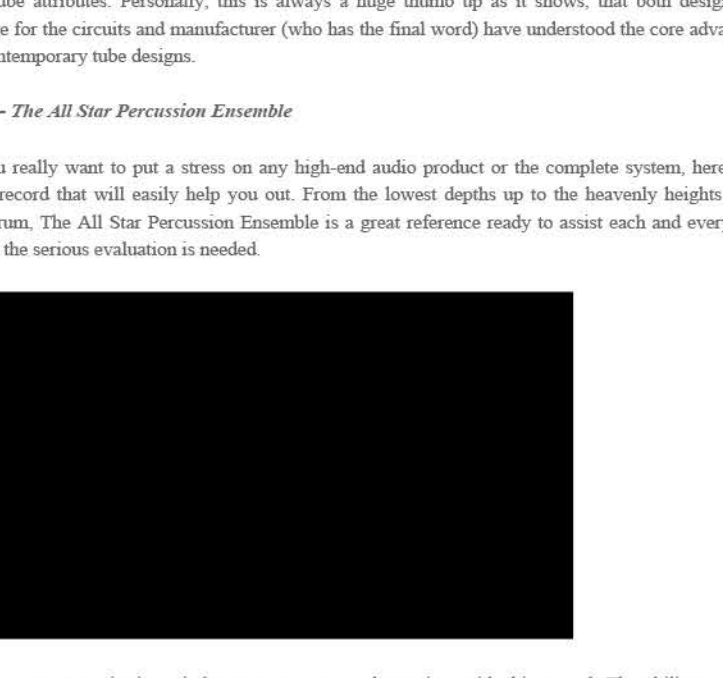
MUSIC

Michael Franks - *The Art Of Tea*

The very album that had elevated Michael into the global worldwide recognition... This is really a masterfully crafted record released on the Frank Sinatra's Reprise label and its more than worthy of its vinyl prime time. If you take in consideration the star crew of musicians like Joe Sample (Keyboards), Larry Carlton (Guitar), Dave Sanborn (Alto Sax), Michael Brecker (Tenor saxophone) and as cherries on top two legends; Al Schmitt performing the duties the mixing engineer and Dong Sax as mastering engineer, this should ignite the interest for any music lover.



The Art Of Tea has a certain, one of the kinds organic flow and one can instantly recognize Franks' unique musical DNA. As usually, Franks' luxurious deal with the label allowed him to choose top musicians to ornament his compositions. What might seem like an easy listening music LP, actually hides the layers of rhythms and sounds expertly crafted into a remarkable sonic collage.



Audio Hungary Qualiton Phono refreshing sonic delivery of the Art Of Tea neither recalled solid state nor tube attributes. Personally, this is always a huge thumb up as it shows, that both designers in charge for the circuits and manufacturer (who has the final word) have understood the core advantages of contemporary tube designs.

FIM - *The All Star Percussion Ensemble*

If you really want to put a stress on any high-end audio product or the complete system, here is the very record that will easily help you out. From the lowest depths up to the heavenly heights of the spectrum. The All Star Percussion Ensemble is a great reference ready to assist each and every time, when the serious evaluation is needed.

There are many criteria to judge a component under review with this record. The ability to render sudden dynamic shifts, the raw percussion orchestra energy and sense of the space, that acoustical instruments are formed into are certainly on the top of the list.

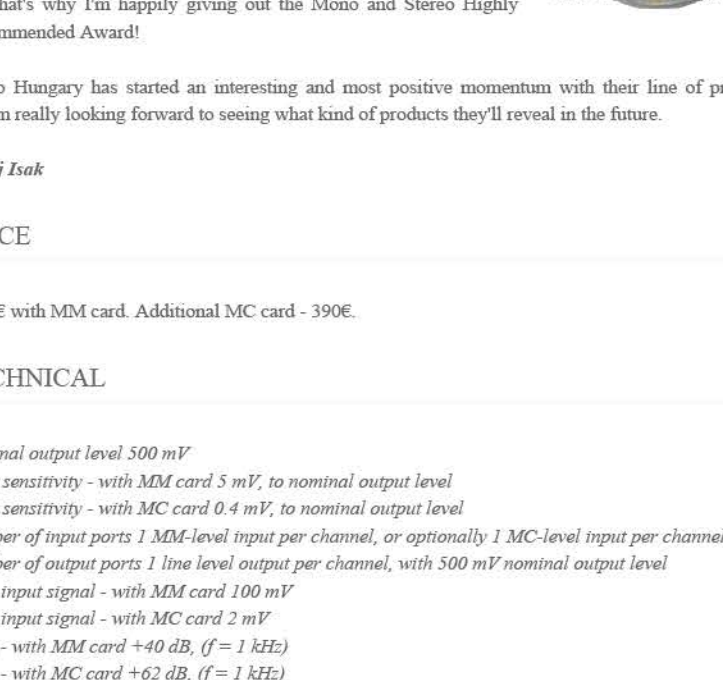
Audio Hungary Qualiton Phono greatly expanded the gravity of the percussion orchestra. The motivic development of the score was expanded with a great forward-driving momentum.

The instrument was formed with a believable and complex musical lines were easily interpreted without being smeared into the "plastic" like behavior too often associated with the Qualiton Phono given a price range.

The crescendos and diminuendos were followed easily and Qualiton could form a seamless whole rather than acting with a dissecting attitude. This unwanted sonic behavior is linked even with some phono stages with the much higher price tag. Hats off to the Hungary Audio team for such performance.

SUM UP

Audio Hungary Qualiton Phono preamplifier possesses a unique organic quality, that is evident even with the very first notes being served from the turntable.



Tube-based phono preamplifiers are always associated with unique three-dimensionally and Qualiton Phono embodies this quality with ease, expanding from the basic attributes to the level of performance, that is usually reserved for a higher priced phono stages. As with the rest of the Audio Hungary products, Qualiton Phono is priced reasonably and perform more than a notch about its given price.

All in all. It's great to have a pleasant "déjà vu", with the similar impact of the Audio Hungary's Qualiton APX 200 power amplifier and Qualiton APR 204 Qualiton tube preamplifier I've already reviewed.



I'm more than positively surprised and inspired by what Audio Hungary Qualiton Phono could deliver in terms of music's flow. This double boxed phono preamplifier certainly deserves the recognition and that's why I'm happily giving out the Mono and Stereo Highly Recommended Award!

Audio Hungary has started an interesting and most positive journey with their line of products and I'm really looking forward to seeing what kind of products they'll reveal in the future.

Matej Isak

PRICE

3750€ with MM card. Additional MC card - 390€.

TECHNICAL

Nominal output level 500 mV
Input sensitivity - with MM card 5 mV, to nominal output level
Input sensitivity - with MC card 0.4 mV, to nominal output level
Number of input ports 1 MM-level input per channel, or optionally 1 MC-level input per channel
Number of output ports 1 line level output per channel, or optionally 1 MC-level input per channel
Max. input signal - with MM card 100 mV
Max. input signal - with MC card 2 mV
Gain - with MM card +40 dB, (f = 1 kHz)
Gain - with MC card +62 dB, (f = 1 kHz)
Total harmonic distortion - with MM card < 0.07%, (f = 1 kHz, input level: 5 mV)
Total harmonic distortion - with MC card < 0.2%, (f = 1 kHz, input level: 0.4 mV)
Frequency response 20 Hz - 20 kHz, (-0.3 dB)
Input impedance - with MM card 47 kOhm
Input impedance - with MC card 145 Ohm
Signal-to-noise ratio - with MM card > 70 dB
Signal-to-noise ratio - with MC card > 65 dB
Tubes required 4 x Tungstram ECC83, 2 x Tesla E88CC
Weight 5.4 kg
Dimensions 35 x 8 x 30 cm
Warranty: 2 years

CONTACT

Audio-Hungary Kft.
Nádor u. 28
4400 Nyíregyháza
Hungary

Tel: +362 02595922
Email: info@audiohungary.com
Web: www.audiohungary.com

