MONO STEREO
REVIEWING THE WORLD'S FINEST AUDIO PRODUCTS

AUDIO HUNGARY QUALITON X200 INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER REVIEW

It's been a while, but not too long since I've reviewed the Audio Hungary product. The roots of the Audio Hungary Qualiton brand are way deeper and go far more back than most people are aware of.

absolutesounds.com
Established 1978

The history of the company began in the late 1940s. Rafilm National Radio and Film technical Company was founded at that time. The company profile was very broad.

In 1951, Audio Voice -,and Film technical Co. went from it, specializing in audio equipment. The audio line included sound film projection and amplification equipment, which became dominant at the time. The development went in the direction of electroacoustics and audio technology.

The name changed to Electroacoustic Factory, using the abbreviation EAG from 1960. Under pressure from the German company AEG, it changed its name to BEAG (Budapest Electroacoustic Factory). The successful history of the company began at this time.

It produced complete studios, sound systems, teaching aids. The production in Nyíregyháza developed in 1970. One of the most successful movements was the construction of the complete sound system of the Moscow Olympics in 1980.

BEAG, the biggest electro-acoustic factory of the Eastern Bloc, disintegrated into smaller units during the privatization period. The mainline, which included the production of amplifiers, loudspeakers, and microphones, was continued by UNIVOX GmbH.

In 1990 the old-established Budapest Electroacoustic Factory (better known as BEAG), which mainly produced PA systems, was dissolved. At that time, based on the company's plant in Nyíregyháza, Univox Kft was founded. This new company continued to offer a considerable part of BEAG's product range, including amplifiers for industrial use, outdoor and indoor loudspeakers, intercoms, and microphones. This extraordinarily broad product range was available to the customers until early 2014.

In 2014, Univox Kft was purchased by Audio Hungary Kft, allowing the UNIVOX name to continue as a brand name. The product range has not disappeared, but the number of products has decreased significantly.

The merger of the two companies made it possible to develop and produce premium class audio products with a large pool of acquired knowledge and production experience.

In the first quarter of 2015, company specialists, backed by their extensive practical know-how and complemented by the young engineering team from Audio-Hungary Kft, developed the company's very first amplifier under the guidance of the new management: the UNIVOX APX 200 tube power amplifier. In this way, we pay tribute to the APX 100 unit made by BEAG, which Audio Hungary has now transformed into a remarkable piece of consumer electronics. Accordingly, the power amplifier has 4 Ω and 8 Ω outputs at an affordable price in its category.

When it comes to the quality of Audio Hungary products, they make no compromises. Devices that come on the market are made up of electrical circuits consisting of selected, high-quality components.

Audio-Hungary Factory Tour
Megnézen...
Megosztás
Megtekinthető itt: YouTube

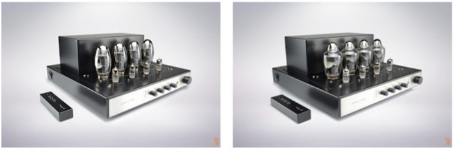
They are housed in solid and carefully designed metal frames. They developing and manufacturing long-life power amplifiers and integrated amplifiers intended for the Hungarian and international markets, and - in addition to tube amplifiers - on the development of hybrid designs with semiconductors.

At Audio Hungary a lot of time and effort is invested in perfecting one of the most delicate points of tube amplifiers, the output transformer. Audio Hungary transformers are exclusively manufactured in their newly equipped factory on state-of-the-art toroidal and linear coil winding machines.

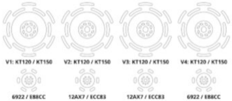
The development and market launch of loudspeakers and cables belonging to the series is also in progress.

QUALITON X200

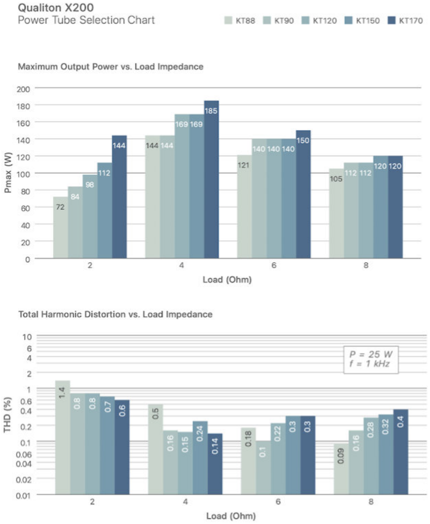
Audio Hungary Qualiton X200 is an integrated balanced tube stereo amplifier with a power of 100 W per channel.



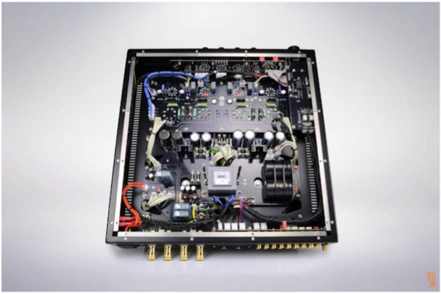
X200 is equipped with 12AX7 input tubes and 6922 driver tubes. The output stage is based on the KT series of power tetrodes and X200 is compatible with KT88, KT90, KT120, KT150, and KT170.



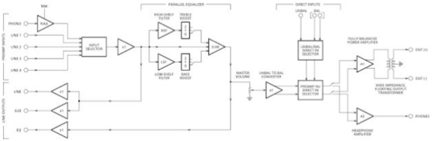
The Qualiton X200 features a fully symmetrical output transformer design and a floating output connection. Output noise is further reduced by a fully balanced design.



Up to 180 W output power into 4 ohms is available when using KT170 power tubes.



A low-noise, ultra-low distortion, the fully differential amplifier provides the output signal for the highest fidelity.



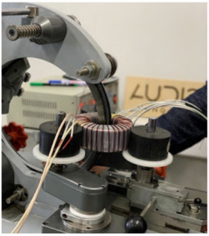
1 x line-level output, buffered.
1 x subwoofer output, buffered, volume adjustable.
1 x EQ output, buffered.

The Qualiton X200 has a built-in high-fidelity headphone amplifier that works effortlessly with a wide range of headphone impedances, starting at 32 ohms. Automatic muting of the speaker terminal when the headphone output is in use.

OPERATIONAL

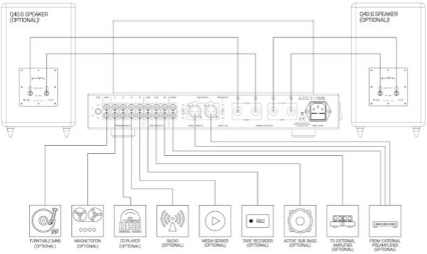
Audio Hungary Qualiton The X200 integrated amplifier was designed from the ground up as a true all-rounder high-performance tube power amplifier.

At its heart is a precise, broadband, transparent preamplifier circuit that is remotely controlled by a motorized ALPS potentiometer (Vol Up, Vol Down, Mute), and there are direct inputs that feed the signal directly into the power amp.



The Qualiton X200 has been designed with the user in mind, offering and covering the widest range of user needs.

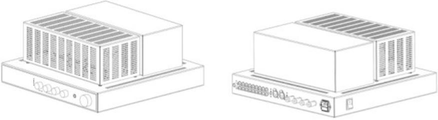
There are several options for connecting the X200 to the audio system. A switch selects Preamp IN / Direct IN modes. Direct IN mode still allows you to choose between unbalanced/balanced connections. With the Direct IN mode, you are served with a purely tube-based signal chain.


Q40-S SPEAKER (OPTIONAL)!
Q40-S SPEAKER (OPTIONAL)!
REC
TURNTABLE (MM) (OPTIONAL)
MAGNETOFON (OPTIONAL)
CD PLAYER (OPTIONAL)
RADIO (OPTIONAL)
MEDIA SERVER (OPTIONAL)
TAPE RECORDER (OPTIONAL)
ACTIVE SUB BASS (OPTIONAL)
TO EXTERNAL AMPLIFIER (OPTIONAL)
FROM EXTERNAL PREAMPLIFIER (OPTIONAL)

The rear panel of the X200 features a variety of inputs, including a MM phono input with ground connection and low noise circuitry, as well as 4 x line-level inputs and a direct input. The balanced/unbalanced switch engages an unbalanced/balanced operation.

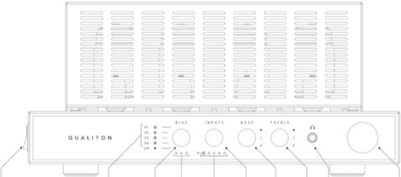
The studio-grade master parallel equalizer is certainly an unexpected but nice addition. In the zero position, it is completely bypassed. Switch it on and you get a warm, harmonic note. Even at lower volumes, the bass lift adds to the listening pleasure.

There's a reason most integrated amplifiers in the 1980s had a bass boost. It's funny that even some seasoned experts don't acknowledge the fact that our particular ear mechanism works in a very peculiar way. It needs the proper amount of lower frequencies to come out more ample lush.



This is why reference level, quiet listening is not possible without a bass boost, subwoofer, or direct attenuation. This is usually accomplished via a simple switch on the back of the speakers with a few dB of boost.

The X200 tone control is surely nice addition that will let music enjoy more catered and at a lower listening volume than usual.



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

1. MAIN SWITCH with position indicator

2. BIAS TRIMs allows adjustment of the selected

vacuum tube's bias status

3. BIAS SELECT allows selection of vacuum tube to be indicated and adjusted

4. BIAS LEDs indicating the selected vacuum tube's bias status

5. INPUT LEDs indicating the selected input port of the preamplifier. From left to right:

PHONO, LINE 1, 2, 3 and 4

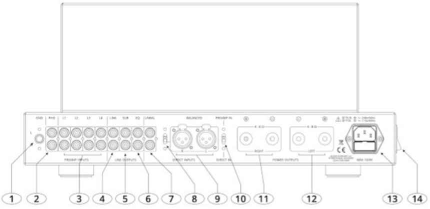
6. INPUT SELECTOR rotary switch allows selection of preamplifier channel used. From left to right: PHONO, LINE 1, 2, 3 and 4

7. BASS CONTROL of the preamplifier's parallel equalizer

8. TREBLE CONTROL of the preamplifier's parallel equalizer

9. HEADPHONE connection for dynamic headphones

10. VOLUME control allows adjustment of the stereo listening level when using PREAMP IN



1. GND terminal accepts a ground wire from a turntable

2. PHONO INPUT accepts signals from a moving magnet phono cartridge

3. LINE 1, 2, 3 and 4 INPUTS accept high level program source signals

4. LINE OUTPUT provides a buffered version of the signal connected to the currently selected preamplifier channel

5. SUBWOOFER OUTPUT provides a buffered version of the signal connected to the currently selected preamplifier channel

6. EQUALIZER OUTPUT provides a buffered and parallel equalized version of the signal connected to the currently selected preamplifier channel

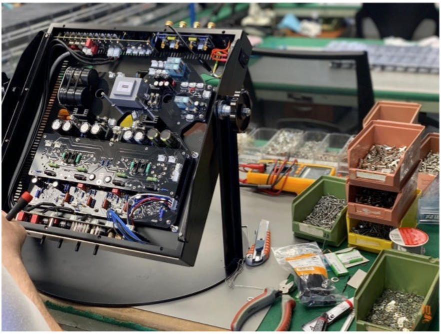
7. UNBALANCED DIRECT INPUT accepts high level program source signals. This input is used to drive the power amplifier directly without preamplifier and volume control.

8. UNBALANCED / BALANCED direct input selector switch

9. BALANCED DIRECT INPUT accepts high level program source signals. This input is used to drive the power amplifier directly without preamplifier and volume control.

BIAS

As with the rest of the X200, bias adjustment is simple and straightforward with an easy-to-use power amp tube bias system based on visual feedback.



The X200 must be warmed up for at least 10 minutes before bias adjustment can begin. Then the X200's semi-automatic bias system can be used to check and accurately adjust the quiescent current of the power tubes.

The PREAMP IN/ DIRECT IN switch on must be in the PREAMP IN position. The volume control on the front of the unit needs to be set to the minimum position. As you cycle through output tubes (V1-V4) with the appropriate selector switch, the LED BIAS will indicate the bias status of the selected power amp tube.

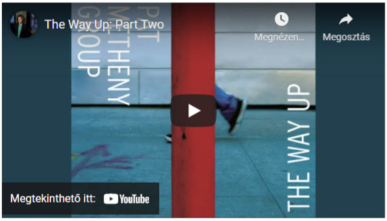
The optimum bias current level is fine-tuned by adjusting the bias trim for the selected power amp tube using the plastic screwdriver.

Three colors are available to indicate the current of the selected power amp tube:

- BLUE - The quiescent current of the selected power tube is lower than the optimum value.
- GREEN - The quiescent current of the selected power tube is within the optimum range
- RED - The quiescent current of the selected power tube is higher than optimal and must be reduced to the safe value as soon as possible.

THE MUSIC

I'm a big fan of the Pat Metheny Group and *The Way Up* is one of my favorite albums post-ECM. Not only do I find great joy and solace in Metheny's music. His complex, kaleidoscopic compositions offer unique sonic escapades, but also a handful of complex material to judge and evaluate high-end audio products. And The Way Up is remarkable on all fronts.



The album is divided into three parts, which are meant to be a harmonic whole. I can't count how many times I've listened through the album in one go, but it's burned itself deep into my subconsciousness.

I know by heart how certain parts should sound, where the tension is, the harmonic progression, the dynamic shift, etc. With Audio Hungary Qualiton X200 in action, I didn't skip any of the three long tracks. That alone should put the X200 on the "wanted" map with a lighting speed.

Qualiton X200 presented *The Way Up* with a surprisingly weightless and authoritative balancing act. It was interesting how unexpectedly Audio Hungary Qualiton X200 revealed some dainty details that I seem to have overlooked until now. That really shouldn't happen at this price point, should it? It's not like you always make discoveries with your favorite records, but there is a familiar discovery or two here and there. And that's even more enlightening if it happens with a product like the Audio Hungary integrated amplifier. Again, that sole attribute is worthy of recognition and highlighting.

Qualiton X200 more than the usual number of anchor points allows *The Way Up* to unfold with a holographic sense of quality, where note hovers in space with a feathery lightness and without a sense of cutting decays and leading edges of the notes.

Jamie Saft, Steve Swallow, Bobby P...
Megnézen...
Megosztás
Megtekinthető itt: YouTube

The horizontal and vertical sonic expansiveness was further revealed and confirmed with Jamie Saft, Steve Swallow, Bobby Previte - "Henbane". X200 revealed the musician's remarkable interplay with boldness, without restraint, and with the necessary diametrical sonic expansion. The X200 allowed the "Henbane" momentum to float in space beyond the means of usual presentation. Not every amplifier stains the sonic canvas with such strenuous and requisite balance. "Henbane" sounded not as a laid-back sonic backdrop, but as the main and foremost musical moment.

Audio Hungary Qualiton X200's ability to deliver exhilarating and unexpectedly rich tone, wood, and color continued with *A Go Go* by John Scofield.

H
John Scofield - Chicken Dog (album...
Megnézen...
Megosztás
John Scofield
A GO GO
Megtekinthető itt: YouTube

A modern electric guitar jazz master was rendered with more shimmering, not glittering, with a gravity-defying quality and multitude of tinny realities fall into place with order and rehabilitating time and space with mojo, biting rhythm, and well laid-down sophisticated syncopation.

The feats of vigor were confiscated by Charles Mingus - *The Clown*, where the upbeat rhythmic pulse was not distorted and a myriad of details was morphed into reality with delicacy and necessary delicacy.

Charles Mingus - The Clown 1957 (...
Megnézen...
Megosztás
CHARLES MINGUS THE CLOWN
Megtekinthető itt: YouTube

X200 acted far from unweaving. These trade-offs are too easy to notice even in much higher priced amplifiers. Again, a high remark for Audio Hungary integrated!

The X200 stands for undiluted quality and sonic equivalence. *The Clown* was not folded back like many amps regardless of being solid-state or tube designs.

Audio Hungary acted with incandescence quality where reconnection with the music was no strange affair and sonics scape was broadened not ruffled.

CONCLUSION

I have always found Audio Hungary products to be special, but X200 takes the Qualiton all-in-one concept to another level.

With the combination of 12AX7 input and 6922 driver tubes as well as KT88, KT90, KT120, KT150, and KT170 output tubes, there are plenty of ways to tinker and find the right, desired sonic recipe. Many options should make tube rollers happy.

The Audio Hungary X200 is a modern-sounding integrated amplifier that, despite being all-tube, operates outside the usual sonic expectations. With the classic tube amp esthetic of the Qualiton X200, one might expect a somewhat restrained, more traditionally oriented sound spectrum. On the contrary, there's nothing to connect the X200 to the sound of the past. The X200 is not even remotely comparable to the slow, toned, saturated sound of the last century. It's a fast-sounding, engaging, contemporary amplifier that blends into the music with unexpected ease.

The X200 shows its strengths and chameleon nature in stand-alone mode or as a power amplifier with direct input. I was impressed with its performance with both preamplifier in and direct balanced input-driven directly from my MSB Technology Select DAC.

I certainly didn't expect the X200 to pursue Select's sonic potency so vehemently, but it did so far, far beyond its means. X200 has proven over numerous music albums just how potent and at what level its inner heart truly is.

The real challenge combination was partnering Qualtion integrated amplifier with the highly sensitive SoundSpace Systems Robin speakers. This is where X200 showed its true nature with the utterly controlled performance, noise and fatigue-free reproduction, and sonic delivery well above the stated price.

I always say that everything starts with the packaging and the paraphernalia that goes with it. It shows how much a brand cares about its products and nonetheless customers. I can assure you that even some of the high-end six-figure audio product packaging fails catastrophically in this regard. Instead of focusing on the customer, it shows the other side.

It wouldn't be fair not to mention the high-quality Audio Hungary Qualiton X200 packaging and manual. Over the years I have received hundreds of products and the accompanying paraphernalia is not always up to the required standard. Especially the packaging and manuals.

Audio Hungary has gone out of its way to make everything simple, clear, and understandable. Above all, the quality of the printing, the choice of fonts, and the clear layout scream quality at every turn of the page.

Along with everything else, the Qualiton X200 manual and simplified installation guide stand out from the crowd. It shows that a lot of time was invested in making it clear and understandable.

The Audio Hungary Qualiton X200 integrated amplifier has a powerful, self-contained audio ecosystem with a headphone amplifier, balanced operation, direct input, studio-level EQ, etc. It is simple, easy to use and a joy to listen to.

It was designed to be a true all-rounder, great sounding, great performing integrated amplifier and it delivers on its promise. The X200 acts as a modern audio hub with multiple connectivity options and takes all the features a step further, but not getting in the way of enjoying the music at any time.

I am often asked to recommend a particularly well-designed, great-sounding, and reasonably priced tube integrated amplifier. As you've obviously been able to decipher so far, the Audio Hungary Qualiton X200 gets my vote and a big thumb up.

BEST BUY Award MONO STEREO

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED Product MONO STEREO

For what it represents sound-wise, connectivity-wise, and value-wise, I wholeheartedly award it the Audio Hungary Qualiton X200 double-decker, 2021 mono, and stereo Best Buy and Highly Recommended Product award.

Matej Isak

by: monoandstereo.com