

AUDIO HUNGARY QUALITON PHONO REVIEW PART ONE



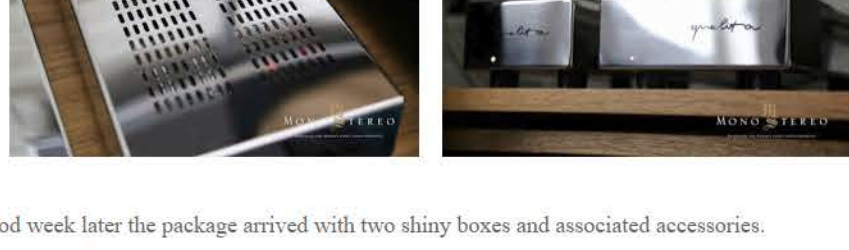
Weekend is here with a lots of fun ahead! Audio Hungary Qualiton Phono preamplifier just arrived for a test and review directly from their headquarters in Hungary.

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.



A good week later the package arrived with two shiny boxes and associated accessories.

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 give both units a distinguish and eye pleasing value. They look stylish and reflect a certain aura, especially with when the tubes start to glow gently through the wanted ports on the top cover.



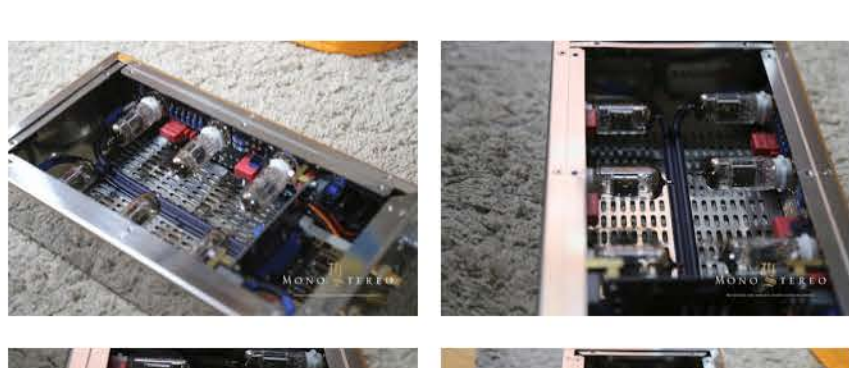
Audio Hungary Qualiton Phono was designed from the ground up as a premium category vacuum tube phono stage with extreme low noise and distortion level. It was made to complement the A series of Qualiton products.



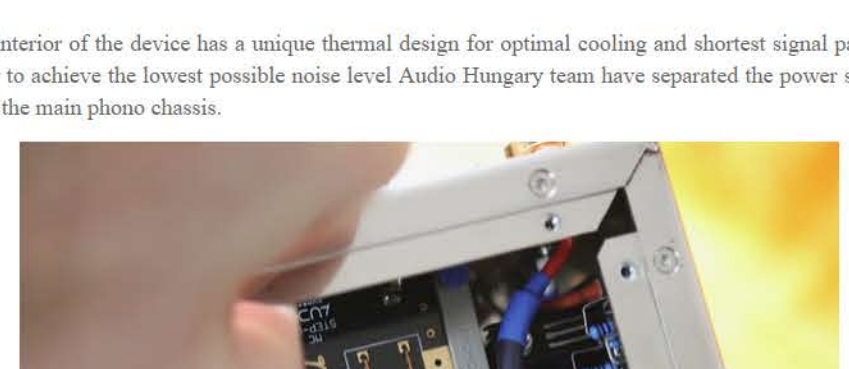
The MM card is installed by default. MC card is an extra and cost a bit less then 400 EUR. The slot on the back of the main unit's chassis offer an easy installation of MM and MC cards, for lower and higher impedance cartridges. Any card can easily be swapped with simply unscrewing of the four screws, 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 Tungram 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.

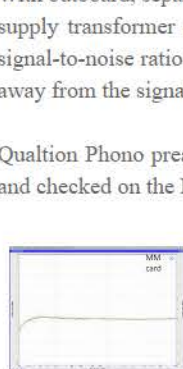


The interior of the device has a unique thermal design for optimal cooling and shortest signal path. In order to achieve the lowest possible noise level Audio Hungary team have separated the power supply from the main phono chassis.



With outboard, separated power supply Audio Hungary managed to avoid the negative effects of power supply transformer magnetic field. Along the design process they discover significant benefits with signal-to-noise ratio and with better, more involving musical experience, when power supply was farer away from the signal circuit.

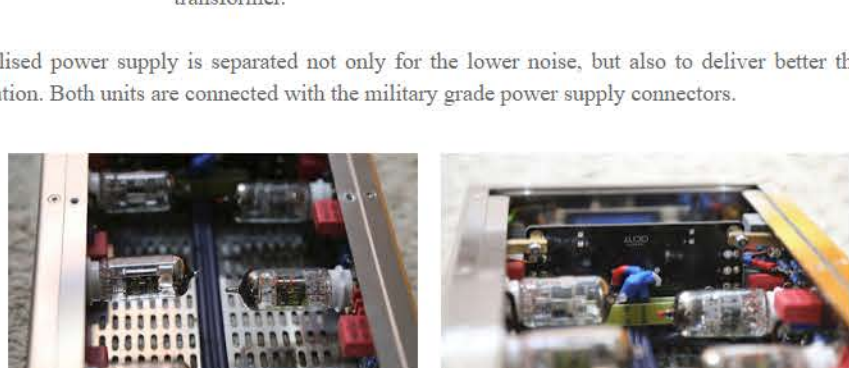
Qualiton Phono preamplifier uses passive RIAA correction and its accuracy was repeatedly measured and checked on the Rohde & Schwarz UPV Audio Analyzer.



The dual mono structure delivers the output level of the left and right channel operation within 0.5dB.

Interestingly, both power transformer and the MC transformers are made in Audio Hungary own factory. Step up transformer uses unique 30 years old lacquered copper wires, that were left as a stock at the Audio Hungary former company. The MC transformers bobbins are made from bakelite and the core constitute of special material alloy with high μ value. Power and MC transformers double shielded and lowers the noise by stray field of power transformer.

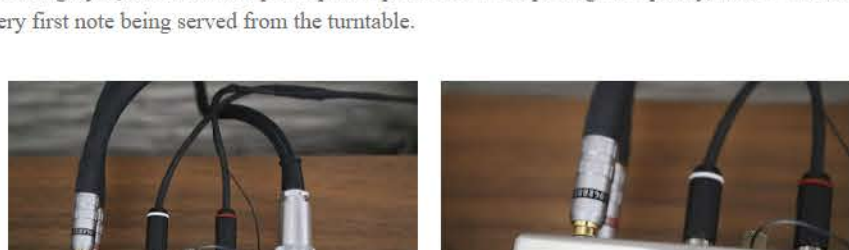
Stabilised power supply is separated not only for the lower noise, but also to deliver better thermal operation. Both units are connected with the military grade power supply connectors.



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

SUM UP

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



Tube based phono preamplifiers are always associated with unique three dimensionally and Qualiton Phono embodies this qualities with ease, expanding 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 then notch about its given price.

All in all. So far, I'm having the similar impact, like with the Audio Hungary Qualiton APX 200 power amplifier and Qualiton APR 204 Qualiton tube preamplifier. I'm positively suprised and inspired by what Qualiton Phono delivers!

In the second and final part of the review I'll go more in depth with the music references and sum up my conclusions.

Stay tuned...

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, with 500 mV nominal output level
- 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 Tungram ECC83; 2 x Tesla E88CC
- Weight 5.4 kg
- Dimensions 35 x 8 x 30 cm
- Warranty: 2 years

CONTACT

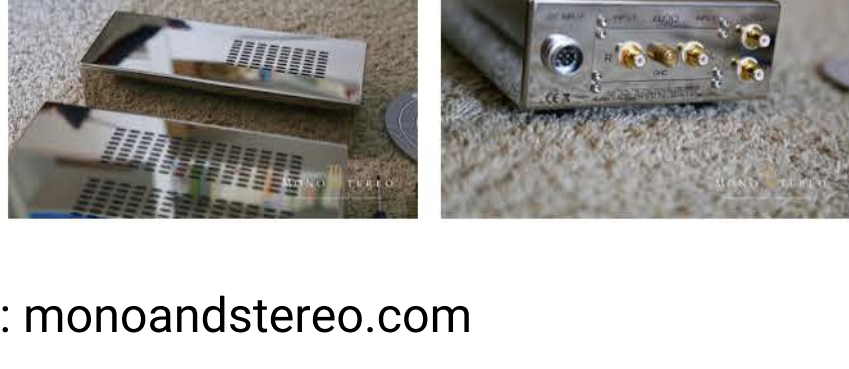
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