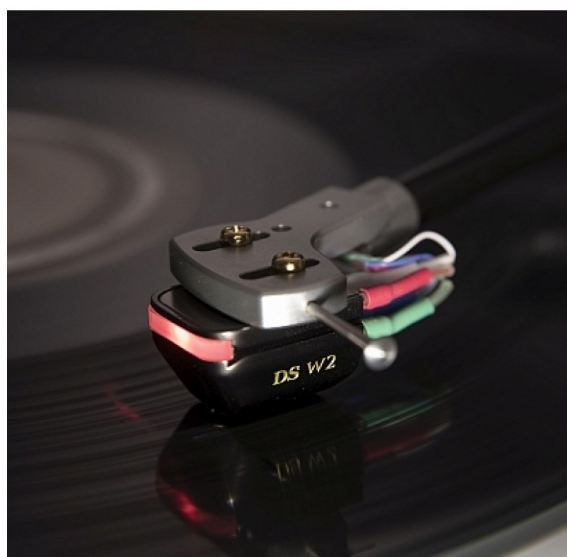


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Press contact: David Denyer
07976 646 404
david@ddpr.co.uk

Optical cartridge pioneer DS Audio upgrades ground-breaking DS-W1 model to create new DS-W2



Four years ago, Japanese company DS Audio broke new ground with the world's only optical phono cartridge, borrowing technology developed and honed in various scientific, industrial and medical applications. The company's debut model, the DS-001, was only released in its native Japan but the overwhelming response it received soon led to a second model, the DS-W1, and to worldwide distribution. Since then, the range has grown with the addition of the flagship DS Master 1 and entry-level DS-002 models.

The new DS-W2 is a direct replacement for the DS-W1 which will now be phased out. It offers significant design enhancements over its predecessor. The DS-W2 now occupies the middle position in the company's range of optical phono cartridges, delivering improved performance over the entry level DS-002 and incorporating an appealing amount of trickle-down technology from the flagship Master 1.

The Master 1 was the first of the company's designs to feature an advanced optical-mechanical system in which the micro-optic sensor is positioned in closer proximity to the stylus. This improves photo-electrical conversion of the signal and therefore extracts an even more accurate and detailed level of information from the vinyl's grooves. The new DS-W2 incorporates this same approach, as well as the Master 1's wire-suspended cantilever which is designed to considerably lower the compliance, making the DS-W2 able to perform effortlessly at its best with a much wider range of tonearms (the DS-W1, in contrast, needed to be paired with a low-mass tonearm for peak performance).

The DS-W2 sports an aluminium body, a boron cantilever and a Micro Ridge stylus. A hand-crafted natural rose quartz LED indicator adds an eye-catching detail. Like both the Master 1 and the DS-002, it delivers an output of 500mV and more than 25dB+ of channel separation. DS Audio recommends a tracking force of 1.7g.

In common with all DS Audio optical cartridges, the DS-W2 comes with its own separate, dedicated, phono stage/equalizer. Its massive, sophisticated power supply features a mighty twelve 56,000µF capacitors which are all connected via a 1.5mm thick pure copper-plated bus-bar, designed to maximize power transfer. For outstanding signal-to-noise performance, the phono stage/equalizer uses a special shielding that covers the entire transformer and is designed to isolate internal 'noise' from the power supply while also blocking external RF and other environmental interference. A specially printed circuit board promises a short and clean signal path, and there are both RCA unbalanced and XLR balanced outputs.

The DS Audio DS-W2 and its phono stage/equalizer are hand crafted in Japan with the highest level of attention to detail and quality. Every component part is tested and evaluated by the company's expert technicians.

Released from the constraints of coils and magnets, DS Audio cartridges exhibit an uncanny freedom from grain and low-level noise. Listening to the DS-W2 is akin to opening a fine net curtain to reveal a soundstage with such palpable transparency, natural texture and timbre, you'll forget that you're listening to vinyl.

Technical specifications

DS-W2 optical cartridge

Body material	Aluminium
Cantilever	Boron
Stylus	Micro Ridge
Needle pressure	1.6-1.8g (1.7g recommended)
Signal output	Photo-electric conversion
Output signal level	> 50mV
Channel separation	> 25dB (@ 1kHz)
Weight	8.1g

DS-W2 phono stage/equalizer

Inputs	RCA
Outputs	RCA x 2, XLR x 2
Rated output voltage	500mV (@ 1kHz)
Output impedance	RCA 120Ω, XLR 600 Ω
Pre-amp input impedance	> 10Ω
Dimensions	430 (w) x 107 (h) x 384 (d) mm
Weight	12kg

Pricing & availability

The DS Audio DS-W2 optical phono cartridge with phono stage/equalizer is available now, priced at £9,900 (inc. VAT).

DS Audio cartridges are fully compatible with any of the company's accompanying phono stages/equalizers, allowing you to mix and match.

Consumer contacts for publication

www.ds-audio-w.biz

Sound Fowndations
Aldermaston, Berkshire

Tel: 0118 981 4238
Email: info@soundfowndations.co.uk
Web: www.soundfowndations.co.uk

About DS Audio

A Japanese company, DS Audio a business group of the Digital Stream Corporation (DSC). DSC co-developed with Microsoft the optical mouse and for more than 25 years has created industrial laser optics for medical testing systems and for laser-based medical optical instrumentation.

Press contact

For more information, product samples or high-resolution print-ready images please contact David Denyer on 07976 646 404 or david@ddpr.co.uk.

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| David Denyer PR |

Tel: 07976 646 404
Email: david@ddpr.co.uk
www.daviddenyerpri.co.uk

 DavidDenyerPR  @DaveDenyer