DS Audio

PRESS RELEASE
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Optical cartridges meet valve / tube amplification: DS Audio launches new TB-100 phono equalizer

DS Audio promises "a new era of analogue sound" with the launch the TB-100, a vacuum valve / tube phono equalizer designed to partner with the company's pioneering optical cartridges.

It is fair to say that DS Audio's optical cartridges have, since their debut in 2013, constituted a genuine revolution in analogue sound. More than a decade later, the Japanese brand remains the only optical cartridge creator worldwide and yet, far from resting on its laurels, it continues to innovate. Not only has designer Tetsuaki Aoyagi further evolved optical phono cartridge technology to 'third generation' level, he has also made judicious use of trickle-down know-how to offer the benefits of optical technology to a wider range of price-points.

Now, Aoyagi has turned his attention to the particular sound quality offered by valve / tube amplification, with the launch of the new TB-100 phono equalizer, designed to partner with any of DS Audio's optical cartridges from entry-level to top-of-range.

A pure vacuum valve / tube amplifier

The TB-100 is a dual mono, single-ended design with RCA outputs. It features four selectable bass curves and uses quad-matched ECC82 (12AU7) dual-triode valves / tubes, optimized specifically for this model. To ensure peak performance, the company employs proprietary in-house tools to minimize any variations in the valves / tubes during operation to within 1% (or 0.1dB).

Each of the entirely independent channels is equipped with its own input valve / tube for voltage amplification, and a second valve / tube to buffer the output. This minimalist two-stage

architecture, coupled with the optical cartridge technology, ensures a highly transparent, rich, pure and dynamic audio experience.

Wideband transformer input

The TB-100 converts the audio signal from the optical cartridge's photoelectric cells (of which there are two, one per channel) from a current to a voltage signal, ensuring precise phase alignment between the left and right channels. Additionally, the TB-100's design achieves a flat frequency response within -1dB over a huge bandwidth of 10Hz to 70kHz, delivering clear and high-quality sound.

Twin mono structure

The design features a symmetrical twin-mono configuration, incorporating completely independent ground and power transformers. This approach eliminates crosstalk between the left and right channels, enabling a cleaner and more immersive soundstage.

Low-noise, low-voltage power supply

A dedicated low-noise regulated power supply is included for LED power and for the photoelectric cells' negative bias voltage. Separate power circuits and transformers for each photoelectric cell ensure that greater voltage stability is supplied to the cartridge.

Like every DS Audio product, the TB-100 phono equalizer is hand-made and quality assured, with every component part-tested and evaluated by the company's own in-house team of technicians in Japan.

Technical specifications

Inputs	RCA
Outputs	RCA
Rated output voltage	500mV (@ 1kHz)
Output impedance	700Ω
Dimensions	44 (w) x 15 (h) x 48.2 (d) cm
Weight	18.7kg

Pricing & availability

The DS Audio TB-100 valve / tube phono equalizer is available now, priced at £17,500 (inc. VAT).

All of 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

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