



ARTISTIC

Accoustic Arts developed a top loading cd-player that unites the strengths of the best experts in the house in one device.

The top-loaded CD-player weighs in at 18 kilograms and costs 15,000 Euro – not much of a surprise, then, that it is one of the top references. Naturally, this drive should be placed on the uppermost deck of a high-quality rack; the one that is usually reserved for analog turntables.

We are, of course, already party familiar with the Player II Mk 2, not only because there was a predecessor of similar caliber. It is, in fact, no mere coincidence that the “hybrid” analog output stage with tube technology, which can be leveled at the push of a button in the connection panel on the rear, is reminiscent of our current and constantly in use top reference pre-amp, the “hybrid” Accoustic Arts Preamp.

Also the experience from the TUBE DAC II and the DRIVE II CD, both of

which are amongst the best of their kind, came in very handy. It is, therefore, only logical to build a synthesis of all of these outstanding devices into the digital all-rounder that is the Player II Mk 2.

In fact, already the haptic of the rail-guided CD drive cover, which is a specially modified version of the Philips Pro2, is astounding. Everything is made of solid aluminum, usually ten millimeters thick and elaborately decoupled.

Perfect CD playback & more

It’s like every time I am dealing with the top products from Lauffen in south-

west-Germany – after all, more than a decade ago I chose the Amp II, the first Accoustic Arts product ever, as our STEREO top reference. There was simply no other way...

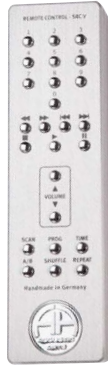
In addition to perfect CD playback via the fully balanced and unbalanced outputs, the Player II Mk 2 provides its capabilities, from its DAC to its Class A power-stage, to other digital sources, via Toslink, AES/EBU and asynchronous USB sockets as well as coaxial. It also offers AES/EBU, coaxial and optical outputs.

You’d, however, hardly dare to speak of a top-class “sound card” for the PC/



▲ The Accoustic Arts is a CD player and DAC with almost all connection options one can think of. Thanks to its volume control, it can even be used as a preamplifier.

Accustic Art's remote control is made out of great looking and feeling metal, and it is logically structured. ▶



Great performance

The performance in the listening room was once more rather typical for Accustic Arts. The tube stage allows itself a few minutes warm-up time directly after being switched on, which is absolutely worth it, as quickly becomes apparent.

The offered spectacle is immediately of a size, energy and precision as one rarely hears, even as editor for a HiFi magazine. Thelma Houston made the air in the listening room flicker and the dynamics pulsed breath-takingly vibrant, while once again the indefinite feeling manifested that it played so sovereignly that it absolutely never lacks authority, strength or breath.

The German engineers have certainly perfected the hybrid technology of semi-conductors and tubes and thus get the best out of both for their auditorium. The device further offers the choice of leaving the data format "native", which is what we preferred, or extrapolating it to 24-bit/192 kilohertz, which then sounds tighter and more analytical.

Of course, 15,000 euros still is an enormously big number, even if the preamp and DAC are amongst the world best, thus relativizing the price accordingly. However: not only expense for material is unparalleled, also the resulting

listening pleasure can hardly be surpassed even when investing more money. And hence the Accustic Arts Player II Mk 2 deservedly enters the ranks of STEREO top references. Chapeau!

Tom Frantzen

Mac in this case. Nine separately regulated power supplies with a 100VA toroidal transformer form the power supply of the device!

The drivers for high-resolution audio use of the USB interface with the most common HD formats up to 24 bit/192 kilohertz and DSD64 are naturally included for Windows 7, 8 and 10.

Mac OSX doesn't need any additional drivers; the system settings are well explained in the player's exemplary manual.

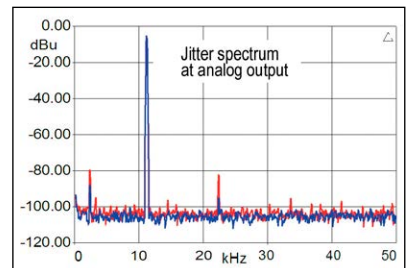
The already mentioned highlight, somewhat the icing on the cake, is the option to use it as a completely uncompromising preamplifier, at least for digital sources. It appears like a kind of complementary product to the analog Tube Preamp II Mk 2. The here implemented, strictly selected 12AX7 double triodes of highest quality contribute their share to the sound. They are produced at military standard and should, therefore, be even more reliable.

ACC.ARTS PLAYER II MK 2

around 15000 €
 Dimensions: 49 x13 x39 cm (WxHxD)
 Warranty: 2 years
 Contact: Accustic Arts
 Phone: +49 7133 974770
 www.accusticarts.de

Ultimate high-end CD specialist with enormous material expenditure and sound potential. The hybrid tube output stage helps not only the CD top loader, but also the DAC and preamplifier to absolute top sound. Superb, top reference.

LAB MEASUREMENTS



Signal-to-noise ratio digital zero	100.3 dB
Quantization noise ratio 0 dBFS	94.7 dB
Converter linearity at -90 dB	0.1 dB
Output resistance Cinch	60 Ω
Output voltage Cinch 0 dBFS	2.7 V
Output resistance XLR	110 Ohm
Output voltage XLR 0 dBFS	5 V
Distortion factor at -9dBFS	0.009 %
Distortion factor at -60dBFS	0.8
Jitter	2.6 ns
Reading time	7 s
Power consumption. Stby/idle (at)	/20 W

LAB COMMENTS: A measurement without flaws.

FEATURES



Remote control, all conceivable connection options for a player and DAC; balanced/unbalanced analog outputs, uncompromising (switchable) volume control.

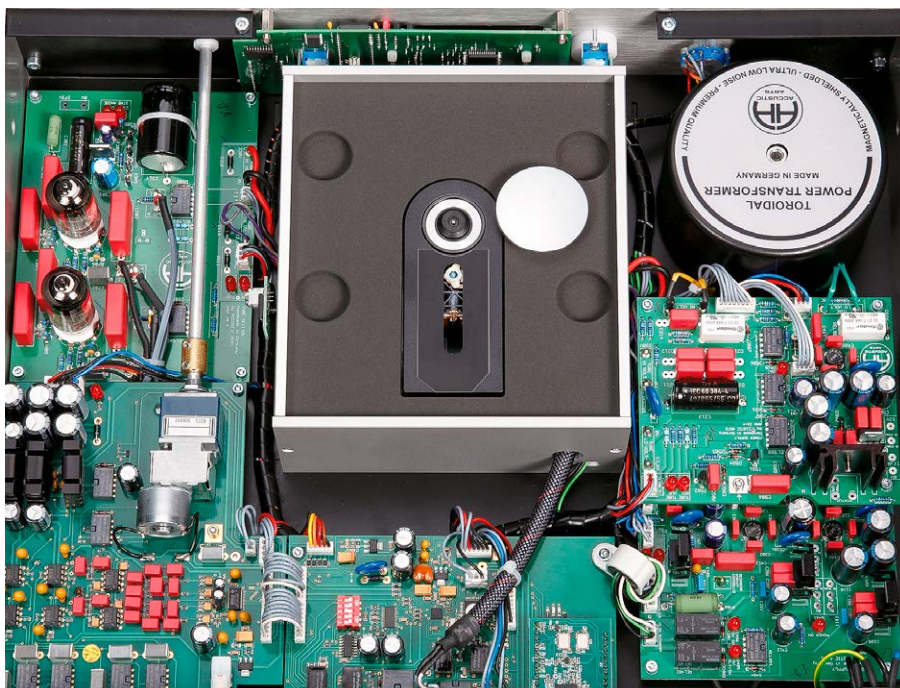
STEREO-TEST

SOUND QUALITY **100%**

PRICE/PERFORMANCE



VERY GOOD



▲ In the middle a modified Philips Pro drive, on the right a potent power supply with a lavish toroidal transformer, on the left the tube output stage – and brilliant construction wherever you look.