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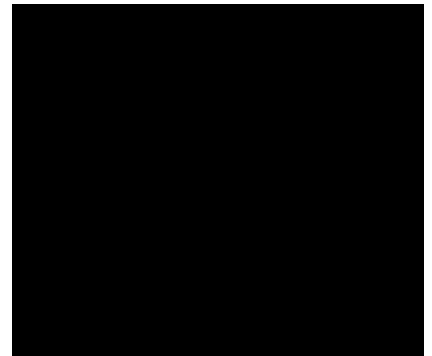
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*al sito Perreaux*



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23.11.15

## Pre phono Perreaux Audiant VP3

di Giuseppe Trotto

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The title of this article should really be Perreaux Audiant VP3 Vinyl Preamplifier, because the name by which the subject of this review is defined by the New Zealand based Perreaux was not chosen at random. Unlike the majority of existing preamplifiers counterparts, who are united in the use of the definition phono, or the prefix PH, maybe with adjoining numbering to mark the progressive versions, it is the designated Vinyl Preamplifier, as if to emphasize its noble function: to treat the signal from an analog source, properly understood as a vinyl record groove. Fortunately with the VP3 we are not in the presence of one of the many pre amplifiers that act only as a connection between cartridge and amplifier. I read the presence of the term VINYL as a design statement, like this: 'Dear music lovers, we are aware that we live in a digital age, but the VP3 is all about analog.'

The digitization of the present era is not, however, unfamiliar or disliked by Perreaux. This beautiful pre amplifier is not equipped with knobs or buttons. The switch from standby and selecting functions Moving Magnet, Moving Coil and Mono is made in touch mode, or fingering the relevant indicators that light on the bottom section of the front, which acts as a screen. The rest of the chassis is very robust, consisting of a silver anodised aluminum top which wraps over the front, revealing the Perreaux logo. The sides and base are both black. Removing the black base from the VP3 reveals the electronic circuitry which is directly affixed to the underside of the aluminum extrusion, which is actually the cover, so to speak. This is ingenious, because the massive aluminum panel effectively becomes a heat sink for the electronic components. Air ventilates the interior space by travelling up through the bottom of the unit and then out from the sides. The componentry is of the highest quality and it has been designed with order and rationality. The internal power supply circuit is dominated by a toroidal transformer manufactured by Noratel, which guarantees absolute accuracy and refined energy reserves for the entire electronic device. The PCB has been carefully laid out to maximize separation between sensitive signals and the power supply, and to ensure a perfectly mirrored symmetry both internally and at the rear panel. In this way it ensures the very lowest levels of noise and maximizes channel separation. This is also absolutely necessary in the case of Perreaux Audiant VP3, which is also designed to allow the simultaneous connection of two turntable cartridges. The rear panel also contains a power switch and IEC power connector with built-in



fuse. There is also a trigger input, which enables the user to drive the VP3 into and out of standby by means of another component both audio and home automation. This input accepts a mono 3.5 mm plug and its voltage from zero to twelve volts DC. Between 3 and 12 volts the unit will exit standby, to return into standby again at zero volts. An RS232 port provides the VP3 with the possibility of an external serial control aimed at individual installations. A control set is available on the Perreux website. The port can also be used by authorized personnel for firmware updates. The rear panel also features a series of phono inputs and corresponding outputs. I speak in plural because, as mentioned previously, there is a pair of RCA for MM cartridges and one pair for the MC, placed well away from each other for isolation reasons set out above. Are also multiple outputs, a pair unbalanced and one balanced XLR. It is possible to connect one turntable featuring an MC cartridge and another turntable containing an MM cartridge both simultaneously to the rear of the VP3 and switch between them from the front panel. The rear panel also features a ground terminal. All of the connectors described are of excellent quality and are gold plated. The rear panel also features micro slots, within which are housed a series of dip switches dedicated to the gain adjustment, IEC/RIAA curves, resistive and capacitive loadings. The uniqueness of the switches is in the fact that they are all mirrored, which means that the loads themselves must be managed for each individual channel, both incoming and outgoing. When configuring the MM input, the gain obtainable through varying the values of 36 dB and sensitivity of 11.9 mV, 40 mV and 7.5 dB, 44 dB and 4.7 mV, 48 dB and 3, 0 mV. MC for that scale is 56 dB and 1.2mV, 60 dB and 0.7 mV, 0.5 mV and 64 dB, 68 dB and 0.3 mV. The fourth dip switch is devoted to the selection of the RIAA, RIAA Equalization distinct in Normal Curve and IEC RIAA Equalization Curves. Using a further sequence of switches, we can obtain the following loads. For MM, 47 Ohms, 1 kOhm, 10 kOhm, 22 pF, 47 pF, 100 pF, 220 pF, 470 pF. For MC, 47 Ohms, 10 ohms, 30 ohms, 100 ohms, 250 ohms, 500 ohms, 1 k Ohm, 47 pF. The ability to combine all the data values, gives a very high level of customization, including the most difficult in terms of internal impedance, frequency response and output value. To end the description of technical / physical one can not overlook the fact that the VP3 Vinyl Preamplifier not appear at all negligible in size 431 x 67 x 277 mm (WxHxD) and weight (7.5 kg). Complete the equipment of the packaging a power cord common, a delicious elegantly bound manual, very comprehensive and rife with setup examples. In addition to this Perreux include two test sheets which are the actual graphs of the measurements, which is the total harmonic distortion, frequency response, and the spectrum analysis, covering both MM and MC inputs. Needless to say, the plotted curves provide indications of excellent laboratory performance. Americans exclaim: "impressive."

Before moving to listening impressions, I think it is appropriate, given the work in progress nature of my system, to point out the components of the audio chain, in order to shed light on the degree of reference. Turntable Da Vinci Audio In Unison 001, with separate motor, flywheel intermediate homebuilt, flying Aerex Engineering support, Kevlar belts and silk. Arm Da Vinci Reference Size 12", 900 heads Supex Super Koetsu and Rosewood, step-up transformers Audio Tekne MCT9401 and Supex SDT77. Preamplifier transformers and valves Audio Tekne TP8301 MKIII. Power amplifier Tekne IT2 for medium to high. Loudspeakers NTS Muriano Research for low to medium: a surprising electronic design alternative which I will talk soon. Car speakers Altec assembled with components and Klipsch high efficiency. Super tweeter Enigmacoustics Sopranino. Audio cables Tekne, Western Electric, Vermouth Audio, Audio Consulting and DIY. Mobile and supports in stone, Iroko and beech.

I tell you now that the Perreux VP3 not equalled, but as he could, the performance of the integrated Audio Tekne phono stages, but has manifested itself as one of the best among the pre that have been tested in the system to date.

On the face of it a phono stages is a component of comparative simplicity, however in practice it features formidable design challenges, in part because of its exceptionally delicate operational functions, namely to provide for the care and management of an infinitesimally small electrical signal. This signal is produced by the interaction between the vinyl surface which is far from smooth and the tiny needle that subsequently, through the gauntlet of a mechanical / electrical (cartridge) far from insensitive to innate characteristics of materials (coils, cantilever, suspension, body) and external factors (magnetic field, resonance, humidity, temperature, etc.). To undergo still new stresses caused by the tonearm and impedance levels and abilities typical cabling and terminations. See then as a process apparently simple, conceal, on the contrary, a number of significant roughness. In this case, the wide range of possibilities of setting the user provides a fundamental tool in order to obtain an ultra interfacing end of the head turn. It should be borne in mind that a happy combination electric equivalent to a level of listening just as happy. For this reason I would suggest not to rely totally to the manufacturer as it pertains to the loads of the head, but leave hearing and his musical sensibility - I hope mature - a good deal of autonomy perceptive, just to be able to modulate adjustments in such a way as to reach the top of the balance between endogenous and exogenous factors mentioned above.

Like all electronic equipment, the Perreux VP3 requires very long run in time. I'm talking days, not hours, after which it will seem to become another product all together, when compared to the original. The test was run using



the MM input and the step-up transformer upstream. This is the condition in which the VP3 produced the best results, especially in terms of gain and dynamics. A signal already expanded and made extremely linear, allows the unit to work in harmony and focus on other key aspects of sound, without loss of strength and capacity. I extensively 'tried' various resistive and capacitive loads and found clear differences in each match. The use of the VP3 in my system came as an unexpected surprise. The VP3 has a super modern appearance and I must admit to being prejudiced towards thinking of it as an industrial product; precise, metronome like and sounding a bit 'artificial'. The converse was the case as it showed tangible qualities of naturalness and timbre. This is certainly rare commodity in phono preamplifiers in this price range. Then the VP3 passed smoothly the 'noise test'. There is nothing more unbecoming of a phono preamp that is noisy. The buzz can notoriously mask details and disrupt the sound stage. When noise is completely removed, it can savor a sense of calm and when a song begins, the music emerges from a completely black background and is more holographic. Listening to the Symphony no. 4 in G Major by Gustav Mahler, performed by the Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer EMI Records in 1962, one is pleasantly surprised by its depth and breadth of the scene. In some passages they capture the movements of the feet of the musicians and browse the music, while it returns quite fully the perception of the environment, in this case the Concert Hall, with its cavernous connotations. Even the tonal accuracy was very good. In this edition, the bows are expressed with a genuine glow and the brass section is compact and vibrant. It remains fairly easy to distinguish the various orchestral departments. The Perreaux VP3 shows no hesitation even at full volume. Mahler is often difficult to reproduce for the fact that his works do not spare orchestral eruptions loud and agonizing crescendo that put a strain on the hi-end. The VP3 remains unmoved and held the bridle firmly right through to the very end. Ella & Louis, Verve Hi-Fidelity Records, 1956. The voice of Fitzgerald is not open and pure as usual, but with a tone that's a little 'dark and sensual', with incredible presence. Armstrong's trumpet instead becomes golden and intense.

All this happens, again, provided that you are using a step-up. The moment I directly accessed the MC, the response of Perreaux lost a certain amount of energy and vitality. Among the internal components I have not found the presence of step up transformers, making me assume a stage signal amplification based on transistors and operational amps?. This does not help performance and VP3 becomes more 'normal'. Not in catastrophic terms, mind you, because the VP3 is always able to offer a remarkable performance in terms of transparency and sophistication. The orientation of sound, however, tends to focus on the mid-high frequencies and the complex becomes thinner. albeit pleasant.

I must stress the fact that over a fortnight of use, during the second half of August which was the warmest on record that I had available for this test, was too short. "The Perreaux VP3 has manifested itself as one of the best among the pre that have been tested in the system to date." "The VP3 is an excellent electronic phono pre amplifier, which makes flexibility its strong point. The numerous combinations allow the interchange of a very wide range of cartridges, but what matters most is that, once properly adjusted, you duck elegantly from the scene, leaving the legitimate proscenium to the one who is the protagonist of the show: His Majesty Vinyl. Long live the king!"

#### Product Specifications:

##### Inputs

Audio inputs: 2 RCA unbalanced selectable  
 Input sensitivity  
 MM from 3.0mV to 11.9mV selectable  
 MC from 0.3mV to 1.2mV selectable  
 Gain  
 MM from 36dB to 48dB selectable  
 MC from 56dB to 68dB selectable  
 Input impedance  
 MM 1kOhm to 47K selectable  
 MC from 10 ohm to 47K selectable  
 Input capacitance  
 MM from 22pF to 470pF selectable  
 MC 47pF selectable  
 Input overload margin: 22dB  
 Trigger Input: 1 mono 3.5mm jack  
 Voltage OFF: 0V  
 ON Voltage: 3-12VDC

##### Outputs

Audio Outputs: 1 unbalanced RCA, 1 balanced XLR  
 Output Impedance: 100ohm unbalanced 30ohm balanced  
 Rated output: 0.75Vrms  
 Maximum output: 10.3Vrms  
 Total harmonic distortion (at maximum output): 0.002% 1kHz; <0.05%  
 20Hz-20kHz  
 RIAA accuracy: +/- 0.5dB 50Hz to 20kHz

S / N ratio: 87dB  
 Fuse: 0.5A slow  
 Dimensions: 431x67x277 mm (WxHxD)



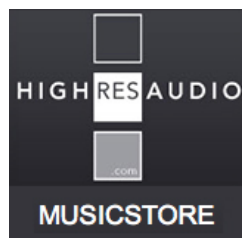
playstereo.com presenta



Android-based smart portable music player  
 Mastering quality lossless playback



Weight: 7.5kg

**Official distributor Italy::** [al sito Art of Music](#)**italian price at the date of review::** 2.250,00 euro**System Used:** [all'impianto di Giuseppe "MinGius" Trotto](#)

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