

# BRINKMANN

Real High Fidelity.

## Brinkmann Marconi-II Reference hybrid Preamplifier w remote & slate base

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NZ\$20,995.00 ea (incl. GST)

### **Positive Feedback Onlines Writers Choice Award:**

Known stateside mostly for their exquisite and superb turntables, Brinkmann returns with a knock-out punch to the world of electronics. Not that there's anything wrong with focusing on only their 'tables. Alas, there's so much more to the Brinkmann line. **Marconi is perhaps the most quintessential preamplifier to have graced my system yet**—and I don't quite foresee that changing anytime soon. **A marvel of electrical engineering**, Marconi has it all; balanced and single-ended inputs, a tube stage handling phase inversion, individually adjustable input gain for all six inputs, remote control and Brinkmann typical design, that is, a resonance optimized chassis with see through glass top.



Immediately upon setup and connection to my trusted Threshold T400 super-amp, driving a pair of Zu Definition MK2s, **I noticed gobs of detail, truly three dimensional soundstage and layering that was at least several orders of magnitude better than my existing setup.** Playing cuts like Yello's latest Touch, the soundstage size and layering improvements immediately become evident. **Speed, dynamics and overall image presence is the best I have ever heard my system sound and that's saying sumthu'n.** There's a certain sense of clarity and calmness to the music that other preamps in my system perhaps hinted at, the NAT linestage comes to mind, but never quite capitalized on in a way as Marconi does. The perfect mate for the Threshold T400, this combo **knocks bass lines and dynamics out of the ballpark when the music calls for it. Total splendor and most definitely a product to consider** if you are in the market for your last preamp. It sort of reminds me of what I said about the Brinkmann LaGrange, when I reviewed it years ago... **a definite must have.**

.....David W. Robinson, Editor-in-Chief

In the June 2019 issue of Germany's Stereoplay Magazine, the Brinkmann Marconi MkII Line Preamplifier and Mono Power Amplifier were evaluated to great acclaim. Reviewer Roland Kraft concluded that Marconi MkII is "...*certainly one of the very best line-stages that money can buy.*" *Considering that Marconi's pricing is substantially less than other state-of-the-art preamplifiers, we believe that Marconi MkII is a true high-end bargain. Audition and believe!*

### **Brinkmann's introduction to Marconi linestage:**

A line stage has three duties. First, it switches the various sources. Second, it controls the playback volume. And third, it conditions the signal in such a manner that even long runs of cable between line stage and power amp will not have an influence on the sound. The most important of course being that the preamp has as little as possible – ideally none – influence on the signal's musical integrity.

MARCONI is our Top-of-the-Line Reference quality Preamplifier. We have chosen this name as an homage and a reflection towards the great inventor.

In the never ending search for tonal improvement in amplifiers, the development is often limited in the loss that is generated by components and other interferences. The symmetrical technique has been introduced to prevent these interferences or at least to minimize them. Therefore all the amplifier stages are doubled to carry the signal in both forms, the original one and an inverted one, which is 180° phase shifted. In the power amplifiers these two signals are backed together to form one signal again. This cancels all the tonal characteristics of the components and other interferences to zero, but the music is able to pass uninterfered.

We use this technique in our MARCONI preamplifier to further reduce all existing influences in an endeavour to keep the tonal influence of the components as small as possible. The phase inverters that are responsible for the symmetrical signals work with tubes. Tubes respond to the input signal without a noticeable time delay. Allowing a free synchronical and symmetrical signal. The outputs are provided by four identical, low output resistance transistor amplifiers.

Our asymmetrical preamplifier CALVIN uses the same output stages and the technical details described there are also valid for the MARCONI preamp.

The preamplifier is equipped with six linear-inputs, 5 of them correspond to asymmetrical and one to symmetrical signals. As a special feature, the input levels of all the six inputs are individually adjustable, so the user can set the same level of loudness for every connected source. The outputs are both, symmetrical and asymmetrical, the phase can be switched between 0° and 180° via remote control. A record output completes the rear panel layout.

The power supply for the preamplifier is build into a separate casing. All components that emit heat have been placed in the preamplifier. It's large enclosure with heat sinks on both sides is much more capable to dissipate heat. The tubes are placed inside the heat sinks, enabling the heat to dissipate. So only the power transformer is left in the power supply casing. The power switch on the front panel of the preamplifier activates the secondary low voltage and the high voltage rails for the tubes via three relays.

A special feature of the preamplifier is its fully electronical control for level as well as for volume. An AD-converter interrogates the motorpot at the front panel and this information formed as a digital word is fed into the digital potentiometer-ICs to control the volume passively via a few hundred integrated resistors.

This technique allows to drive the four outputs with the same volume, there are no differences between the channels. The volume can be adjusted with a rotary knob on the front panel of the preamplifier or via remote control. A mark at the rotary knob allows the visualization of the volume setting level.

## Specifications

THD/IM distortion: 0,01%/0,05%

S/N ratio: 90 dBA

Frequency response DC: 250 kHz

Gain: 12,5 dB

Output voltage - maximum: ± 12 V symmetrical

Output impedance symmetrical: ± 0,1 Ohm

Input impedance: 20 kOhm

Input sensitivity: 150 mV

Input gain adjustment: 0 ... -12,5 dB (0,5 dB/step)

Dimensions: 420w x 95h x 310d mm (with granite base) / power supply 120 x 80 x 160 mm

Weight: preamp -12 kg / granite base - 12 kg; / power supply - 3,2 kg

Included in delivery: preamplifier, power supply, power cord, granite base

## Award



### Brinkmann Marconi

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.....David W. Robinson, Editor-in-Chief

## Review

### Brinkmann introduction - *Brinkmann introduction*

As usual for Brinkmann, we didn't accept any compromises when developing the »Marconi«. The volume control, for instance, is purely electronic and works in two planes. First, the sensitivity of each of the six inputs (two of them balanced) can be adjusted individually and saved, thus eliminating the obnoxious jumps in volume when switching between sources. Second, the "actual" volume control consists of a motorized potentiometer that can be operated either remotely or with the knob on the front plate. This potentiometer digitally controls ICs which in turn adjust the playback volume passively with discrete resistors in precise steps of 0.5 dB. The utmost immunity against any influences can only be achieved with balanced signal processing. Which means that for a stereo preamp, four complete amplifiers are required since the signal is processed both in phase aswell aswith a 180 degree phase shift.

### Link

<http://www.audioreference.co.nz/product/brinkmann-marconi-ii-reference-hybrid-preamplifier-w-remote-slate-base>