

**OWNER'S MANUAL**  
**PV 7**  
**VACUUM TUBE PREAMPLIFIER**

**conrod-johnson design, inc.**  
**703-698-8581**

Thank you for purchasing the conrad-johnson model PV7 vacuum tube preamplifier. We believe that it will be one of the most satisfying purchases of audio equipment that you will make.

The PV7 was designed to provide audiophiles with a moderately priced preamplifier of high quality which would accurately reproduce the dynamics, tonalities and textures of a live musical performance. The design and materials have been carefully selected to yield many years of unvarying excellence.

Please take a few minutes to read this manual so that you will better understand the use of your PV7.

## **LIMITED WARRANTY FOR THE conrad-johnson PV7**

1. conrad-johnson design, inc. warrants to the original purchaser that the conrad-johnson PV7 will perform to specifications as published in the owner's manual and that it will be free of defects in materials and workmanship for a period of three years from the date of original purchase.
2. conrad-johnson will repair defective units without charge for labor or parts (with the exception of the vacuum tubes) subject to the following conditions:
  - a) The unit must not have been altered or damaged through misuse, abuse, negligence, accident, or improper operation.
  - b) The purchaser must provide evidence of purchase at the time service is requested.
  - c) All repairs must be undertaken at the factory or other service center designated by conrad-johnson design, inc. Units submitted for warranty repairs must be shipped in the factory packing carton to conrad-johnson design or its designated service center, freight and insurance prepaid by the owner, and will be returned to the owner, freight and insurance prepaid by conrad-johnson design. Replacement cartons are available from the factory for a nominal charge.
  - d) Normal wear and maintenance are not covered by this warranty.
3. The above warranty may be transferred to subsequent owners provided that the warranty registration card has been returned to conrad-johnson design, inc. within 30 days of the original purchase and that the registered owner provides the factory with a signed notice giving the new owner's name and address and the model and serial number of the unit.
4. Where permitted by law, conrad-johnson design's liability shall be limited to that set forth in this warranty. No other warranty of any kind, expressed or implied, is made by conrad-johnson design, inc., and all implied warranties, including merchantability and fitness for a particular "purpose", which exceed the obligations and time limits set forth herein are hereby disclaimed. conrad-johnson design, inc. shall not be liable for incidental or consequential damages. Some states do not allow the exclusion or limitation of incidental or consequential damages, or limitations on how long an implied warranty lasts, so the above limitation or exclusion may not apply to you.
5. This warranty gives you specific legal rights, and you may also have other rights which vary from state to state. Questions about warranty service should be addressed to:

conrad-johnson design, inc.  
2733 Merrilee Drive  
Fairfax Virginia 22031  
703-698-8581

## **ABOUT conrad-johnson design**

Conrad-Johnson Design offers exclusively audiophile audio components. We believe that our commitment to the purchaser of our products is nearly unique in the industry. The services we offer to conrad-johnson owners include:

- Information - Registered owners of conrad-johnson equipment will be directly informed of new equipment we have to offer. They will also be informed of any significant changes in the design of their equipment resulting from our ongoing development program.
- Factory updating - Should significant design changes be made, conrad-johnson design will, whenever practical, offer to update existing equipment. This service will be offered at a minimal charge to cover parts, labor, and handling.
- Factory service - Any conrad-johnson product may be returned to the factory for service. All equipment serviced at the factory will perform to its published specifications when returned. Factory service will be offered at reasonable rates.
- Transferable warranty - conrad-johnson design guarantees its products, not the owner. Should you decide to sell the product, the warranty may be transferred to the new owner. (See Registering the Warranty).

## **REGISTERING THE WARRANTY**

Please return the enclosed card to the factory within 30 days of purchase to register the warranty. The warranty may be transferred to a new owner if it has been properly registered initially and if the registered owner sends a signed notice providing the name and address of the new owner and the model and serial number of the unit.

Proper registration of the warranty is important! Not only will it preserve transferability of your warranty, it will also enable us to inform you of any alterations in the design of a given model and of any new products we offer which are likely to be of interest to you.

## **CIRCUIT DESIGN**

The phono stage of the PV7 consists of two cascaded triode amplifiers direct coupled to a cathode follower for low output impedance. Phono equalization is accomplished by R-C networks in a direct coupled feedback loop driven by the cathode follower. The RIAA components are 1% tolerance, with RIAA capacitors being polystyrene dielectric. The audio circuitry is executed entirely with precision, low noise metal film resistors. All coupling capacitors are polypropylene dielectric. The line stage consists of a single voltage amplifier direct coupled to a cathode follower with an overall feedback loop.

Plate voltage is supplied by a sophisticated, low impedance voltage regulator. The regulator's output supplies the audio circuitry directly to minimize power supply source impedance. The regulator is designed using solely polypropylene capacitors, isolating the audio circuitry from the non-linear effects of electrolytic capacitors. Filaments are operated on a regulated d.c. voltage to minimize noise at the low signal levels in a preamplifier and to prevent line voltage fluctuations from coupling infrasonic disturbances to the audio signal.

## **INSTALLATION**

Because of the number and type of vacuum tubes used, the PV7 dissipates a significant amount of heat (approximately 30 watts). It is essential therefore, that proper attention be paid to ventilation. The unit should be mounted horizontally on a flat hard surface so that the ventilation holes in the bottom are unobstructed. At least three inches of clearance should be provided above the unit and the cabinet or shelf should be open at the back. Vertical installation is not recommend.

To minimize hum pickup, keep the unit well away from the power amplifier, and route power cords away from input cables.

THE PV7 IS TO BE OPERATED ONLY ON AC LINE VOLTAGE OF 108 to 125 VOLTS, 50 or 60 HZ

In any system of audio electronics minute leakage currents from the ac line transformers will flow in the signal ground connections between preamplifier and amplifier. These currents can intermodulate with the signal and affect the clarity of sound. Generally, one orientation of the line cord will provide much lower current flows. When combined with the finest associated equipment this effect is clearly audible with the PV7. After installing the unit try reversing the line cord at the wall outlet to pick the most satisfactory orientation.

## CONNECTION

### Inputs:

*Phono* - The phono inputs provide the additional amplification and RIAA equalization required by most high fidelity cartridges. The input impedance is 47,000 ohms shunted by approximately 140 picofarads capacitance. This is the industry standard load and will work well with most moving magnet cartridges and all pre-preamplifiers for moving coil cartridges. A few moving magnet cartridges perform better with a 10,000 ohm load which may be achieved by having a service technician shunt the phono inputs with 12,000 ohm resistors.

For some moving magnet cartridges, optimum performance requires higher capacitive loads. This may be achieved by soldering suitable value capacitors across the phono input jacks. Polystyrene capacitors are recommended for this purpose.

*Tuner, Auxiliary, Tape 1 Tape 2* - These are all high level inputs and are electronically equivalent. The outputs of your tape recorders should be connected to Tape 1 and Tape 2.

### Outputs:

*Record 1, Record 2* - Connect these to the inputs of your tape recorders.

*Output 1 Output 2* - Connect to the inputs of amplifiers with impedance of 10k-ohms or greater.

## AC OUTLETS

Two ac outlets are provided for your convenience: they are unswitched (always live). THE TOTAL CURRENT REQUIRED OF THE OUTLETS MUST NOT EXCEED 5 AMPERES. This precludes the use of these outlets for high powered amplifiers.

## **OPERATION**

*Turn on:* Because of the delayed warm up characteristics of vacuum tube equipment, a time delay muting circuit is incorporated in this preamplifier. Output 1 and Output 2 are grounded via a relay for approximately 45 seconds after the unit is turned on in order to suppress warm up transient noises. The relay grounds the outputs again immediately at turn off or in the event of any power line interruption.

*Selector:* Use the selector switch to choose an input from Phono, Tuner, Tape 1, Tape 2 or Auxiliary inputs. The selected source will be available at the source (out) position of the tape monitor switch and at both Record Outputs. Note that dubbing between tape decks is possible in both directions. Also, since the selected decks' output is fed back to its own record input, care must be taken not to select a tape deck which is in the record mode. Similarly, if one of the tape loops is used for an external signal processor, that tape loop should never be selected (and, of course, there is no reason to select it since the external processor is not itself a program source). Failure to observe these precautions will create an unstable feedback system and may generate a "howling" sound.

*Monitor:* This switch permits you to compare source and tape while recording on either or both tape decks from the selected input. You may wish to use Tape 2 and Record 2 to install an external signal processor such as graphic tone controls. Then, the Tape 2 position will choose the processed signal while Source will choose the pure signal.

*Balance:* Permits continuous control of location of stereo image from left to right. In the full counterclockwise position only the left channel will be heard. Similarly, the full clockwise position will reproduce only the right channel. In normal use this control will be centered.

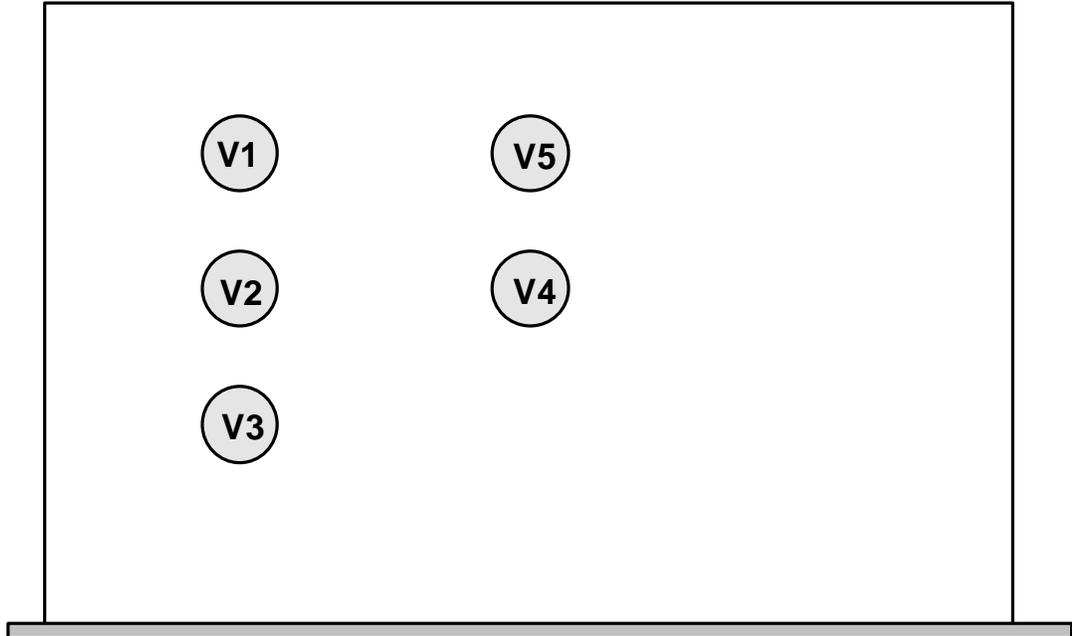
*Volume:* The PV7 volume control is an extremely precise control, maintaining channel to channel tracking within  $\pm 1/2$  db throughout its rotation.

## **VACUUM TUBES**

The audio circuit of the PV7 uses five vacuum tubes of two different types: three 12AX7 (V1, V2 and V4) and two 12AT7 (V3 and V5). Each type has been carefully chosen for its circuit application. It is well known that tubes of a given type vary sonically depending on the manufacturer. We have chosen the brands of tubes that we supply based on extensive auditioning of available brands. The choice of brand has been made solely on the basis of sonic performance without regard to either cost or prestige. We know of no vacuum tubes available of the specified types which will improve the sonic performance of your PV7. Also, the tubes in your preamplifier have been tempered by a controlled burn in procedure that permits them to perform for a greatly extended period without sonic degradation. We anticipate two to three years of operation without degradation in normal use. We highly recommend that, when the time comes to replace the vacuum tubes, you purchase replacement tube sets from conrad-johnson design.

Please note: Substitution of 12AX7 type for the type 12AT7 is likely to damage the 12AX7. Other tube type substitutions may damage the preamp circuitry or transformer.

**TUBE LOCATIONS:**



Tube complement:

V1,V2,V4: 12AX7

V3,V5: 12AT7

Fuse: The AC line is fused to protect the transformer. This fuse will not fail in normal operation. Failure of the fuse is a symptom of a more serious problem, so the unit should be taken to a qualified Service Center. **IN NO EVENT SHOULD THE FUSE BE REPLACED WITH A FUSE OF DIFFERENT TYPE OR RATING THAN THAT SUPPLIED BY THE FACTORY.**

## **SPECIFICATIONS**

Gain: phono stage 40 db  
high level 20 db

Output: maximum 25v (rated at 2.5v)

Phase: phono is non-inverting so tape outputs are phase correct  
high level stage inverts phase of all inputs including phono

Phono overload: in excess of 500mv at 1KHz

Response: bandpass 2Hz to more than 100 KHz  
RIAA equalization to +/- .25db (20-20KHz)

Total hum and noise (20-20KHz):  
Phono inputs 72db below 10mv input  
High Level: 84db below 2.5 volt output

Distortion: THD less than .1%  
IM less than .1%

Output impedance: Less than 200 ohms

Dimensions: 14 1/2 x 3 3/4 x 10"

Weight: 12 1/4 lbs.

## **SERVICE**

In the event your conrad-johnson component requires service, repack it with the original packing material and ship it to:

Service Department  
conrad-johnson design, inc.  
2733 Merrilee Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22031

For components weighing 90 lbs. or less, we recommend that you ship via United Parcel Service (UPS). In all cases, be sure to adequately insure your component. Be sure to enclose a note explaining the problem you are having in as much detail as possible. If the problem is intermittent, please indicate. If you do not have the original packing material, replacements are available from conrad johnson design at a nominal charge. If the unit is under warranty, enclose a copy of your receipt as proof of purchase.