



conrad-johnson

ET7-S2 line-stage preamplifier

Reviewed in Issue **179**

This classic looking conrad-johnson preamplifier owes more to the excellent range topping GAT-S2 line preamplifier from the range than it does classic c-j products of the past. It also builds heavily on the strengths developed for the original conrad-johnson ET7 model it replaces. Using a single 6922 double-triode for voltage gain and a high-current MOSFETs buffer, the ET7-S2 features a substantially improved power supply reservoir section sprinkled with large c-j capacitors. The single-ended line only preamplifier remains true to c-j's minimalist goals, but that makes it a true songsmith.

The best preamplifiers contribute the least to the sound, and that holds here. In our test, Alan Sircom thought that, "The original ET7 was one of the few preamps that got out of the way of the sound, but in no way as well as the GAT S2. The ET7-S2 is much closer to the GAT-S2 in this respect". He also praised the ET7-S2 for having, "transparency and 'there-ness'" at levels normally associated with considerably more expensive designs. Alan concludes, "The improvements brought about by the additional power supply (and presumably the connectors) give an already graceful sounding preamplifier prima ballerina poise but coupled with an ability to thwack and growl with the best of them when needed. It's good enough that prospective GAT-S2 owners might ask themselves some very difficult questions before paying much more for the big hitter." In other words, the 'Baby GAT' just grew up! +



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