


***Conrad-Johnson Owner's Manual:***

*ART PHONO*

**conrad-johnson** It just sounds right.



*Thank you* for selecting the conrad-johnson ART PHONO triode equalization amplifier as the phono stage for your audio system. A reference quality phono stage, the ART PHONO is capable of remarkably faithful recreation of the dynamics, textures, tonalities, and ambience of live musical performances. We believe that you will experience the excitement of discovery in hearing more from your favorite lps than ever before.

At conrad-johnson, we expect our products to be a source of satisfaction and of pride to their owners for many years to come. Accordingly, circuit designs, parts and materials for all conrad-johnson products are selected with a view to maintaining optimal performance over the years. Our reputation for producing among the industry's most reliable components is a natural consequence of this engineering approach.

Please take a few minutes to read the manual to better understand the features and capabilities of your ART PHONO.

In closing, we'd like to welcome you to the family of conrad-johnson owners. We want you to enjoy your conrad-johnson product to the fullest. To this end, our staff stands ready to answer any questions you may have about the function and application of your ART PHONO, and to provide any needed service both during, and after the warranty period. Our goal is to heighten your enjoyment of recorded music.

## ***Limited Warranty for Conrad-Johnson Components***

Conrad-Johnson Design, Inc. will provide service under warranty to the original owner on products sold new in the United States for the lesser period of three years from the date of purchase by the original purchaser, or five years from the date of shipment to the authorized conrad-johnson dealer. During the warranty period, conrad-johnson will repair defective units without charge for labor or parts (with the exception of vacuum tubes and batteries).

Exclusions. The following are not covered under this warranty:

- a) Units which have been damaged by misuse, abuse, or accident.
- b) Units which have been modified, altered, or improperly repaired by anyone not specifically authorized by conrad-johnson design, inc.
- c) Units not purchased from an authorized conrad-johnson dealer in the United States for use in the United States.
- d) Normal wear
- e) Incidental or consequential damages are not covered under this warranty. Some states do not allow the exclusion of incidental or consequential damages, so this exclusion may not apply to you.

**Obtaining Warranty Service:** To obtain warranty service, the unit must be shipped, along with evidence of purchase, in factory packing to conrad-johnson design (or designated service center) with freight and insurance prepaid by the owner. After repair, the unit will be returned with freight and insurance prepaid by conrad-johnson design to any destination in the United States.

All implied warranties, including merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose are limited in duration to the duration of this express warranty. Some states do not allow limitations on the duration of implied warranties so the above limitations may not apply to you.

This warranty gives you specific legal rights and you may also have other rights which vary from state to state.

Conrad-Johnson products purchased outside the United States are covered by warranty terms of the importing distributor in the country in which the product was originally purchased, which may differ from the terms set out herein. Importing distributors are not obligated to provide warranty service for products originally purchased outside their country. Conrad-Johnson will provide warranty service for products outside the United States, but in these cases, the customer must pay all shipping, handling and customs costs both to and from our Service Department.

Questions about this warranty should be addressed to:

Service Department  
conrad-johnson design, inc.  
2800 Dorr Avenue, Suite K  
Fairfax, VA 22031

The conrad-johnson service department can also be reached by email at [service@conradjohnson.com](mailto:service@conradjohnson.com), by phone at 703-698-8581.

## **Service**

If your conrad-johnson audio component requires service, repack it using the original box and packing material and ship to the Service Department address above. Boxes and packing materials can be purchased through our service department if you no longer have yours. Include with the unit a note describing the problem you are having in as much detail as possible. It is especially important for our technician to know if the problem is intermittent. If you want an estimate of cost for out of warranty service, be sure to request it in this note. Be aware that requesting an estimate will delay service to your unit, as we will have to contact you for approval before commencing service.

## **Registering The Warranty**

Please return the enclosed card to the factory within 30 days of purchase to register the warranty.

## ***Installation***

### ***Set Up***

To maintain proper ventilation, mount the ART PHONO horizontally on a flat, hard surface, and take care that the ventilation holes in the bottom are unobstructed. Allow at least two inches of clearance above the unit and keep the cabinet or shelf open at the back.

All ART PHONO's sold in the United States are configured for operation on a 60Hz ac power line producing between 108 and 126 volts. Export versions of the ART PHONO will have the correct operating voltage and frequency clearly marked on the back panel of the unit, near the ac power cord. In all cases, the actual line voltage should be within + 5/-10% of the nominal rated voltage.

### ***Electromagnetic Interference***

Considerable care has been taken in the design of the ART PHONO to minimize its susceptibility to radio frequency interference and other forms of EMI. Choice of materials, physical layout, grounding practice, and power supply design have all been specified with a view to reducing the impact of electromagnetic fields on the performance of this unit. Our primary goal, however, is the accurate reproduction of recorded music in the normal home environment, and we have elected not to compromise this objective by the application of heavy handed RFI filters. This approach has worked extremely well, resulting in few instances of EMI problems which can be treated locally as needed, rather than compromising performance in the 99.9% of installations where EMI is not a problem.

Care in installation can often avoid EMI induced problems. The following practices should generally be observed in any application, and will be especially important where EMI may be a problem.

Interconnect cables should be kept as short as possible (3 meters or less), and shielded cable should be used (cable which has two center conductors, and a separate external shield connected at only one end).

Physical location and cable "dress" can be an important factor in minimizing hum pickup. The installation should situate the ART PHONO well away from the power amplifier, and power (ac mains) cords should be dressed to remain at least 4" (100mm) away from in-put/output cables.

## *Connection and Control*

### **Connections**

**PHONO1:** On units fitted with step-up transformers this input is intended for use with low output moving coil cartridges, below 0.35 mv. On these units, this input has a fixed load of approximately 46 ohms, and offers overall gain of 72 dB. On units without step-up transformers, the load impedance is fixed at 47 kOhms and offers gain of 51 db, suitable for moving coil cartridges with an output of 0.35 mv or higher.

**PHONO 2:** This input is intended for use with moving coil cartridges with an output of 0.35mv or higher, and offers gain of 51 db. The input impedance can be adjusted from 147 Ohms to 47K Ohms, and capacitance can be adjusted from 20pf to 936pf.

**OUTPUT:** Connect to a line-level input of your preamplifier.

### **Controls**

**<power>:** Press the switch labeled power to switch the preamplifier on. A time delay auto-muting circuit is incorporated into the ART PHONO to suppress turn-on/turn-off transients. All outputs are grounded via relays for approximately 90 seconds after the unit is turned on in order to suppress warm-up transient noises. The muting relay also grounds the outputs immediately at turn-off or in the event of any power line interruption.

**<input>:** Pressing the input button will toggle between the PHONO1 and PHONO2 inputs. The selected input will be indicated by an illuminated led.

## Cartridge Loading

The ART PHONO has provision for adjusting both resistive and capacitive loading on the PHONO2 input. Loading is adjusted by the settings on a pair (one for each channel) of dual-inline (DIP) switches accessible through the back panel. The switches are numbered from 1 to 8 with switch 1 being the left-most (viewed from the back). Switches 1 through 4 provide for capacitive loading, 5 through 8 provide for resistive loading. The ART PHONO is delivered preset for an input impedance of 47 kOhms and a capacitive load of about 20 pF. Loading can be adjusted as follows:

### Cartridge Loading Settings on LOW GAIN Input

Capacitive Load	switch #	Resistive Load	switch #
	1 2 3 4		5 6 7 8
20 pf	o o o o	47 kOhms	o o o o
56 pf	x o o o	12.1 kOhms	o o o x
100 pf	o x o o	2.58 kOhms	o o x o
156 pf	x x o o	556 Ohms	o x o o
220 pf	o o x o	450 Ohms	o x x o
276 pf	x o x o	221 Ohms	x o o o
376 pf	x x x o	147 Ohms	x x x x
560 pf	o o o x		
800 pf	o o x x		
936 pf	x x x x		

x indicates switch in "on" position

o indicates switch in "off" position

note: off position is indicated by arrow on the body of the switch array.

Be sure to use the same switch settings for both channels.

## ***Vacuum Tube Replacement***

The ART PHONO circuit employs six twin-triode vacuum tubes - four type 12AX7(V1,V2,V3,V4) and two type 12AU7/6189 (V5,V6). The brands of tubes we supply have been chosen by first selecting those brands which are known to be most reliable, then by extensive auditioning of these acceptable brands with the final choices being made solely on the basis of sonic performance. We know of no vacuum tubes available which will improve the sonic performance of your ART PHONO. 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, and then selected for minimum residual noise. Replacement tubes are prepared and selected in the same way. Therefore, we highly recommend that you purchase replacement tube sets from conrad-johnson design.

We anticipate tube life to accommodate two to three years of operation without degradation in normal use - if the preamplifier is switched off when not in use. If the preamplifier is left on at all times, tube life can be exhausted in a matter of a few months.

## ***Getting The Most From Your ART PHONO***

In a system of commensurate high quality components, the conrad-johnson ART PHONO offers an unparalleled level of sophistication and refinement in music reproduction. To get the best performance out of any audio system, there are a number of important details that must be attended to.

### ***Absolute Phase***

Musical notes are heard through the ear's response to waves of alternating rise and fall of air pressure. Musical transients are almost exclusively positive: that is, the initial effect is a rise in pressure. The ear is capable of distinguishing these positive transients from the musically unnatural alternative of a negative transient (an initial fall in air pressure). In terms of your stereo system, these transients are created by your loudspeakers. If the speakers respond



to musical transients by first moving out, they are creating a rise in pressure, and the system is said to be phase correct. If they respond by moving in, they create a fall in pressure and the system is said to be phase inverting. Each component in the stereo system either preserves the phase of the incoming signal, and is said to be phase correct, or inverts the phase and is said to be phase inverting. It is unimportant whether an individual component is phase correct or phase inverting, as long as the system as a whole is phase correct. This will be the case if the number of phase inversions is even (or zero).

The ART PHONO is phase correct (non-inverting). If your system has an odd number of inversions then you must add one phase inversion. This is conveniently done by reversing the positive and negative connections to your speakers (be sure to reverse both channels). If you are not sure about the phase of every piece in your system, you can establish correct absolute phase by careful listening. When the system is in correct phase, transients will be noticeably cleaner and more sharply defined. The effect is especially apparent on plucked string sounds. A final warning - not all recordings are phase correct (including some "audiophile" recordings), so listen to several before concluding your investigation of absolute phase.

### ***The Importance of Wires***

Interconnect and speaker wires are an important element in your stereo system. Interconnects are available which will permit a reference quality system to blossom and fulfill its promise of musical reality. Others will strangle the system to the point where it becomes little better than average. To complicate matters, our experience suggests that the choice of interconnects will be system dependent - those that are top ranked on one system may be a poor choice for a different system. Consult your conrad-johnson dealer for recommendations for your specific system.

### ***Performance Tip***

Warm up the ART PHONO before listening: The sonic performance of the ART PHONO improves noticeably as the unit warms up. The midrange becomes more lucid, the highs smoother, and the soundstage expands. The warm up period can be expected to last about fifteen minutes.

**Questions:** If you have questions about the installation or function of your ART PHONO do not hesitate to call Customer Service at (703) 698-8581.

## *Specifications*

### **PHONO 1:**

Gain 51db , load fixed 47K5 ohms

Gain 72db , load fixed 46 ohms  
(with step-up transformers)

### **PHONO 2:**

Gain 51db , load variable 147 Ohm to 47K5 Ohm  
load variable 20pf to 956pf

**Hum and Noise:** <500uv

**Phase:** phase correct

**Ouput Impedance:** below 200 ohms

### **Mechanical**

**Dimensions:** 16"D x 18.75"W x 5.44"H

**Net Weight:** 31 lb net

## ***Fuses***

The ART PHONO power transformer is protected by a fuse located in a tray in the ac power inlet on the back of the chassis. To access the fuse, first unplug the unit from the wall outlet, then remove the ac power cord to reveal the pull out tray in the inlet. A failure of this fuse is a symptom of a more serious problem, and a competent service technician should be consulted. In no event should a fuse be replaced with a value or type different than that originally sup-plied. Correct fuse values are:

If configured for 120V operation  
F1 5 x 20mm T800ma

If configured for 220V-240V operation  
F1 5 x 20mm T400ma