

CLASS A

AUDION PREMIER QUATTRO

The Audio Quattro is the finest stock preamplifier ever made. Its phono stage can accommodate only low output moving coils, and its line-stage is just a cathode follower without any gain. It has the benefits of both simplicity of design and superb execution (with only 4 tubes in the entire signal path, a 4 chassis totally dual-mono construction and the power supplies use only polypropylene capacitors).

Once modified, this preamp has the extremely rare quality of both speed and precision along with a total sense of immediacy and completeness. It is extremely rare, so it is almost impossible to find used. The last retail price was **\$9,000 U.S.**

The only other preamp ever made that is in its class is the **Jadis JP-80** (and only if it is highly modified). Audion has a much less expensive model called the **DUAL**, which is the same basic design except it has two chassis and it's not hard-wired. I don't know anyone who has heard it, but it should be almost as good for a lot less money.

GOOD NEWS!- Audion has announced that it has re-started production of the Quattro. According to an e-mail from **Ray Lombardi** of **Ray of Sound**, the North American importer-distributor of Audion tube electronic products:

"the Audion Quattro preamplifier is available in 2 versions, a 2-chassis model, and a 4-chassis model. The 2-chassis model will retail for \$10,995, the 4-chassis model will retail for \$15,995."

There is also now a separate Audion phono-stage. One reader purchased one based on this website's recommendation of the full preamplifier. He is very happy with it. We have no experience with this model.

Further- No one in my **group** has had any direct experience with the most recent version of this preamplifier. I did receive a letter from a **reader** who did have some experience with a Quattro, and even compared it to another one of the finest preamplifiers ever made. This is what he wrote to me:

"I am in possession of the very first reincarnated Audion Premier Quattro Moving Coil and Line Level 4 Chassis Pre-Amplifier to reach these shores. It has the only two upgrades available: Silver point to point wiring and stepped attenuators. The chassis colors are black and silver as opposed to the standard dark blue and silver. I tested it in my system against my Michael Elliott SA-9 (Magnum Opus Version) and Magnum Opus Line Stage combination. The Audion Quattro is a very fine performer. However, in my system, as it is now set up, I prefer the two Opus One Units."

After I requested further information, he sent me this **second** letter:

"There was break-in time put on the unit at the factory and at the importer. We tried the unit with the stock tubes as well as with two different sets of NOS E88CC - Telefunken and Siemen. Briefly, the Audion had shortcomings compared to the Opus in bass energy below 60 Hz, and with dynamics, along with less extended upper frequency range. For the most part, I feel that the huge tube power supplies of the Magnum Opus, compared to the solid state power supplies of the Audion probably accounts for most of the differences. I will send you a much more detailed report later. The system includes the big Sound Labs, Walker turntable with Koetsu Onyx Platinum, and a special pair of Viva Auroras (Special Transformers through-out, transformer input, and 845/211 tubes) with Silent Source Cables."

TRANSFORMERS THROUGHOUT, TRANSFORMER INPUT, AND 6X5/211 TUBES) WITH SHORT SOURCE CABLES.

While I am not in a position to verify his observations, I also have no legitimate reason to challenge either his competency or his veracity. Of course, the Audion is a currently available component, while the ultra-rare Magnum Opus model (a "dressed-up SA-9" according to Michael Elliott) must be found used.

These two preamplifiers are most likely the two finest that can be purchased "ready to use". However, based on my experiences, I still strongly believe that **neither** of them can equal a heavily modified **Jadis JP-80** with an **Expressive Technology SU-1 Transformer** in its ability to capture the most basic essences of music, though they both will be superior to the Jadis/ET combo in other sonic parameters which are less important to me. 7/03

AUDION PREMIER QUATTRO (LATEST VERSION-UPDATE FEBRUARY 2007)

I have some important news concerning this long recommended preamplifier. The price for a new **Quattro*** is now \$ **16,000****, but there is also a version with all **V-Cap Teflon capacitors** in the signal-path. This option costs an extra \$ **1,500**** (parts and labor). Needless to say, I highly recommend anyone purchasing this unit to also add the V-Cap modification.

I have heard this new model, with the V-Cap modification, for many hours at an **associate's** home. This same associate also had the **older** Quattro, though it was heavily modified, including **Rel Cap Teflon** capacitors in the signal path. We both agree that this new model is noticeably superior in every way, even beyond the improvement obviously guaranteed just by the change in the coupling capacitors. At this time, we also both agree that this is the finest preamplifier we are aware of that you can purchase **new*****, at **any** price. Accordingly, it is the only preamplifier now in "**Class A**" that is currently being manufactured.

Further- I was just informed by one of my **associates**, who actually owns the first Audion Quattro built with V-Caps, that he also had the stock **volume controls** replaced with those made by **Gold Point**, using **Vishay** resistors. They are \$ **1,500 for the pair**, but he claims that are absolutely necessary if you want to hear the full potential of this design.

*This has **4 chassis**. There is also a **2 chassis** version, which sells for \$ **11,000**, but we haven't heard it. The cost for the V-Cap Teflon modification is also \$ 1,500.

For further details, contact **Ray Lombardi, of **Ray of Sound**, who is the North American importer of **Audion**. The website is: **www.rayofsound.com**

***The one other Class A Preamplifier is a used **Jadis JP-80**, with extensive modifications, and either a **Bent Audio Silver**, or an **Expressive Technologies SU-1**, moving coil transformer as a step-up.