



Simaudio MOON 110LP v2 £500



MOON doesn't do cheap and cheerful, but it does offer high value and the 110LP v2 simply oozes class

breeze. Joni's voice is more than usually soothing this time around on *Shades Of Scarlett Conquering* with a kind of cashmere tonality and no edge at all. Loveliness rules.

Meanwhile, the lower frequencies on Lyle Mays' *Highland Aire* are notably sumptuous, the whole piece conjuring intimacy in an expansive soundscape that sees velvety synth pads painting deliciously atmospheric backdrops. There's a satisfying weight and body to the sound. All right, detail isn't pushed in your face for close inspection and the 110LP v2 isn't the crispest-sounding phono preamp in the group, but it's certainly one that takes as much care over music's inner intricacies as it does its outer limits.

What the MOON does with Stanley and George's sometimes sparse and sterile-sounding *Heroes* is particularly

It delivers sweetness with an ease and elegance that caresses the listener

interesting. Not quite as taut and rhythmically driven or potentially dynamic as, say, the Rega, the effortless flow somehow sounds smoother, mellower and less 'electronic'. As for ELP's *Trilogy*, it's treated to more subtlety, textural contrast and dynamic discrimination than with many talented performers in the group. It isn't the heaviest hitting take, but it is comfortably the most sophisticated. Given the complexity and sheer amount of over dubbing in the production, it's not a bad way to appreciate all the effort expended on the track. The MOON's is an extremely likable kind of presentation, devoid of obvious manipulation, maybe a little restrained, but above all insightful and satisfying for the long haul ●

DETAILS

PRODUCT
Simaudio MOON 110LP v2

ORIGIN
Canada

TYPE
MM/MC phono preamp

WEIGHT
1.5kg

DIMENSIONS (WxHxD)
127 x 42 x 165mm

FEATURES
● MM/MC input
● RCA input/output
● External PSU

DISTRIBUTOR
Renaissance Audio

M OON by Simaudio's least costly phono preamp (it produces four) looks and feels anything but low rent. With a meticulously machined bowed fascia fronting a compact aluminium chassis, it is by a whisker the most elegant and best finished chassis in the group – fittingly as it's also the most expensive of this otherwise affordable gathering.

As it offers the option of an IEC EQ curve, which is devised to quell sub-20Hz turntable rumble, there's no subsonic filter. But the 110LP v2 does offer four gain settings up to 66dB and the bank of DIP switches on the underside also provides ample scope for experimenting with resistance and capacitance values. This is where the v2 scores over its predecessor. Building on its all-new circuitry, it has four impedance increments (claiming 10, 100, 475 and 47kohm respectively) against the original model's 100 and 47kohm. Moreover, with the v2 you get to choose between the standard RIAA and newer IEC EQ curves.

Simaudio presumably feels these features are more beneficial than the balanced connections offered by the likes of the iFi Audio and Pro-Ject.

All the settings are selected via small dual in-line package DIP switches. Thoughtfully, Simaudio supplies an ever-helpful 'non-metallic, non-conducting tool' – the so-called Grayhill DIPstick – to make the DIP switch adjustments the work of mere seconds rather than a fingernail-fraying fiasco.

Round the back are two output and two input RCA sockets and a nicely engineered grounding post – all gold-plated – plus the input for the 24V wall-wart power supply.

Sound quality

Every MOON component that I've had the pleasure of hearing has sounded effortlessly smooth, fluent and refined. It seems to be written into the collective DNA and the 110LP v2 dutifully conforms to type, delivering sweetness with an ease and elegance that caresses the listener like a balmy



Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY



LIKE: Warm, inviting sound; classy build; comprehensive choice of settings

VALUE FOR MONEY



DISLIKE: There's no subsonic filter

BUILD QUALITY



WESAY: Extremely capable purist stage that should satisfy for years

FEATURES



OVERALL

