



RCM Audio The Big Phono

WINNER

PHONO STAGE OVER £20K

The RIAA and now the RIAA Mk II phono stages by RCM Audio have been a reliable choice for over 10 years, but the company recently released a higher-end model called The Big Phono. The two-box Big Phono offers several improvements over its smaller brother, including a more advanced power supply with three separate power feeds and a front panel display for adjusting cartridge parameters. It also includes two inputs, making it easier to connect multiple devices.

Like its smaller brother, the Big Phono uses integrated circuits and a passive RIAA curve in a four-stage amplification circuit. The power supply chassis features two large transformers and multi-stage stabilisation, contributing to its substantial weight of 32kg. The Big Phono offers a wide range of gain and impedance settings, stored in its memory and controlled

through the front panel or by the supplied Apple remote. Setting up the phono stage is, therefore, straightforward, except for lifting the thing!

Sonically, The Big Phono delivers outstanding fidelity, with a rich and energetic sound, exceptional soundstaging, and a level of detail and articulation that surpasses other phono stages. It brings out the best in both well-recorded vinyl and lesser-quality recordings.

In our test, Alan Sircom felt that, “you need some time to process because you are taking on so much new information from discs you thought you knew backwards. Not long after that settles in, you are left with what must be one of the finest sounds you’ll ever hear from vinyl. Everything you want from your music is here and a joy to experience.”

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