

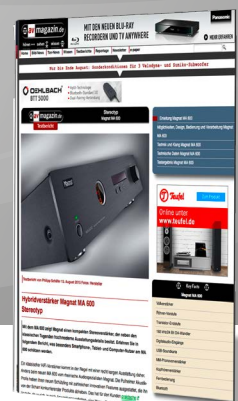


"The sound is top-class – pleasing to the ear with controlled power, tidy stage representation and highly precise detail - which ultimately makes the Magnat MA 600 deserving of a highlight award."

Magnat MA 600



SOUND: **VERY GOOD**
CONFIGURATION: **OUTSTANDING**
FINISH: **VERY GOOD**
PRICE/PERFORMANCE: **VERY GOOD**
TOP CLASS



Magnat

Lise-Meitner-Str. 9 · 50259 Pulheim · Germany · www.magnat.de

av-magazin.de
08 | 2015

With the MA 600, Magnat presents a compact stereo amplifier featuring highly modern technical details in addition to its classical virtues. A classic hi-fi amplifier normally displays fairly meager features. Unlike the new MA 600 from the Rhineland-based audio specialist, Magnat. The acoustic professionals in Pulheim have equipped their new protégé with a large number of innovative features to set it apart from the multitude of competing products. This has practical advantages for customers as it enables them to save on a whole lot of add-on products depending on the intended applications. What is notable is Magnat's courage in combining classic tube technology with proven transistor technology in one device. In this way, the MA 600 more or less offers the best of both worlds. While the pre-amp feeds the warm natural sound of a tube, the powerful transistor chips ensure efficient signal conversion. When modern wireless technology and digital connections are then added to this, the all-in-one solution appears just perfect. Too good to be true, or?

Options

Magnat has done well to design the new amplifier for smart audio applications. This means: In addition to the classic functions, the MA 600 can also receive audio signals wirelessly from smartphones, tablets or a computer. The transmission technology used is the Bluetooth standard. Thanks to the compatibility with aptX codec, mobile devices and computers even transmit the audio signals to the Magnat amplifier in CD quality with the appropriate equipment. The receiving antenna needed for this is included in the package and can be assembled in no time. Another special feature is the USB input. Computers can be connected via cable using the type B socket. The MA 600 then acts as an amplifier and sound card at the same time. After connecting, simply specify the Magnat as the output or playback medium in the sound options of the operating system and computer games, videos and music will then be rendered in pristine sound quality. Digital sources such as CD players, game consoles and streaming players can be connected optionally to the optical Toslink or the electrical cinch socket connector. CD, tuner, aux and tape ports are available for connecting analogue audio players. Analogue recording devices like cassette recorders or tape machines can be supplied with audio signals via the unregulated tape output. In addition, the MA 600 provides an MM phono output with an earth connection.

This also enables record players with moving magnet pickups to be easily connected to the Magnat amplifier. Finally, the mini-jack socket on the front panel offers a practical possibility for connecting mobile audio players like mobile phones, camcorders and MP3 players to the MA 600.

Design, operation and finish

Anyone coming into contact with the MA 600 for the first time will inevitably notice its high "touch" quality. The enclosure is made of sturdy metal and weighs in at over 8 kg. The front panel features a brushed surface, causing it to be more or less prominent depending on the light. This not only looks very good, it also provides it with that certain something in a subtle way. Behind the characteristic porthole window in the 5 mm thick front panel, Magnat shows off the tube, with its illumination enhanced by an additional LED. A bit of "Show and Shine" also has to be permitted in the home hi-fi segment. The finish is immaculate, even on very close inspection, and is impressive with its cleanly trimmed edges and accurate detail quality. The controls have a high-quality feel as a result of being made of solid aluminium. On the back, Magnat has gone the whole way and fitted the amplifier with gold-plated connector terminals, ensuring a long service life for the cinch sockets and cable screw terminals. Operation is mainly via a lightweight remote control.

Technology

Anyone switching on the MA 600 for the first time will inevitably notice that this is a very special amplifier. The hybrid amplifier is first ready for operation after a countdown of 15 seconds, which is shown graphically in the LC display. The delay is due to the tube in the pre-amp section, which needs this time for pre-heating. An ECC 88 tube is used, having been preselected for its sound optimisation and after being run at full power for around 60 hours beforehand. In the power amp section, Magnat relies on powerful transistor technology. For example, 2 high-performance amplifier chips are used in the MA 600 which can generate up to 70 watts of power at 4 ohms per channel. An elaborately designed power adaptor with separately stabilised voltages for the different circuits provides the basis for powerful signal conversion in this regard. Sufficient buffer strength and, therefore, support for high pulse requirements is ensured by the use of high-capacity electrolytic capacitors. This means that the MA 600 does not run out of steam that quickly, even in the event of a prolonged high-level passage.

The electrolytic capacitors also ensure the smoothing of the supply voltage. Finally, a generously dimensioned toroidal transformer guarantees reliable voltage conversion at the heart of the MA 600. The separate standby power supply should also be mentioned at this point. This ensures particularly low power consumption for the Magnat amplifier of less than 0.4 watts in standby mode. The digital audio converter is from Burr Brown and converts the incoming data streams with a resolution of up to 24 bits. The sampling rate is up to 192 kilohertz.

Sound quality

In the listening test, the hybrid integrated amplifier shines with an extremely harmonious and very authentic sound. With "The Bassface Swing Trio" CD, the individual instruments of the jazz group are reproduced with wonderful resolution and in rich detail. The bass reproduction is outstanding in this regard with a decent pressure capability that does not lose its expression even at high levels. And even with the thumping bass ranges of Sven Väth's "Retrospective 1990-97" album, the MA 600 retains control of the sound at all times. When playing classical compositions, the hybrid amplifier is pleasing with its pleasantly warm and harmonious reproduction of complex string ensembles. It renders the different overtones and harmonics skilfully, drawing the listener right into the soundscape. However, the tonal character is still neutral: it does not add anything to the signal, nor does it take anything away. The MA 600 is therefore an all-round powerfully sounding stereo amplifier that is recommended for all music directions and loudspeaker types.

Clear text

Analogue or digital sources – what the hybrid integrated amplifier offers in terms of diverse connectivity opens up an extraordinarily wide range of applications for the user. The sound is top-class – pleasing to the ear with controlled power, tidy stage representation and highly precise detail – which ultimately makes the Magnat MA 600 deserving of a highlight award.