

**HiFi
Test
TV·VIDEO**

Issue: September/October 2009

**HiFi
Test** **Magnat MC 850**
**Spitzen-
klasse**
Preis/Leistung:
gut - sehr gut **1,2**

Evaluation of the MCD 850
+ very open sound
+ high quality workmanship
+ good remote control

**HiFi
Test** **Magnat MA 800**
**Spitzen-
klasse**
Preis/Leistung:
gut - sehr gut **1,2**

Evaluation of the MA 800
+ very good sound
+ elegant design
+ upgradeable

Magnat[®]

MA 800

MCD 850

“...wonderful music machines...”
“...high haptic quality and excellent
workmanship...”



TOPCLASS

Price/Performance: good - very good

Glowing adoration

Hybrid tube amplifier and CD player from Magnat

Magnat, the speaker specialist from Pulheim, has provided the two beautiful electronic components with elegant, yet solid enclosures. The RV1 tube amplifier from the same company was able to impress our colleagues at LP (issue 1/2008) and its values were thoroughly convincing - without any ifs or buts. How the quality of the MA 800 and MCD 850 hybrid devices compare can be inferred from our comprehensive test.

We know Magnat as a manufacturer of speakers that exhibit an astonishingly good sound at an excellent price/performance ratio. In fact, we named the Quantum 705 speaker as one of our all-time favourites. But when the first tube amplifier from Magnat, namely the RV 1, came out remarkably well in our tests, it was absolutely clear that Shandro Fischer was taking his tube amplifiers extremely seriously. We wanted more, and now, in addition to the MC 1 and VC 1, we have got our hands on the MA 800 pre-amplifier and MCD 850 SACD player. The elegant housings in silver or black inspire confidence and the 8 mm thick aluminium front panels, on which clear, legible displays and a few knobs and buttons are arranged, are utterly sublime.

Magnat MA 800

The MA 800 amplifier provides a glimpse of its channel-separated ECC82 double triodes through two small portholes. Shandro Fischer procures the selected tubes from Russia (Sabator "Electro Harmonix") and ensures that they are burned-in for 60 hours. The rear of the pre-amplifier, which is equipped with generously sized bi-wiring terminals, accommodates four high-level inputs. As the MA 800 has separate MM and MC input jacks, two turntables or two pickups can be connected at the same time. The phono pre-amplifier is blessed with low-noise operational amplifiers; the discrete power amplifier, which is supplied with power via a channel-separated power supply unit and stout transformer, utilises Sanken transistors to ensure continuous power expansion. A small additional power supply unit ensures low power consumption when the amplifier is put into standby mode. To ensure the performance doesn't deflagrate when selecting the source or changing the volume, the Pulheim developer has utilised high-precision relays and potentiometers from ALPS. To extract the last remnant of sound quality from the tube amp the display can be completely switched off on the front of the unit. A 3.5 mm audio input and a 6.3 mm headphone jack are located underneath the sturdy volume knob. A solid metal remote control is included for controlling all of the amplifier functions and the MCD 850 CD player we tested.

Magnat MCD 850

The Pulheim manufacturer has also opted for tube output stages from Russia for its SACD players; this time it has used selected ECC88 double triodes that have been pre-aged for 60 hours. The issue with the transformer type was clarified after copious listening tests - the elaborate power supply unit now generates its power with an R-core transformer. As with the MA 800 unit there is also a separate standby power supply here. The player's drive sits in its own metal casing and is entrusted with the scanning of the Sanyo lasers. A Burr-Brown RCM 1796 digital/analogue converter processes the signals delivered with 24 bit accuracy. Connections on the MCD 850 are provided via its digital outputs (coaxial and optical) and analogue RCA output jacks. The level of the headphone output on the front of the unit can be adjusted via the remote control.

Sound

Thanks to the right mixture of warmth and strength, combined with a fresh and airy sound, the stereo combination from Magnat conquered our hearts. The MA 800 hybrid amplifier rumbles from the floorstanding speakers, opens up the room on all sides and breathes an enormous amount of life into the signals generated by the MCD 850 SACD player. Music reproduction is outstanding; singing voices have lots of volume and are precisely portrayed in the room as if it were the easiest thing in the world. Magnat's MCD 850 unit adds something extra when playing SACD discs and reproduces vocals and instruments even more freely and more naturally. We thought it was so good that we extended our listening test and immersed ourselves in a world of sound.

Laboratory

With two x 73 watts at eight ohms and two x 108 watts at four ohms, the Magnat MA 800 is well equipped. The measured values confirm the excellent signal-to-noise ratio and the more than decent channel separation. Another excellent feature is the phono frequency response and the linearity of the converter in the MCD 850 CD player, whose measured values quash any element of doubt

Conclusion

The MA 800 hybrid amplifier and the MCD 850 SACD player are wonderful music machines, which are more than convincing in the listening room thanks to their sound performance - and the haptic quality and excellent workmanship of their housings will also please those hifi fans among us who are visually oriented.



The infrared remote control in a solid metal housing operates both Magnat units.



Fully insulated terminals accommodate both thick speaker cables and banana plugs. The connections provided by the MA 800 enable simultaneous operation of MM and MC pickups.