
Subject: Valve Phono Preamp
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Thu, 16 Jun 2011 22:26:30 GMT
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Hi Fellow vinyl lovers. A work in progress is nearly ready to field. I have been designing a valve based phono preamp for addition to the Oddwatt Line. As is my personal policy it will also show up as a diy project. Not a simple project, but from what I saw at LSAF, it should be ok with many of the folks there. It is a MM design with the expectation that if you use MC cartridges you will most likely use a step up transformer. Some teasers, three stages, two are SRPP, passive equalization, tracking with the RIAA curve is within about a half db from 30HZ to past 20K, at 20 it is up about 0.75 db from the curve. I will be taking care of that before I post the project. Wide-band S/n is in the -90 dbv range. It has been running for about 3 weeks now in my main system and I like what I hear. I still need a name for it so if you want a chance to have input and maybe a lasting contribution to audio send me your suggestions.

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp
Posted by [Shane](#) on Fri, 17 Jun 2011 21:10:11 GMT
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How about the GrooveWatt?

I'll think up some others shortly!

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 17 Jun 2011 23:57:53 GMT
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BAM! - That's a freaking awesome name for an OddWatt phono stage. Can't top that!

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Sat, 18 Jun 2011 02:36:33 GMT
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Hi Good name, let's hear from some others, I might even throw in a genuine Oddwatt "T" shirt. ...SpinWatt? V Watt?

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp

Posted by [Shane](#) on Sat, 18 Jun 2011 03:20:04 GMT

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Thanks. Hard to find something phono related that goes with Watt. How about KillaWatt? Just kiddin. That's kind of a stretch. Guess GrooveWatt is my go to name for the time being. I thought of SpinWatt as well this afternoon at work, another good name.

That's a fine offer of a T-shirt if someone comes up with something good. What I need to do is set some money back to build that ForeWatt of yours. I've got a bunch of Kiwames and Gen 1 Sonicaps that I hoarded for a pre project that fell thru that are just calling out to be used.

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp

Posted by [gofar99](#) on Sat, 18 Jun 2011 03:52:54 GMT

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Hi Shane, The Forewatt is also a diy project and you can check it out on the diyaudioprojects.com site. It can be built rather inexpensively if you have lots of parts hanging around. I am always happy to assist folks with their builds. There are no funky parts in the preamp and the transformer (often a pricy thing) is under \$20 from Edcor. You do need to shield the circuitry from it, but there are many cheap ways to do it. It would be interesting to hear how Sonicaps sound in it. So far I don't know of anyone who has used them. I use Jantzen Silver Z in mine. With only one cap in the signal path the choice has a big effect on the sound. One diyer found this out the hard way, by using a brand X 50 cent one. Then complained about the sound. I was polite and did not tell him what to do with his soldering iron. I suggested that maybe some better ones at least \$2 might work better.

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp

Posted by [Shane](#) on Sat, 18 Jun 2011 04:21:19 GMT

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I liked the look of the unit at LSAF. Thoughtful layout on everything I thought, and if it sounds like the one you were using with the remote volume it'd be a treat to own.

Here's a shot I took of it when I was there.....I wish I had taken a good straight down shot of it for reference.

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp

Posted by [gofar99](#) on Sat, 18 Jun 2011 14:29:43 GMT

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Hi Shane, Yes the one I was using was remote controlled. It is one of two prototypes. We had quality control problems with the remote sections and decided not to offer them at this time. The

builds were complicated and really only one of them behaves properly. (the other has a ground loop issue with the control section) I'm still looking into other sources for the remote control section, but have not found any that are suitable right now. The best of the lot is one I have here presently. It is all relay switched for volume and input. Problem is it is 16 inches wide. Nice digital display and all, but would require a much larger chassis. A maybe. I can't see a line stage preamp in a box big enough for a kilowatt SS amp. As a front end for a stereo KT88 amp perhaps. A dual mono version of the Oddblocks with built in Forewatt. Could work. It would be massive - something in the order of 60 pounds and be rather costly - I would guess in the \$2500 range. Not exactly an affordable kit IMHO.

If I can get the other remote control Forewatt to behave, I may sell it off. I really don't need two.

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp
Posted by [Shane](#) on Sun, 19 Jun 2011 02:14:14 GMT
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Moved to a new topic to keep the focus on the new phono pre.

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Sat, 02 Jul 2011 03:06:08 GMT
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Hi Everyone, I posted the diy project version of the Phono Preamp in the tube section. I like Shane's name for it - so that is what it is called. I owe you an Oddwatt "T" shirt so let me know (PM me) on where to send it. Eventually a kit will come out for this preamp, but it will be a number of months away as it takes time to do the cad work on the design and get suppliers to fabricate the PCBs, chassis and other parts. I'm sure there are some of you who could build it in a weekend. I believe you will like the sound.

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp
Posted by [Shane](#) on Mon, 04 Jul 2011 03:46:29 GMT
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Thanks!!! I actually did something right this time

I'm gonna try and round up parts to do a Forewatt hopefully in the fall. We'll see. I've also got most of the parts to do Richard Gray's preamp as well. It uses a single 12AU7, but is completely different otherwise.

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Sun, 17 Jul 2011 01:09:25 GMT
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Hi All, especially Shane. I've not forgotten the T shirt....I'm trying to get an XL for you. At present all are just Large. The phono preamp is really sounding excellent now. I also just got my new PC based DSO to replace the one I smoked so I can do more detailed measurements.

Good listening
Bruce

Subject: Re: Valve Phono Preamp
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Sun, 25 Sep 2011 16:04:20 GMT
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Hi Everyone, An update on the phono preamp (Groove). One of the two prototypes is being circulated among high end audiophiles in Michigan and initial results are rather favorable. The initial information relayed to me One person was surprised it didn't make crappy music sound better (duh) then tried some really good vinyl and was amazed. Said something like he could hear the rosin on the bow of the violins. Better ears than mine for sure. He thought it sounded better than his \$2500 preamp (I have to find out what brand that was). The second prototype is in my main system and being used daily. Lovely sound. We (Oddwatt Audio) are in the initial phases of sourcing the kits. I hope it is ready for Christmas, a really nice gift. However as a small company we can only field so much at one time and it seem the KT120 mono blocks will get out first.
