

STEREO — VIDEO & MULTIMEDIA —

STEREO

AMR CD-777 Review

‘From the Old School of Good Audio’

By Nikolay Mikheyev
Authorised Translation



At first glance, it is immediately clear that the AMR CD-777 in looks, form, factor and weight, this player is a very attractive proposition within its price category.

Further investigation into the internal construction confirms that we are dealing with an exceptionally high quality product. The modular design of the circuitry and the neat wiring are all very nice. The massive power supply contains ten consecutive stabilizers, three DC and 14 special stages of passive filtering to maximise the noise reduction to the extreme.

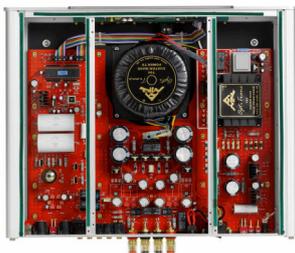
Construction

The transport is an in-house design and consists of a Sony K-series laser and a Philips CD-18 servo system driven by a powerful motor.

To reduce jitter, the manufacturer refused to employ traditional solutions and developed their own system which they have called OptiClock Lock®. The reason for establishing such a system is to synchronize the clock generators to reduce jitter levels.

At the core of the machine is a Multibit digital-analog converter based on the Philips TDA 1541A chipset. So-called "old school", this family of DACs has gathered worldwide recognition as one of the best and in its heyday, was widely used at the heart of many a high-end CD player.

The Philips Multibit approach is without compromise. This era of chipsets only perform the digital-to-analogue conversion and nothing else.



As such, secondary duties are located externally. This has allowed the AMR designers to implement their own analogue and digital filters in an external circuit.

The additional chip saw them create their unique AMR OptiSample® system. This uses a Texas Instruments

Digital Signal Processing chip with 6 modes of Sampling: Direct Master (without filters in general - Digital Master I), its own analog filter (Digital Master II), Oversampling (2x and 4x oversampling) and Upsampling (increasing the frequency of oversampling to 96 kHz or 192 kHz).

All this functionality opens the possibility of the CD-777 machine to perform as a CD-transport or as an independent, integrated machine. In such functional variants, the feeding of the signal is performed via a USB interface or S/P-DIF, with their own 'jitterless' circuitry which eliminates jitter during signal transfer.

In fact, we can say that at the user's disposal are SIX players with the ability to switch on the fly and the ability to also functional as an external digital-to-analogue converter (when fed by a Professional USB sound card) which allows any source to obtain the highest sound quality performance.

The basis for the construction of the analogue output stage is one of no negative feedback served by the 6H1P-EV valve.



The 'EV' letters incidentally, denote that this is a military-grade valve. The company made the decision to use this

valve as it was notable for its longevity and the ability to produce a special "vinyl" sound.



In the CD-777, the manufacturer has fitted traditional RCA-connectors and an XLR output as well, all the while, maintaining a single-ended circuit throughout.

Sound

Now about the sound.

Simply put, this player surprised us with its wide dynamic range and tonal accuracy.

Many believe that valve machines do not offer bass. In this case, you just need to hear the CD-777 once. From the upper bass of 40 Hz and down, the sound is particularly articulate and tonal density is spot on, without a lack of "boom".

The upper frequencies are airy and clean without any sharp edges. The depth of the soundstage, resolution and transparency is perfectly consistent with live music. Also one cannot fail to note its unique ability to adapt to the tastes of listeners – through the six sampling modes, all switchable on the fly.

The lack of filters in Digital Master I leads to a slight roll-off in the upper frequencies

which is useful for very bright recordings. The other setting, Digital Master II does more justice to the audio signal. It is more detailed and dynamic without the typical hard, "digital" sound.

The AMR CD-777 has an amazing tonal accuracy and keeps pace with changes in the pace of the sound. But at

the same time, it is not devoid of emotion, this is a key characteristic of any equipment wishing to be considered a "thoroughbred" in this category which the CD-777 has certainly stated its credentials.

+ Advantages:

High-build quality, stylish, hybrid circuit, 6 versions of sampling, remote control with backlight

- Disadvantages:

None

<http://www.stereo.ru/>

Specifications

Modes:

Direct Master I; without analogue and digital filters

Direct Master II; without a digital filter, analog filter anti-sin (x) / (x)

2x Oversampling

Oversampling 4x

Upsampling 96KHz

Upsampling 192KHz

Transport in-house design, top-loading

Digital audio inputs 1 x USB interface, 1 XS / P-DIF interface (shared)

Analog Outputs: 1 x RCA; 1 x XLR to channel

Digital outputs: 1 x S / P-DIF interface

Valves: 6H1P-EV, ECC88, E88CC, 7308, Cca, 6DJ8, 6922, 6H23n-EV

Output voltage, V> 2

Output impedance, Ohm <150

Frequency characteristics, Hz (+0.0,-0.5dB) 20 - 20 000

Signal to Noise Ratio 'A' Weighted:> 100 dB

Total harmonic distortion + noise (THD + N) <0.3%

Dynamic range, dB> 90

Channel Separation, dB> 90

Transformers 2 x 32 VA Custom EI Transformer (digital path and tube-like cascade)

Power consumption, Watts Standby: <1, Power on: <45

Rated voltage 100V/120V/230V ~ AC 50Hz - 60Hz

Color silver, black

Dimensions (WxHxD) 45x12x37 cm

Weight, 11.5 kg