



Viva Perreaux!



PERREAUX SILHOUETTE SXP2 PASSIVE PRE-AMPLIFIER PERREAUX SX60M MONO-AURAL AMPLIFIERS



Perreaux is a New Zealand company formed in 1974 that is internationally recognised as an innovative leader in its chosen field. Perreaux's philosophy has been to keep its products simple and reliable while performing at the highest standards. This holds true for the new Silhouette series featured here.

The Silhouette's most obvious external design feature is its small size - the compact design is both elegant and functional.

The SXP2 passive preamplifier front panel hosts only a volume control and a source selection switch, while the two SX60m power amplifiers present a clean face to the front and each has an on/off switch on the rear panel. When stacked on top of each other, the three components take up a very small space and are the epitome of simplistic styling.

Maintaining a small form while retaining sufficient connectivity is a testament to Perreaux's design team. The 60 watt mono-aural block power amplifiers feature both balanced and unbalanced line in and out connections (RCA and XLR). The preamplifier has space for three pairs of RCA inputs, plus two variable and one fixed line output. Being passive, there is no remote control.

I was slightly taken back when I saw these three components for the first time. Not that there is anything wrong with small, but this is hardly de rigueur from Perreaux, who are more famous for producing large rack-breaking amplifiers. From a puritanical perspective, many people believe that using a passive pre-amp to drive mono-aural amplifiers is about as good as it gets, though it's not often you see this being done with tiny components.

Once set-up was completed, I let everything settle in for a day or two before I really listened to what was going on. It was clear from the outset that being small was not an indication of power output! I tried the Perreaux with a pair of Wharfedale Opus 1s and with my Dynaudio Contour 3.4s. I was delighted by how well the Wharfedales were driven; they sounded smooth and controlled. This is something my Musical Fidelity amplifier struggles with, reinforcing my belief that the MF is not a great match for the Wharfedales. I was astounded by how well the Silhouettes gripped the Dynaudios and any

concerns about the lack of brawn from such small devices was quickly put out to pasture. Not only was there oodles of power, but the sound-staging and low noise floor were immediately apparent. The Perreaux brought out the best in my speakers. Perhaps they were not driven to within an inch of their lives, but I also felt no need to try. The sound was encompassing and satisfying at all levels. I've not had any previous experience with passive pre-amps, but I suspect this component had a large part to play in the smooth aural delivery.

So there you have it - something of a surprise for those that thought Perreaux had gone soft. They have managed to deliver a series of amplifiers that meet the needs of the modern living space while upholding their reputation for producing 'big' amplifiers! ■ STEVE SMITH

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DETAILS

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SPECIFICATIONS

Perreaux SX60m Mono-aural Amplifier (x2)
• 60 watts (8 Ohms)
THD: 20 Hz – 20 kHz into 8 ohms – 0.006 per cent
FREQUENCY RESPONSE: – 5 Hz to 60 kHz – +0dB, –0.25dB
SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO: 100 dB
DIMENSIONS: 216 x 178 x 58 mm
WEIGHT: 2.4 kg

Perreaux SXP2 Passive Preamplifier
THD: 20 Hz – 20 kHz into 8 ohms – 0.002 per cent
FREQUENCY RESPONSE: – 5 Hz to 60 kHz – +0dB, –0.50dB
SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO: 118 dB
DIMENSIONS: 216 x 172 x 58 mm
WEIGHT: 1.1 kg

PROS
+ Smooth sound
+ Masses of power
+ Small form factor

CONS
✗ Casework feels a little under-engineered

VERDICT
Loads of power and top sound quality from tiny units

Aesthetics	87%
Performance	93%
Features	90%
Functionality	90%
Price Value	92%
Overall	

