

# ΗΧΟΣ

## ΕΙΚΟΝΑ

ΣΥΝΕΤΕΥΞΗ:  
ΣΑΒΙΝΑ ΓΙΑΝΝΑΤΟΥ



ΠΙΚΑΠ  
THORENS TD 850



DVD PLAYER  
DENON DVD-A1XV



ΒΙΝΤΕΟΠΡΟΒΛΕΑΣ  
MARANTZ VP-12S4

### MUSIC BANK

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ΜΑΚΡΙΝΑ ΕΛΛΑΔΡΦΙΑ, UNISEX  
ΟΙ ΣΗΜΑΝΤΙΚΟΤΕΡΟΙ ΔΙΣΚΟΙ ΚΑΙ  
Η ΜΟΥΣΙΚΗ ΚΙΝΗΣΗ ΤΟΥ ΜΗΝΑ

SPECIAL TEST: ΗΧΕΙΑ ΒΑΘΗΣ ΕΡΣΕ 600 €  
ΔΟΚΙΜΕΣ: MISSION H-CUBE ΗΧΕΙΑ  
HOME CINEMA, PRIMALUNA  
PROLOGUE TWO ΟΛΟΚΛΗΡΩΜΕΝΕ  
ΕΝΙΣΧΥΤΗΣ, D-LINK DSM320  
ΑΣΥΡΜΑΤΟ MEDIA PLAYER, PROJECT 2  
ΧΡΕΙΜΑΤΑ ΠΙΚΑΠ, ΕΙΚΟ ΕΙΡ-10V DVD-  
ΒΙΝΤΕΟΠΡΟΒΛΕΑΣ, ΟΡΤΟΜΑ Η30Α &  
H57 ΒΙΝΤΕΟΠΡΟΒΛΕΑΣ, McINTOSH  
C45 ΠΡΟΕΝΙΣΧΥΤΗΣ, SAMSUNG DVD-  
HD850 DVD PLAYER,  
HIGH-END: TRANSROTOR TOURBILLON  
ΠΙΚΑΠ, MERIDIAN 8081 CD PLAYER,  
TECH-TALK: ΡΥΘΜΙΣΗ ΠΙΚΑΠ

# ΗΧΕΙΑ MEGA TEST



### PHOTO PHONE



KODAK EASYSHARE Z740  
DYOR 2005: ΟΛΑ ΤΑ ΝΕΑ ΜΟΝΤΕΛΑ



## PrimaLuna ProLogue Two



**Distribution:** Aquarius Hi-Fi

**Contact:** 210.8834.718

**Price:** 1.470 Euro

**Verdict:**  4.6

WORDS: PARIS KOTSIS

# > Black Velvet

Welcome to the main menu of PrimaLuna sound experience...

You may feel bad about Chinese-made products, but when it comes to PrimaLuna, that all changes. The company from the Netherlands that created a world buzz with its ProLogue One integrated amplifier, has already unveiled at the CES a preamplifier and two power amps based on EL34 and KT88 output tubes. Noteworthy to the preamp is dual mono architecture with tube rectification and choke filtering, independent for each channel. The "Made in China" aspect is, of course, only one part of the story. The other part is quite different and rather revolutionary: a special, custom-made output transformer designed in the US, and a special, patented circuit that checks and adjusts the bias in a constant, automatic way. You no longer need worry about aging tubes or "matched pairs." So there you have it: great value/money ratio and user friendliness, both terrifically rare among tube amplifiers.

Of course, success doesn't come easily for any hi-end product unless there is some serious sound designers behind it. Unlike other manufacturers, PrimaLuna is not one-man show, but rather a team effort, with silent partners such as former Goldmund designer Marcel Croese. Heading the team is Herman van den Dungen, a highly capable person. It's true that these days one can see PrimaLuna amps everywhere, with scores of rave reviews and awards. As some "doubters" have stated, PrimaLuna must have its way in the worldwide press, more so than other manufacturers. While this could be true, it's also misleading to think that way. The review process in general is completely different now with the explosion of the Internet (dedicated web sites, chat rooms, bulletin boards, etc.) and no magazine—especially a famous one that wants to retain its reliability—could afford to ignore the buzz about a giant-killer amp.



The second incarnation of PrimaLuna's integrated amp, the "ProLogue Two" retains the construction and aesthetics of the "One," as well as the input and driver tubes (ECC82, ECC83), however the output stage is now two pair of KT88s providing 40 watts per channel. Small yet important changes include utilizing more capable, ultra-fast diodes in the power supply and Solen Tin Foil caps in the signal path (instead of the Realcaps of the ProLogue One). Overall construction is superb, with ceramic bases for the tubes, encapsulated/shielded, custom output transformers, toroidal power transformer, hard-wired signal path, a choke filter and of course that beautiful blue-black gloss. The amp also has a soft-start function and of course, the auto-bias feature.

### BIG & SECURE

Two months ago, I was quite lucky to receive the ProLogue One after it had been properly broken in by the retailer. Unfortunately, that was not the case with the Two, which came to me with no play time whatsoever. The first 2-3 hours were good, but then everything collapsed into a heavy, dark, shut-in sound. It was only after 150 hours of use that the amp started to shine again and at around 250 hours, it settled in with its final sound. I asked the ProLogue Two to drive the high-sensitivity Horning Hybrid Agaton and my own custom, high-sensitivity, 3-way speakers. I also tested it, under harder conditions (a small room) with the Harbeth Monitor 40. All met with resounding success. These big speakers can be very hard to follow unless the amp has serious resolving capabilities and bass power. ProLogue Two certainly has this capability which is why I prefer the KT-88 over EL 34: it creates a bigger, deeper soundstage; it portrays a fuller body experience throughout the midrange; it goes further into the deep bass and extended highs; and last but not least, it sounds to my ears more neutral, with a more balanced tonality. It is the tube of choice in my single-ended amp (Unison P30K) but now, with the ProLogue Two, the time has come to enjoy the KT-88 in such a rare push-pull design.

So the ProLogue Two seems to be the big brother of the P1, both in price and sound. Nevertheless, it is equally clear and distortion free; like having the same DNA, which in this case is metaphorically true. Compared to the single-ended Unison, the ProLogue Two is quieter, has

### FEATURES

**Power:** 40Wrms

**Fr. response:** 20Hz-30KHz ( $\pm 0.5$ dB)

**Inputs/outputs:** 4 line/ 8&4Ohm

**Consumption:** 300W

**Dimensions:** 39x27,5x19 cm. (WDH)

**Weight:** 18 kilos

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less harmonic distortion and possesses equally dense definition but can't equal Unison's rhythmical ability, aliveness and texture. Speaking from memory now, ProLogue Two is not as huge as Graaf GM50 but is more balanced in tonality and quieter. This is the point at which the PrimaLuna sound excels: it is dead quiet and distortion-free, factors that can be easily heard and measured in the lab (actually both PrimaLuna amps provide the best measurements I've ever taken on tube amps). But this is not accomplished at the expense of beauty. Instead, midrange is magical, palpable and three-dimensional; full of tonal colors, with almost no trace of crossover distortion. This is indeed a fresh, new sound approach regarding push-pull designs.

Summing up, ProLogue Two is a bullet-proof amplifier that deserves a BIG 5 STARS for its combination of sound purity, high quality construction, driving ability and the ergonomics it offers. It was no surprise then that I bought the review sample, as it was easily welcomed by my speakers as well as my heart. It is almost always powered on, without showing any sign of stress, instability or over heating, and it is always capable of producing velvety sounds with delicate transients and mirror-like, grain-free treble. If I weren't such a fanatic about single-ended sound, I don't think I would search for anything else after having auditioned the ProLogue Two. I would just partner it with a proper monitor speaker and a tube-based CD player (as it is utterly revealing of other component's sonic signature), and simply enjoy my music thereafter. ■



## Lab Report

ProLogue Two reached flat (-0,1dB) at 10Hz and at 77KHz (-3dB), a fine response for a tube amp. Noise was again exceptionally low, reaching at -72dB, a solid state territory of quietness. Distortions were slightly more than ProLogue One, at 0,15% (instead of 0,1%). Lastly, power was measured at 37W@5% THD, from both 4 and 8 Ohms taps, while keeping distortion at 0,3% THD (solid state standards) it still produced a healthy 14W (like ProLogue One). An overall superb lab report.



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