

Metronome Le Player 3



BOJAN JOVIC 02/10/2020

Metronome precision

After the CD player and D / A converter, we tested the third model from the Classica series - it is a CD transport called Le Player 3.



If you have not read the previous tests and are not familiar with the range of a reputable French manufacturer, we will remind you that the models from the Classic series make up the beginning of Metronome Audio's offer, but that this should be understood quite conditionally. Namely, it is a true high-end manufacturer, so the Classica series can be said to be a ticket to the highest class of devices, which means top quality workmanship, extremely great features and, of course, the right price.

Quality in every detail

As expected, the Le Player 3 fully follows the design characteristic of the entire series and on the outside relies heavily on the related Le Player 2S model. The front panel is made of one piece of solid aluminum 10 millimeters thick, in a brushed finish, which is visually divided into three parts. The largest, central part was used to accommodate a disc drawer on the left side, while a black Plexiglas panel was placed on the right side, with a numeric screen and attractive chrome buttons. Controls include buttons to control playback, switch between tracks and open the drawer, as well as additional commands to select the sampling frequency, which will be discussed later.

The powerful upsampler presents itself as much more than just audiophile entertainment - it is performed at a very high level and is capable of audibly improving the sound.

Although made in a conventional manner, with the upper and sides of the case in one piece, the Le Player 3 features exceptional finishing quality. The chassis and cover are made of two-millimeter-thick steel, with a flawless finish, while three massive feet on the underside are in charge of stability and anti-vibration. In addition, the kit comes with three cone washers made of a thermoplastic polymer known as delrin, which are attached under the feet with a magnet to keep contact with the substrate to a minimum. As Le Player 3 does not contain an internal D / A converter, there are only digital outputs on the back. The setup is quite complete and contains one optical and one coaxial output, an AES / EBU connection via a balanced XLR port and an IS2 connection in the form of an HDMI port.



Equally high-quality workmanship continues under the hood: inside the housing we find a large printed circuit board that covers the entire surface, except for the front left corner, where the transport is located. The disc mechanism is housed in its own metal shield for additional insulation, and the manufacturer states that it is a Philips GF8, which has been modified in order to achieve even more stable rotation. Behind the transport are two smaller toroidal transformers from the American manufacturer Talem, each in its own armor with integrated coolers, as well as a capacitor bank on which many lower category amplifiers could envy this metronome. In addition to five large electrolytic capacitors from the Italian manufacturer Kendeil, with a capacity of 10,000 microfarads per piece, there are as many as 26 smaller capacitors from the Taiwanese company Jackcon, so the total capacity is 76,000 microfarads, which is impressive for a device of this type. The internal wiring is kept to a minimum and very neatly placed, while the control electronics are housed on an additional, raised PCB to the right of the drive mechanism and feature, among other things, a MediaTek MT1389XE CPU and an AMtek AM5888S drive wheel. Still, one of the most interesting circuits in the interior is the AK4137EQ circuit from Asahi Kasei, which functions as a 32-bit asynchronous signal converter with an integrated oscillator and allows the sampling frequency to be raised all the way to DSD128 quality. MediaTek MT1389XE CPU and AMtek AM5888S drive wheel. Still, one of the most interesting circuits in the interior is the AK4137EQ circuit from Asahi Kasei, which functions as a 32-bit asynchronous signal converter with an integrated oscillator and allows the sampling frequency to be raised all the way to DSD128 quality. MediaTek MT1389XE CPU and AMtek AM5888S drive wheel. Still, one of the most interesting circuits in the interior is the AK4137EQ circuit from Asahi Kasei, which functions as a 32-bit asynchronous signal converter with an integrated oscillator and allows the sampling frequency to be raised all the way to DSD128 quality.

A powerful upsampler

During testing, the Le Player 3 presents itself as quite easy to use, despite the advanced features it is equipped with. All commands are available via the system remote control, and the only thing that disappointed us a bit was the outdated, although quite informative display of the numerical type, which simply does not fit the device of this segment. Still, the Metronome is somewhat redeemed by the brightness control option, which can be adjusted in five steps via the remote control. Therefore, the upsampler is shown as the only command for which it is necessary to reach for the device itself. Namely, the two buttons to the right of the display provide selection of the desired frequency of the output digital signal in the range from 44.1 to 192 kilohertz, including all intermediate values (48, 88.2, 96 and 176.4 kHz), as well as DSD in versions 64 and 128 (2.8 and 5.6 MHz).



After inserting the disc, Le Player 3 performs the reading a bit slower, but this is a feature of many high-end optical readers. The noise level during operation is much more important, and in this respect the Metronome proves to be an exemplary quiet device - the mechanism can be heard at the very beginning, when starting the disk, after which it is almost completely silent, even when you get very close. In addition, the response to all commands is quite fast, so Le Player 3 is a real pleasure to use.

Although CD transport does not affect playback quality as much as speakers or amplification, its contribution is undoubtedly significant. Basically, the thing is simple: more accurate reading and less error correction in the digital domain will provide a cleaner signal, which will result in subtle improvements in sound when switching to better quality transport. We therefore connected Le Player 3 to the related Le DAC D / A converter via an AES / EBU connection, and as a result we got an unforgettable musical atmosphere. As we have known the tonal signature of this DAC for a long time, we were able to be convinced of the complete neutrality of transport, with perfectly precise and clear sound. In addition, the powerful

upsampler presents itself as much more than just audiophile entertainment - it is performed at a very high level and is able to audibly improve the sound. For the best results, it should be provided with quality production,

Who is it for?

After testing, we are sure that transport of this quality will improve the sound of any system in which CDs are one of the main sound carriers. With the right quality D / A converter, this metronome will enhance even lower-end systems, and the integrated upsampler will further enhance any record. Le Player 3 received all the recommendations from us as a capable and flexible CD transport, which was created to be a permanent solution in the position of an optical reader.

METRONOME LE PLAYER 3

Mounts: CD, CD-R / RW

Formats: CD-Audio

Upsampling: up to DSD128

Transport: Philips GF8

Digital outputs: coaxial, optical, AES / EBU and I2S

Dimensions (WxHxD): 450x115x435 mm

Weight: 11 kg

Price: 4,600 euros

Vox Trade, 011 / 3016-230

METRONOME LE PLAYER 3

Top quality workmanship.Silence at work.An exceptional upsampler.Precise and detailed sound.

A dot matrix or LCD screen would suit a device of this class better.

4.7 Overall Score

Quality of workmanship	* * * * *
Functionality	* * * * *
Sound	* * * * *
Value for money	* * * *

Translated by Google