MARK LEVINSON Nº5206

Mark Levinson №5206 preamplifier with PurePath fully discrete, direct-coupled, dual-monaural line-level class A preamp circuitry, MM/MC phono stage, and MainDrive headphone output.

EVOLUTION

Derived from the same Pure Path design philosophy as the distinguished Mark Levinson №500 series products, the №5206 preamplifier was created to deliver all the performance and quality expected from Mark Levinson with new affordability and exceptional value.

ARCHITECTURE

The foundation of the №5206 is its fully discrete, direct-coupled, dual-monaural line-level preamp circuitry, for which the Shelton design team has been awarded one patent with another patent pending. A unique single gain stage mated to a digitally controlled resistor network for volume adjustment maintains maximum signal integrity and widest possible bandwidth. Each of its four stereo line-level inputs—two balanced XLR and two single-ended, using custom Mark Levinson RCA connectors—has its own individual high-reliability signal switching relays. Like the №500 series components, the MainDrive headphone output employs a preamp output stage specifically designed with the current and power capacity to drive headphones directly, without a separate headphone amp.

A newly designed phono stage features a hybrid gain topology, mating key discrete components from the acclaimed №500 series Pure Phono stage with low-noise pre circuits for high performance at a lower cost. Also, like the №500 series, a hybrid active/passive RIAA equalizer employs precision resistors and polypropylene capacitors for exceptional accuracy and sonic clarity. The user can select MM/MC gain and optional infrasonic filter from the setup menu, while capacitive and resistive loading settings are easily accessed from the rear panel. Variable line-level RCA outputs allow system expansion and flexibility.

DIGITAL AUDIO

The №5206 delivers outstanding digital audio capability through the Mark Levinson Precision-Link II™ DAC. The class-leading ESS Sabre Pro series 32-bit D/A converter with jitter elimination circuitry and a fully balanced, discrete current-to-voltage converter form the heart of the digital audio processing stage. Six digital audio inputs are provided: One AES, two coaxial and two optical S/PDIF, and one asynchronous USB for playback of high-resolution PCM (up to 32 bit/384kHz) and DSD (up to 11.2MHz) files. The №5206 includes MQA (Master Quality Authenticated) technology, which enables playback of MQA audio files and streams. A Bluetooth receiver equipped with aptX-HD enables the high-quality Bluetooth playback.

CONTROL

System integration and communication ports include Ethernet, USB, RS-232, IR input, and 12V trigger input and output. A newly designed, solid aluminum IR remote is included with the №5206. Finally, an internal webpage allows setup, import and export of configurations, and software updates using a PC and standard web browser.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Robust materials, lavish finishes, and bold geometry are hallmark attributes of Mark Levinson designs. The one-inch-thick, bead-blasted, black-anodized, solid aluminum front panels are machined and contoured to flow seamlessly into the sleek glass display, which itself is recessed into a bead-blasted, clear-anodized aluminum bezel.

The iconic hourglass knobs redefined with a gently curved profile softly transitioning into a rounded front. With meticulous details, including, debossed top cover vents, screen-printed logo and legends behind the glass panel, and custom machined aluminum Standby and Menu buttons, and matching feet, the №5206 exudes elegance and style.

The №5206 is proudly designed, engineered, and precision-crafted in the USA.

Performance Specifications

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All production №5206 units will undergo 100% functional testing prior to shipment, and the following features and electrical measurements will be verified on all units. All production units will meet or exceed all specifications listed below.

ANALOG LINE STAGE

Gain:
8dB maximum, single-ended outputs
14dB maximum, balanced outputs

Output overload:
>7.5V RMS, single-ended outputs
>15V RMS, balanced outputs

Frequency response:
20Hz to 20kHz, ±0.03dB
<2Hz to 250kHz, +0.1/–3dB
[At unity gain volume setting]

Total harmonic distortion:
<0.003%, 20Hz to 20kHz
[At unity gain volume setting,
2V RMS single-ended/4V RMS balanced out]

Signal-to-noise ratio:
>93dB, 20Hz to 20kHz, wideband, unweighted
[At unity gain volume setting, referred to 2V RMS single-ended/4V RMS balanced out]

Subwoofer high-pass filter:
Selectable; 80Hz, 2nd order (12dB/octave)

PHONO STAGE

RIAA frequency response:
20Hz to 20kHz, ±0.3dB

Infrasonic filter:
Selectable; 20Hz, 1st order
(6dB/octave)

Moving-magnet mode

Input resistance:
47kΩ

Input capacitance:
Selectable; 20, 70, 120, or 170pF

Gain:
39dB at 1kHz

Total harmonic distortion:
<0.01%, 1kHz, 2V RMS output
<0.05%, 20Hz to 20kHz, 2V RMS output

Signal-to-noise ratio:
>80dB, 20Hz to 20kHz, wideband, unweighted, referred to 2V RMS output

Maximum input level:
>190mV at 1kHz
>1.6V at 20kHz

Moving-coil mode

Input resistance:
Selectable; 37Ω to 1000Ω

Gain:
69dB at 1kHz

Total harmonic distortion:
<0.01%, 1kHz, 2V RMS output
<0.05%, 20Hz to 20kHz, 2V RMS output

Signal-to-noise ratio:
>68dB, 20Hz to 20kHz, wideband, unweighted, referred to 2V RMS output

Maximum input level:
>6.5mV at 1kHz
>19mV at 20kHz

DIGITAL-TO-ANALOG CONVERTER STAGE

Output voltage:
5.6V RMS at 0dBFS, maximum volume, single-ended outputs
11.2V RMS at 0dBFS, maximum volume, balanced outputs

Frequency response:
20Hz to 20kHz, +0/–0.05dB
[with 44.1kHz/16 bit signal]
20Hz to 20kHz, +0/–0.02dB
[with 192kHz/24 bit signal]

Total harmonic distortion:
<0.0025%, 20Hz to 20kHz, 3V RMS single-ended output [with 44.1kHz/16 bit signal]

<0.002%, 20Hz to 20kHz, 6V RMS balanced output [with 44.1kHz/16 bit signal]

<0.002%, 20Hz to 20kHz, 3V RMS single-ended output [with 192kHz/24 bit signal]

<0.0017%, 20Hz to 20kHz, 6V RMS balanced output [with 192kHz/24 bit signal]

<0.004%, 90kHz, 3V RMS single-ended output [with 192kHz/24 bit signal]

<0.003%, 90kHz, 6V RMS balanced output [with 192kHz/24 bit signal]

Signal-to-noise ratio:
>92dB, 20Hz to 20kHz, wideband, unweighted, with 44.1kHz/16 bit signal [referred to 3V RMS single-ended or 6V RMS balanced output]

>98dB, 20Hz to 20kHz, wideband, unweighted, with 192kHz/24 bit signal [referred to 3V RMS single-ended or 6V RMS balanced output]

Sample rates/bit depth:
PCM: 32, 44.1, 48, 88.2, 96, 176.4, 192, 352.8, or 384kHz; up to 32 bits

DSD: Native or DoP; single, double, or quad speed (2.8, 5.6, or 11.2MHz)

HEADPHONE OUTPUT

Total harmonic distortion:
<0.04%, 20Hz and 1kHz, 2V RMS output, 30Ω load
<0.1%, 20kHz, 2V RMS output, 30Ω load

Output overload:
>3.3V RMS, 30Ω load

Signal-to-noise ratio:
>88dB, 20Hz to 20kHz, wideband, unweighted, referred to 2V RMS output

GENERAL

Analog input connectors:
2 pairs balanced line-level inputs (XLR)
2 pairs single-ended line-level inputs (RCA)
1 pair single-ended moving-coil phono inputs (RCA)
1 pair single-ended moving-magnet phono inputs (RCA)

Digital audio connectors (№5206 only):
2 coaxial S/PDIF inputs (RCA)
2 optical S/PDIF inputs (Toslink)
1 balanced AES/EBU input (XLR)
1 asynchronous USB input (USB-B)

Output connectors:
1 pair single-ended line-level outputs (RCA)
1 pair balanced line-level outputs (XLR)

Control connectors:
1 RS-232 port (DB-9)
1 Ethernet port (RJ-45)
1 USB port for firmware updates (USB-A)
1 baseband IR input (⅛"/3.5mm phone jack)
1 programmable 12V DC trigger output, 100mA maximum (⅛"/3.5mm phone jack)
1 programmable 12V DC trigger input (⅛"/3.5mm phone jack)

Power consumption:
Power on: 70W
Power on (headphones connected): 85W
Normal standby: 65W
Power Save standby: 4W
Green standby: <0.4W

Dimensions/Weight
Unit only:
Height: 4.96"/126mm
Height without feet: 4.50"/114mm
Width: 17.25"/438mm
Depth, enclosure only: 18.00"/457mm
Depth, with knobs and rear connectors: 19.25"/489mm
Weight: 34 lbs/15.4kg

With packaging:
Height: 13.63"/346mm
Width: 24.25"/616mm
Depth: 29.00"/737mm
Weight: 48 lbs/21.7kg

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