

McIntosh

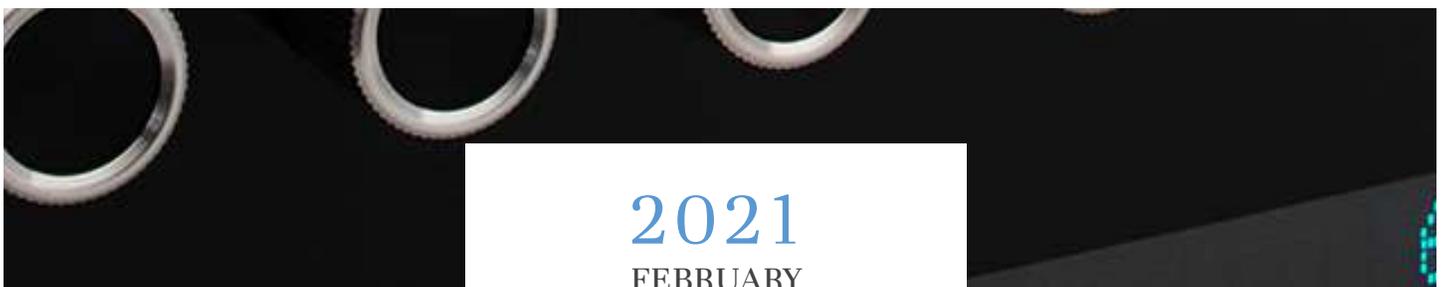
MA12000

F. del Pozo



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2 - CHANNEL HYBRID INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER



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Francisco del Pozo

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Super Amplifier

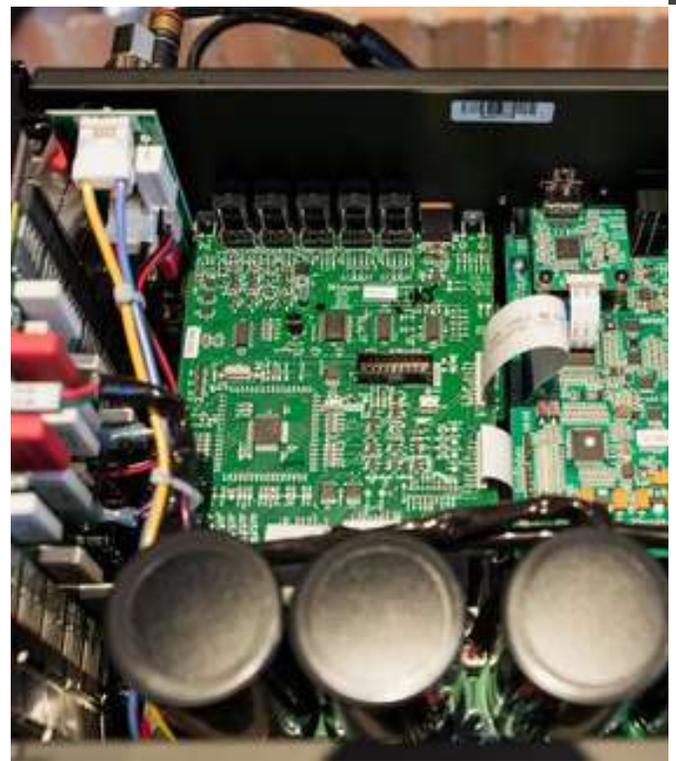
When McIntosh launched the MA12000 Hybrid Integrated Super Amplifier, it once again took another step to write the legend of the great audio giant, which is the Binghamton-based brand.

There are few manufacturers today who can boast of the legacy of tradition, prestige and longevity that the North American manufacturer has, to tell the truth, the MA12000 had it relatively easy, just perhaps its hefty bill in terms of weight... and price, could somehow put into question what would come to be later, and is that previously the manufacturer had launched the MA9000 that had become one of the great integrated amplifiers of the moment, in the case of MA12000, in addition, was accompanied by a pre-amplification section based on a hybrid tube vacuum model, with which McIntosh once again demonstrated that it was a brand that was linked to its roots, that connects directly with vacuum tubes devices, otherwise, the MA12000 included all the patents that have led the brand to be one of the leaders in the world audio market, among others the Power Guard® system, McIntosh Monogrammed Heatsinks™ or Sentry Monitor™, patents that make McIntosh noise and distortion levels practically negligible, on the other hand, in the MA12000 destined, born, to become the next king of integrated amplifiers, all the elements that the brand had implemented in its reference amplifiers and preamps, as among others the C53, including a phono section of the highest level, capable of rivaling the best separate units on the market, as well as a digital module, conveniently updated, unlike the model incorporated in the C52 and now, just as the brand did with the C53, the so-called DA2 module, with the latest DAC chip from the manufacturer ESS Technology.



A wide range of inputs and outputs, both single-ended and XLR, an extremely flexible menu in which it is possible, not only to rename the different sources that are used, but also to assign different gain values, to each one of them separately, making a delight, the possibility of comparative tests, a headphone output, also of the highest level and as if that were not enough, “all spiced up”, just like the one with the reference C53 preamplifier, with an equalizer, which the brand calls 8-band tone control, 8 equalization bands that, without formally responding to the scheme of a graphic equalizer, does allow the device’s frequency response to be individually adjusted in up to 8 zones in order to optimize it to the requirements of the room.

And of course, and already speaking of the power section, how could it be otherwise, McIntosh decided for what is to be one of the great characteristics of his reference components, the Autoformers, in addition to that aesthetic heritage marked by the glass, the vumeters and the chrome, if anything defines a purebred McIntosh, it is the use of the so-called Autoformers, or transformers, in the final output stages, an ingenious solution that has already proven that McIntosh has dominated for a long time and that allows an optimal impedance adjustment between the amplifier and the loudspeakers, in this way there is practically no loudspeaker, however difficult and demanding it may be, to be used. Stand up to the combination of the brute force of a McIntosh, coupled with sobriety, when it comes to distortion and noise levels, and the controllability to adapt to the impedance that Autoformers have. That McIntosh sound is a majestic sound, it is a relaxed sound, it is a sound that does not attract attention at any time, but that is demonstrated when the circumstances require it.



03 McIntosh® MA12000



They come to coexist in a same body, the strength, the toughness and the power of Arnold Schwarzenegger, with the finesse and beauty of Grace Kelly.

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VOLUME



On the other hand it could not be said that was greatly missed with the McIntosh MA12000, and it is that the McIntosh MA12000, as I said before, has become, in its own right, the new king of integrated amplifiers, somehow, they come to coexist in a same body, the strength, the toughness and the power of Arnold Schwarzenegger, with the finesse and beauty of Grace Kelly.

Is the new great McIntosh integrated amp, the new great amp on the market.



During the time that I was able to live with the MA12000, I was surprised how close it is to my C52 preamp and MC611 mono blocks, from the same manufacturer, with almost any speaker that I have been able to use or have been able to use for testing , it is never really necessary, nor is it missing, the extra power that MC611 monophonic blocks can provide, if it is not with very high-demand loudspeakers, due to their low sensitivity and their very difficult curve impedance, how can they be, for example, Magnepan 1.7. In any case, the MA12000 was always more than enough, powerful in abundance to be able to dominate any loudspeaker, including the aforementioned ones, although it is true that the monophonic blocks allowed to extract the quintessence of the Magnepan.

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