



February 2011

# Magnet RV2

- + First-class acoustic homogeneity
- + Very good depth
- + Excellent spatiality
- + Excellent workmanship

Convincingly crafted, cultivated and powerful as well as nice-sounding stereo valve amplifier



**Price/Performance: OUTSTANDING**

# Magnat RV2



**Magnat RV2 stereo valve amp – tradition, quality and harmony of sound**

## Introduction

Already the object of admiration at the last IFA: Magnat's RV2 tube amplifier on sale for 1999 euros. It's an example of high-quality amplifier design for stereo fans who love the special slightly warm and very pleasant sound of valves at a justifiable price. A performance of 2 x 50 watts is delivered at four and eight ohms and at 20 Hz to 20 kHz with a total distortion factor of less than 1%. This hefty product weighs in at 23 kilograms and possesses a full-metal case with an eight-millimetre thick front panel. We examined how much more performance the successor to the RV-1 could deliver.

The grand RV2 weighing in at 23 kilograms looks as if its been manufactured from solid metal. Only a few controls adorn the front panel made from eight-millimetre thick aluminium – as is to be expected from such dedication to the pursuit of the basic theme of acoustic purism. A precise ALPS motor potentiometer is responsible for precisely controlling volume. The input is switched by a reed relay. The corresponding control makes a very solid impression as does the one for adjusting the balance. The reverse of the RV2 also impresses with its stable and good-looking loudspeaker-cable sockets that will also take high-quality banana plugs. The cinch sockets are spaced far enough from each other to also allow high-end cables to be easily connected. The device is of course given stability by feet on its base.

A remote control made entirely from metal, which is only responsible for the volume, has been included. There's also a mute button – but then that's all. The very solid back on the remote needs to be removed with the included screwdriver when the batteries have to be changed. The MM/MC phono preamp demonstrated its performance capacity through low-noise operational amplifiers. The Class AB power amplifier equipped with select Russian and already burned-in (60 hours) Type 6550 valves delivers a performance of 2 x 50 watts at four and eight ohms (20 Hz to 20 kHz). The total distortion factor is less than 1%. Magnat has installed a powerful mains adapter with voltages stabilized separately for the individual circuits in order to ensure that optimum power is always available. Analogue inputs for Phono MM, Phono MC, CD, Tuner, AUX and Tape are located on the rear. An analogue REC output has also been provided.

## Sound

Corey Hart – Sunglasses at Night: This cult song from the 1980s has been acoustically renovated and may be found on the "So Eighties 2" sampler. The RV2 dedicated itself to rendering this piece with power and a surprising authenticity. Changes in dynamic were recognized well, the release from the boxes also succeeded very well – that is on high-quality speakers.

Howard Jones – What is Love: The RV2 also demonstrated its stability when disco hymns from the 1980s were thrown at it. Particularly the homogeneous self-contained fundamental range with solid, valve-typical but never distracting warmth was highly appreciated. Due to the operating principle that produces high thermal loss, the RV2 did not constitute a miracle of volume but was very still pleasant to listen to when levels were turned up considerably beyond the normal room volume while the RV2's outstanding work in the bass range was also very enjoyable. Who needs a sound control when the basic settings with excellent depth, substance and precision are so convincing? Only acoustic fools would feed such an "elite sound unit" as the RV2 with poor software using booming mid-tones, no bass and screaming trebles, such an application would urgently require DSP post processing.

Brian Ferry, It's all over Baby Blue: This song from Ferry's "Frantic" album was rendered with a clear structure and well-defined vocal contours. The system produced an outstanding spaciousness in the treble range when used in conjunction with loudspeakers possessing ribbon tweeters such as our Aurum Vulkan VIII. Compared with the RV1, the RV2 delivered a fresher and livelier as well as more detailed treble range. It's performance was for a valve amplifier highly respectable. The separation of voices and instruments also succeeded very well. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sonata for Two Pianos, Allegro: The sometimes very fast playing caused the RV2 surprisingly few difficulties. The piano's temperature was excellently reproduced with the very good resolution delivering a coherent reflection of keyboard expression. The clear contours produced a three-dimensional and emotional sound which was distributed throughout the listening space in an outstandingly even manner. Noise levels have been

reduced through the use of high-quality components to such a degree in the RV2 that they weren't audible even when the volume was turned up high. Antonio Vivaldi, recitative and aria from Cantata RV679: We have rarely been able to enjoy such a successful rendering of the very difficult to reproduce harpsichord in our test room. So pleasant but so easily penetrable – it caused joy and amazement. The female voice was also enjoyable. The equal rendering of instruments also confidently produced highlights. The RV2 pursues its tasks homogeneously with a touch of refinement and cultivation and is able to audibly improve on its predecessor. It sounded a little softer and didn't bring out as many details into the light. Within Temptation, "The Howling": Taken from the "The Heart of Everything" album, this title takes off with a bang right after a brief intro. And the jump in dynamic was not captured with first-class quality but the RV2 did handle the task in a for a valve amplifier very adroit style. And what we really liked and what can't be mentioned often enough: The casual always pleasant and never pressing style of rendition. You just settle down on the couch and listen – nothing detracts from or spoils the listening fun. The depth, when the amplifier is used with large floor loudspeakers was fine, even high-quality active subwoofers were mercilessly degraded making them superfluous extras. The electric guitar sounded full of energy, the female voice full of clearly recognizable contours. Jan Hammer Project featuring TQ, Crockett's Theme: The powerful and yet not imprecise or washed-out bass reached right down into the frequency cellar taking its very good volume with it. The electric guitar parts sounded emphatic and also impressed with spaciousness. The sound was also excellently released from the loudspeakers with this example.

Andrea Bocelli, L'Attesa: This as ever very emotional title was taken from the "Andrea" album. The RV2 responded splendidly with a great sensitivity that was expressed within an impressive breadth and depth of rendition. The strings presented themselves wonderfully smooth, clear and finely integrated. The transitions between the individual frequency ranges were structured gently and almost unnoticeably so that the presentation produced the pleasure of a uniform and consistent experience of sound.

Faithless, Insomnia, album version of "The Best of Faithless": The bit-for-bit build up of this trance classic from the 1990s was expressed very well. The RV2 presented each added effect precisely. The hard kicking bass lacked a little definition and speed. But spaciousness was again outstanding. The sound was easily released from the loudspeakers to spread like a finely woven acoustic carpet through the listening space. The different levels of sound could be distinguished right to the back – the RV2 practically left nothing out.

## General characteristics

Magnat's RV2 presented itself as a stereo valve amplifier for connoisseurs of sound. Those who prefer lavishness with a bit of warmth and cultivation but do not wish to sacrifice a certain dynamism should be well-served with the RV2. It would be great in music rooms and it harmonizes very well with loudspeakers that are able produce a spatially far-reaching treble range. Boxes connected to the RV2 should also bring depth and a powerful bass to the party.

**Overall rating of the sound in relation to the purchase price:  
Excellent – outstanding.**

## Conclusion

Magnat's RV2 has improved on its predecessor in regard to acoustics: It sounds more detailed, handles the depths better and is more spacious while the treble range is simultaneously freer and more resolved. The very high quality of the build, which extends right down to the final detail, speaks for the RV2 as does the fair price.