

**AUDIO
FILE**

Plattenspieler mit elektronischer Geschwindigkeitswahl
Hersteller: Pro-Ject Audio Systems, Austria
Vertrieb: Audio Tuning Vertriebs GmbH, AT
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Web: www.project-audio.com; www.audiotuning.com
Preis: € 2.590 (inkl. Tonarm, Tonabnehmer und Phonokabel)



Pro-Ject Xtension 9 Super Pack

Pro-Ject's Xtension 9 Super Pack mates the Xtension 9 Evolution turntable and 9CC Evolution arm to the new Ortofon Quintet Black MC. Its plinth measures a nicely compact 465x350mm and so size-related rack placement is not an issue.

This is made from MDF and filled with a metal granulate to produce a non-resonant, high mass, base all topped with a very swish paint finish in High Gloss Red or White. The deck stands on three damped aluminium feet, pre-adjusted for level at the factory.

The platter is machined from a non-resonant alloy that is internally damped close to its periphery. This spins on an inverted ceramic bearing aided by a magnetic suspension system to further reduce the load seen by the bearing. It

'Vocals sounded solid and perfectly locked between our speakers'

is topped with an interface layer made from recycled records and a heavy record puck is supplied – the use of further mats is not recommended by Pro-Ject.

The motor sits in the left hand rear corner of the plinth and is normally sheltered under a sturdy metal cover. A single push-button

at the front of the plinth starts and stops the platter and also selects 33.3 or 45rpm.

Pre-fitted to the deck is the latest version of Pro-Ject's 9CC Evolution tonearm, which consists of a single piece, variable-thickness carbon fibre armtube and headshell, pivoting on high quality ABEC7 bearings. Four sorbothane-damped counterweights are supplied for cartridge matching. The arm is fully and easily adjustable for VTA (via arm height) and azimuth.

The Super Pack deal is completed by the range-topping Black variant of Ortofon's new Quintet cartridge series. This is a conventional low output MC design sporting a fine nude Shibata stylus.

A COHESIVE WHOLE

This deck exhibits that certain indefinable sonic 'rightness' that generally characterises the upper reaches of the Pro-Ject range. We were immediately struck by the superbly low subjective levels of groove noise and background mush.

The Eagles' 'Long Road Out Of Eden' [Universal] starts with some quiet instrumental artefacts that stretch off into the soundstage on the left hand side and the Pro-Ject captured the scale and depth of these perfectly, sweeping the action dramatically and precisely from

left to right when the full band began. Don Henley's vocals sounded large, solid and locked perfectly in between our loudspeakers.

Anita Baker's vocals on 'Caught Up In The Rapture' from her *Rapture* album [Elektra 960444-1] were beautifully clear. Equally, the drum strikes backing her were taut and well defined, helping to render the whole performance as a tightly cohesive whole. Better still was the Pro-Ject's fine sense of image stability that painted a vivid and expertly scaled sonic picture in our listening room.

A well designed arm and cartridge, plus a good quality drive system and heavy platter should also be a recipe for a good bass performance and so it generally proved to be with the Pro-Ject. Albums were underpinned by good weight and a rhythmically adroit guiding hand – although occasionally, we felt that the Xtension 9 Evolution was approaching the limits of its comfort zone with more punchy, fast-paced material.

The most notable example we found of this was with Galaxy And Phil Fearon's 'Dancing Tight' [Ensign]. Here, the low end was slightly lacking its customary sense of spot-on timing and impact. Generally speaking, we found the Pro-Ject to be assured and smooth at the bottom end of the spectrum.

FAZIT

Die sorgfältige Verkleinerung des originalen Xtension Design, die Ergänzung eines aktualisierten und verbesserten Tonarms ergibt eine fast fehlerfreie Plattenspielerkombination. Mit dem preisreduzierten Spitzen-Tonabnehmer als Draufgabe bekommt man ein echtes Schnäppchen.

HI-FI NEWS SPEZIFIKATIONEN

Geschwindigkeitsabweichung bei 33,33 Upm	33,27 Upm (-0,18%)
Hochlaufzeit	5sek
Max. Speed-Drift / Max. Gleichlaufschwankungen	0,07% / 0,02%
Rumpeln (leere Rille, DIN B wtd)	-68,2dB / -68,7dB (mit Klemme)
Rumpeln (durch Lager, DIN B wtd)	-67,6dB
Brumm & Störgeräusche (unwtd, rel. to 5cm/sec)	-61,1dB
Leistungsaufnahme	6W
Maße (BHT) / Gewicht	465x185x350mm / 16kg