
The Latest Advance from John Curl

In the face of the recent advances in cartridge technology, it was inevitable that a renowned industry leader would solve the problem of the 'weak link.' John Curl, in great part responsible for the legitimacy of audiophile transistor electronics, approached the project with these design goals: wide bandwidth with no overall feedback; inaudible noise and distortion; and total isolation from all external electrical energy, especially RFI.

From these criteria, Curl produced the finest and most musical booster amplifier ever created. The heart of the circuit is Curl's complimentary push-pull solid state circuitry, composed of two gain modules, each Class A push-pull (inverting polarity). The devices themselves, with extreme current capabilities, are special-production components, optimized for this circuit. Matched with the ultra-low impedance, wide bandwidth power supply, these high current transistors guarantee that the amplifier is fast enough to handle signals in excess of 200 KHz.

Less Noise Means More Music

The SOTA Head Amplifier will reproduce complex musical transients effortlessly, with none of the strained hardness common to all other transistor models. The sound of the SOTA proves again Curl's talent for translating definitive research into definitive musical performance. In fact, the SOTA amplifier represents not simply a healthy respect for measurements, but an even healthier respect for human hearing and the reproduction of music in your listening room. Final evaluation occurred at home, in real-world hi-fi systems. No other head amp in our experience matches the smoothness, the coherence, nor the focus of the SOTA.

In comparison with other active boosters, we found much evidence to support a major assumption of ours: that noise, even at the threshold of hearing, has dramatic effects on dynamic range and clarity. We conclude that the blurred imaging and perceptual smearing of other head amps answers to interference (such as hum and RFI), inaccurately termed 'background noise.'

The Steel Cylinder: Form Follows Function

The SOTA solution is visible in the shape and the material of the enclosure: both the cylindrical design and the quality milled steel act to shunt and to neutralize outside electric fields. Together, they produce a veritable isolation shield. Unlike the commonplace square boxes of aluminum (a material with negligible effect on magnetic fields), the steel cylinder, throughout our testing, showed the importance of the shielding. With the enclosure in place, the sound is distinctly cleaner, with wider dynamic range and definition. In short, the SOTA Head Amplifier is immune from the interference which plagues all other designs.

Further, the goals of inaudible noise and immunity to hum pick-up result in the use of a battery power supply to eliminate the spurious interference from the A.C. line. Batteries guarantee isolation from A.C. hum. The SOTA Head Amp achieves the lowest possible noise levels consistent with low distortion. In particular, each channel has been individually nulled for lowest second harmonic distortion. No matter how critical your stereo system, there should be no audible noise added by the SOTA Head Amplifier.

The SOTA Step-up: The Booster for all Systems

To assure complete compatibility with all major cartridges, our pre-pre-amp offers three choices for impedance matching (5, 30, or 100 ohms) and the option of either a 18 or 27.5 dB gain setting for both high and low output moving coils. To assure complete consistency and reliability, each SOTA is individually evaluated and tested by hand.

We at SOTA are confident that the age of the moving coil is just beginning. If the moving coil has come to dominate up to now, imagine its musical impact with the support of an absolutely first-class head amp. Our simple claim: most careful listeners will conclude they are hearing their cartridges for the first time.

Finally, it will be apparent why only with a superlative step-up device can you know what a superlative moving coil you have. That's why we say the SOTA takes the measure of your cartridge and phono system—and perhaps your entire set-up. For many of you, it is our hope that the SOTA will clarify—in more ways than one—why you bought a moving coil cartridge in the first place!

SOTA
industries

P.O. BOX 7075, BERKELEY CA 94707

Specifications: SOTA Head Amp

Frequency Response (+0/-3 dB)	6-160 KHz
Harmonic Distortion (20KHz)	less than .02%
Intermodulation Distortion (@ 100 mV)	less than .05%
Crosstalk (20-20KHz)	greater than 70 dB
Equivalent Input Noise (at 1 volt)	- 146 dBV
Output Impedance	180 ohms
Channel Balance	.1 dB
Output (max)	.25 V (typical)
Type of Circuit	Inverting Polarity
Power Supply	2 Alkaline "D" cells
