



POWER UP

Adding Graham Slee's own external PSU1 (£155) power supply to the Revelation C raises the overall price of the phono stage to £895, but the benefit it brings to the already strong performance is immediate. The low noise floor drops away even further and the very slight leanness to the midrange is reduced, helping thinner recordings sound a little fuller without any detrimental effect on the speed and musical agility with complex bass routines. The same slightly dark character of this phono stage partnered with the van den Hul cartridge is retained, which may or may not appeal, but helps to lend it an urgency that is extremely appealing to my ears. The advantage, of course, is that you can upgrade to the PSU1 power supply as and when you see fit rather than splashing out the extra from the off.

Graham Slee Revelation C £740



Small but perfectly formed, this MC-only preamp is a tweeker's delight and has some unique functionality

DETAILS

- PRODUCT**
Graham Slee Revelation C
- ORIGIN**
UK
- TYPE**
MC phono stage
- WEIGHT**
300g
- DIMENSIONS**
(WxHxD)
107 x 50 x 180mm
- FEATURES**
 - Multiple EQ curves
 - Mono mode
- DISTRIBUTOR**
GSP Ltd.
- TELEPHONE**
01909 568739
- WEBSITE**
gspaudio.co.uk

With a range consisting mostly of models where the gain and loading settings are fixed (or at least set to a single position), the Revelation C is fairly unusual as it offers an extensive choice of adjustments. This includes gain and impedance (in keeping with the rest of the models in the test), but you can also alter the EQ curve and select mono if you so choose.

This is the only model here that doesn't also support an input for moving-magnet cartridges (the Revelation M is equipped for this task). The adjustments are made via a series of multi-position switches on the front panel with the stereo and mono adjustment on the rear.

Externally, the Revelation C is somewhere between functional and austere. The casework is very similar to a number of other Graham Slee products we have looked at in the past with a simple but fairly attractive design that feels solid and likely to last a very long time. As standard, the

Revelation is supplied with a 24V wall-wart power supply, but an optional linear PSU is available (see box out).

Sound quality

With the high gain setting selected, the Revelation has no trouble hitting the test level and there is no appreciable background noise. From the outset, some behavioural traits are very distinctive and influence the performance across all the test material. This is a blazingly fast sounding phono stage that tears through *Ode To The Big Sea* with a speed and precision that is superior to anything else in the group.

Tonality is also extremely believable. Cato van Dyck's vocals in *Mary Morgan* are textured, detailed and effortlessly real. The way that plucked guitar notes appear then decay away is very compelling and this immediacy is something that pulls you into the performance. At the same time, the design statement that the Revelation has been built – at least in part – as an

archiving tool makes itself felt at times. Even these relatively good recordings are not immune to having some of the limitations of their mastering pointed out and in a system with other revealing components, the balance might tip too far towards the forensic for some. This has no effect on the spaciousness and soundstage that's on offer, though, which is consistently good and helps the Ray LaMontagne piece sound just as it should.

With the final Depeche Mode track, the Revelation's abilities make for a superb performance too. The speed and attack coupled with the bass response result in a powerful performance and there is an appealing tonal darkness to the upper registers that complements the nature of the music extremely well. The slight congestion that is present in the upper midrange is handled well and the emotional content to the vocals is delivered very effectively ●



Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| SOUND QUALITY
★★★★★ | LIKE: Engaging performance; useful adjustability; build |
| VALUE FOR MONEY
★★★★☆ | DISLIKE: A little pricey; unflattering with some recordings |
| BUILD QUALITY
★★★★★ | WE SAY: A talented and very clever phono stage that delivers excellent sound quality |
| FEATURES
★★★★★ | |

OVERALL

