

Regain the dynamic sound of the original master tape with Master Sound Works

State of the art technology that will reintroduce you to the sound enjoyed from master tapes of the live recording.

Master tapes capture all of the music information as it is—the individual expression of the strings,

wind instruments, drums, and vocals, the color and harmonization of their sound,

and well beyond that, the atmosphere of the concert hall and the passion of the audience.

ESOTERIC created Master Sound Works with the goal of regaining the richness of the master tapes without losing anything.

Carrying forward the next generation of TEAC's long heritage in advanced audio tape technology,

ESOTERIC sets a new standard in high-end audio.

Master Sound Works



Stereo Linestage Preamp

C-03



Stereo Linestage Preamp C-03 Specifications

General

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Power supply | Europe model | AC 230 V, 50 Hz |
| | U.S.A./Canada model | AC 120 V, 60 Hz |
| | Korea model | AC 220 V, 60 Hz |
| Power consumption | | 18 W |
| Weight | | 22 kg (48 lb 8 oz) |
| External dimensions (W x H x D) | | 445 x 129 x 383 mm (17 1/2" x 5 1/16" x 15 1/16") |

Audio features (Gain=0dB mode)

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Maximum output level | 7 V |
| Rated output level | 2V |
| Output impedance | 47 Ohms (RCA) 100 Ohms (XLR) |
| Total harmonic distortion | 0.005% (1 kHz, 2 V input) 0.001% (1 kHz, 2 V input, Awgt) |
| Frequency response | 5 Hz to 120 kHz (-3 dB) 10 Hz to 35 kHz (-0.5 dB) |
| Signal-to-noise ratio | 100 dB (2 V input, Awgt) |
| Gain | 0 dB /+12 dB switchable |
| Input sensitivity | 2.05 V (rated output) 870 mV (850 mV output) 410 mV (400 mV output) |
| Maximum input level | 7 V |
| Input impedance | 40 k Ohms (RCA, XLR) |

• Design and specifications are subject to change without notice • Weight and dimensions are approximate.

ESOTERIC

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English version



A preamp that combines exquisite quality with simplicity and sets a new high end standard!

At ESOTERIC, we have carried the pursuit of high quality sound to the highest degree, from circuit designs and internal wiring that view "luxury" as standard, to the L/R dual mono configuration, custom power supplies and high performance volume control. ESOTERIC technology has focused more than twenty years of experience to further the "State of the Art."

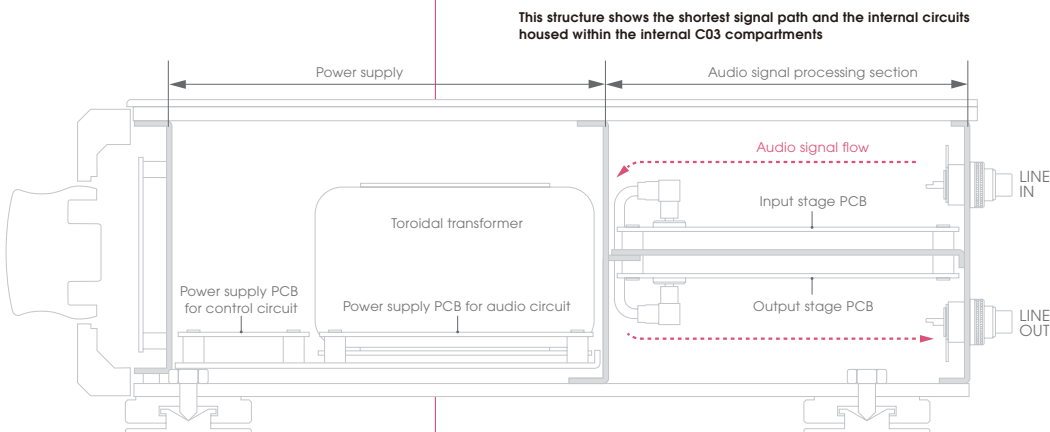
High-end design concept based on the essentials

Deliver premium quality audio signals into a carefully configured central circuit and eliminate any elements that are not absolutely necessary. This minimalist, essence-oriented circuit design brings unequalled sound quality to the C-03 lineage preamplifier.

Eliminating extraneous circuits such as those for tone control and REC out functions from the signal circuit, has enabled us to create the shortest possible signal path. By minimizing circuits, we've been able to achieve an optimal layout with the highest grade of components. We have also arranged the input and output audio boards with one above the other in a dedicated compartment at the rear of the chassis close to the rear ports. This design results in an even shorter signal path that is "true to the source." The buffer amplifier in the C-03 uses a high definition discrete circuit configuration for input and output. The output stage delivers signals to the external power amplifier via an output buffer circuit with the same high voltage design as our monaural D-01 D/A converter. This allows ESOTERIC to deliver all musical signals through the purest possible path and with power to spare.

Meticulously continuing ESOTERIC's L/R dual mono design implementation

ESOTERIC's high-end L/R dual mono designs have won critical acclaim worldwide and this implementation has been fully incorporated into the C-03. Stereo equipment usually combines the signal path for right and left channels, the power path, and the component layout into one circuit board. Unfortunately, this type of design often includes various disadvantages. The C-03 nullifies these disadvantages with its dual mono design incorporating two identical audio boards, one for each of the right and left channels. Furthermore, each channel has its own dedicated power section and large 200VA toroidal transformer. By completely dividing the right and the left, the C-03 achieves perfect separation between channels and enjoys an overwhelming superiority over traditional systems.

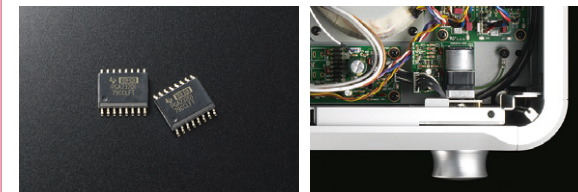


The volume control system, a key component of the preamplifier

When designing the C-03, we reviewed numerous devices and worked on developing circuits and housings from the earliest stages of the system's evolution with the goal of achieving the very highest sound quality.

In our search for the perfect components for the master sound concept, we conducted repeated trial listenings to compare the sound of variable resistance amplifiers and volume control amplifiers, finally settling on a right angle potentiometer made by Burr-Brown (TI). By locating this device independently on each audio board, we pursued the dual mono configuration even into the realm of the volume control—something that is usually shared between the left and the right channels. Because the audio signals are routed through the audio board only, the audio circuit can be limited to the rear half of the compartment, where the input/output terminals are also located.

The volume control knob indicates the volume intuitively through the position of the pointer. A microcomputer recognizes the knob's position via an A/D converter, setting the correct volume for the knob's position on the volume control amplifier. Control of left and right channel balance, input sensitivity, and total gain, are comprehensively controlled by a microcomputer which sets the volume control amplifier's gain in a single location. Unlike when these controls are performed by several circuits, with the C-03 there is no signal degradation or changes in acoustic quality when each item is adjusted.



High sound quality via five lines of input and three lines of output

Connect up to five input devices to the C-03 via its three RCA and two XLR input lines. Input terminals (other than those selected), are completely isolated from the circuit, totally eliminating electrical impact from inactive inputs. This design helps to achieve a higher level of sound quality by eliminating noise. Input terminal RCA3 can bypass the preamplifier in the main body so it is ideal for connecting an A/V system to the C-03. In addition to one XLR line, the outputs include two more useful lines for bi-amplification. The C-03 provides three output options so you can choose between RCA, XLR, or a combination of the two.

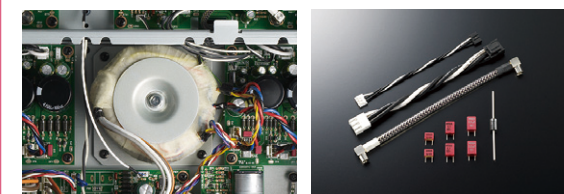


An elaborate design cuts out noise from the microcomputer

We've enhanced the purity of the sound signal by electrically isolating the control signals from the microcomputer to the audio circuit, courtesy of a photo coupler that prevents digital noise from originating in the control section. Additionally, the C-03 turns off the microcomputer for a few seconds after you stop using the volume control. The microcomputer kicks back in when a dedicated circuit detects that the volume control is being adjusted again. The whole circuit is designed with the aim of achieving sound of the highest possible purity; even the microcomputer's clock is suspended while you enjoy the music signal.

High grade parts employed throughout Esoteric carefully selects high grade components after exhaustive trial listening.

Several of the finest parts possible for specific placement are selected, trial listening occurs and the part is assigned to its position based on the outcome of these tests. The sole determining factor is acoustic presence, not grade or reputation of part. This is a rare design implementation in high end audio known as design by sound (As opposed to sound by design). The C-03 is the result of an obsessive pursuit of the highest possible sound quality. In addition to a large and custom designed toroidal transformer, a high grade German condenser and high purity (99.9999%) 6N copper wire are used. We've also used rare 8N (99.999999%) high purity copper wire for the internal cabling required for the actual audio signal paths. Noise reduction achieved and faithfulness to the original master tape becomes a phenomenal experience with these system implementations.



A super heavyweight body provides the ultimate in vibration resistance

Weighing in at about 22 kg (48.5 lbs), the C-03 is a super heavyweight—the most solidly built preamplifier ever designed by ESOTERIC. The input, output, power source, and control circuits are each separated into their own dedicated compartments, preventing mutual interference and also enhancing the amp's mechanical strength and rigidity. The input and output terminals are mounted on thick 2mm steel plates that we've used for the rear panel and are connected to the inner board with flexible copper wire, isolating the inner board from the adverse effects of external vibrations. Combined with a heavy 5mm thick bottom plate supported by three pinpoint feet, this system design thoroughly eliminates the impact of external vibrations on the circuit boards.



High-end amplifier with casual elegance

The C-03's body construction follows the design concept of the ESOTERIC P-03 and D-03. The short scratch finish and blast finish contrast beautifully on the C-03's thick aluminum body. With the formative beauty of a screw-less top panel and rounded corners, the C-03 integrates beautifully with other products in the high-end ESOTERIC family.

Wireless remote control as standard

A wireless remote control that enables you to operate the input selector, the volume control, and the basic functions of ESOTERIC disc players* is included as a standard accessory. * Operation excludes the P-01 and D-01

