



Parasound JC 3+ Phono Preamplifier

(\$2,995): This sturdy, well-built, and - at nearly 20 pounds - quite beefy unit, represents electronics wunderkind John Curl's latest thinking on affordable phono pre-amplification. While not the last word in hyper detail (for that you are going to have to spend a lot more do-re-mi), the JC 3+ reproduces enough detail to satisfy all but

the most demanding vinyl addicts. Curl and the Parasound team are justly famous for bringing to market the stellar JC 1 monoblock amps and the JC 2 line stage a few years later. If you were expecting the JC 3+ to follow in the sonic footsteps of the JC 2 line stage, it's natural partner, think again. While both units are blessedly quiet and dynamic, the phono stage's lush, richer voicing paints with a more saturated tonal brush. When paired with the leaner sounding JC 2 (my current reference), the results are magical: impressively wide dynamics, superb neutrality, excellent detail retrieval, wide staging, holographic imaging, and more than a whiff of the air and ambiance one gets from great tube gear. In the real world, it doesn't get much better (Maurice Jeffries).

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