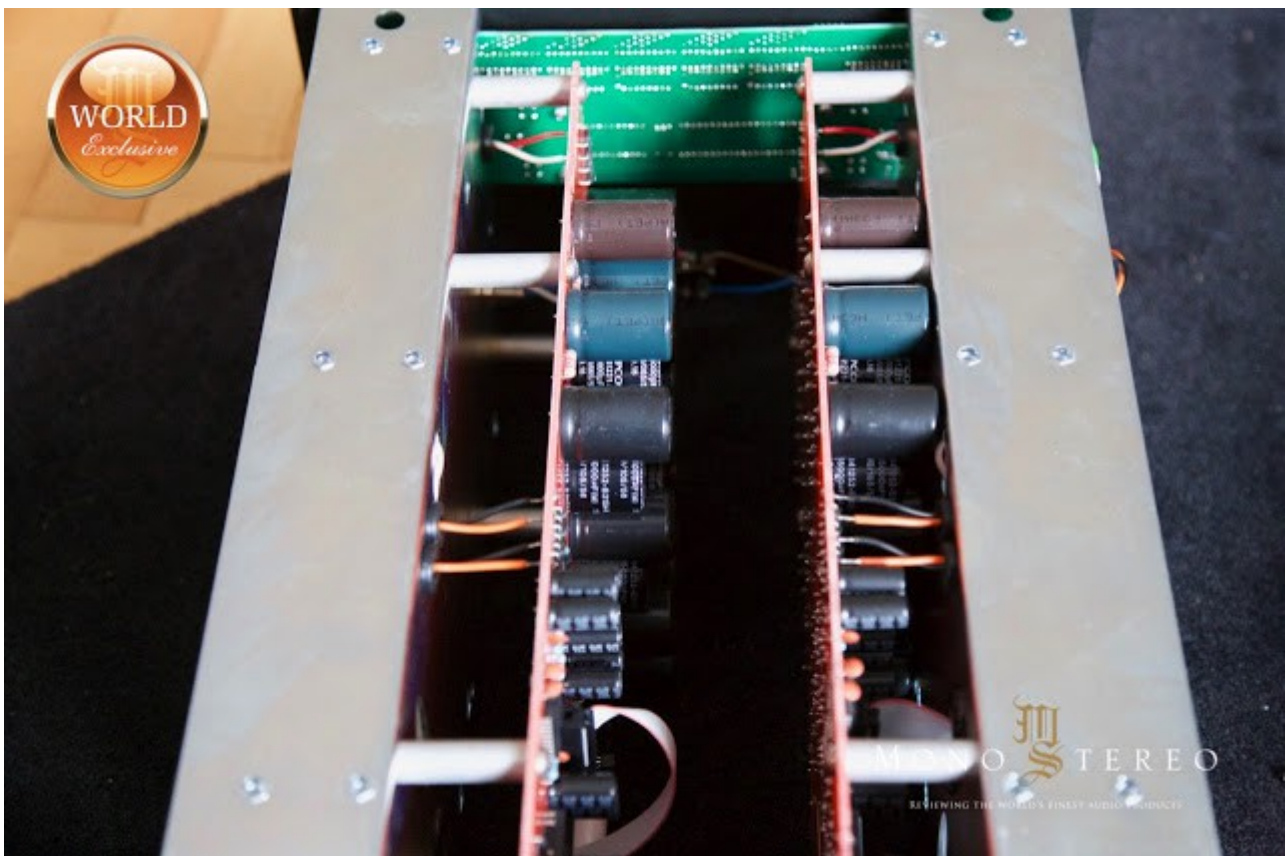


NEW GRANDINOTE GENESI ULTIMATE PREAMPLIFIER REVIEW PART ONE



I really didn't expect such an interest about the all new Grandinote Genesi ultimate preamplifier. Based on the responses and requests, that came I've write up the first part of the review about this highly potent solid state preamplifier. You can also find an exclusive peek under the hood of the Genesi's and see the internal structure and design.

So what makes Genesi tick? It was designed from ground up to bring unrivalled completeness and consistency of the sound. Genesi operates in pure Class A without feedback, is fully dual-mono based and uses direct coupling stages in absence of any capacitors between them. Genesi's circuits were designed and optimised to follow the music's pace as well as to have ability to drive any power amplifier.

Grandinote circuits are very similar across all of the Massimiliano's products and one can recognise the Grandinote DNA across the complete product line like with the products like Shinai, Celio, Volta, preamplifiers and power amps. Even the Grandinote MACH speakers are designed to to follow the sonic orientation of naturalness, speed, energy, extension, a lot of details and informations etc.

THE INNER CORE OF GENESI

The complete line of Grandinote preamplifiers (Proemio, Domino and Genesi) uses multiple power supplies. In fact, each transistor have a dedicated one! In Domino the power supply circuits are even more sophisticated then in Proemio and stabilisation is not only shunt, but double shunt design.



So, there is more filtering, but this is not the true reason why Domino is a better than Proemio. With more complex power supply, Domino circuits can use more current and thus work at lower impedance than Proemio circuits.

Genesi uses the same signal circuits, but the difference again is in the power supply. Its not doubled but four times the Proemio. Genesi circuits also works with lower impedance, than both Domino and Proemio. Basically the initial design is similar, but the real differences are in the polarisation system of the signal circuits...



This particular polarisation system is very sensitive and requires highly selected components with closely match parameters in all transistors. In order to achieve this, the first step is to test all the transistors one by one and measure all of their parameters! From batch of 1000 transistors there are only 30-60 transistors that can be used for Genesi circuits and each Genesi required four transistors. This process of selecting between the thousands of transistors requires four days of work alone! Quite a painstaking process in order to get the required matched selection of transistors, that can be used for 7-15 of the flagship preamplifiers. Yes, there are lot of trial and error and time invested, but this for example is the exact same path that Manuel Huber from FM Acoustics had atook long time ago. At the end, this cannot be cheap and reflects in the final price and most importantly in the sound.



The very hearth of every high end audio device is power supply. Grandinote Proemio can be considered to implement "basic" power supply, Domino "double basic" and Genesi as the state of the art a quad "basic".

The "negative" side of the more complex power supply is the size. While Proemio PCB boards not extend to the full chassis length, Domino's take s complete space. With Genesi bigger, more complex power supply and consequently PCB's size become even larger and that called for the grander chassis.



Massimiliano is not the fan of the external power supply as he strongly believes how power supply circuits and signal circuits needs to be close to each other to perform best. He's also trying to stay away from the "more boxes-more money" philosophy and rather focus on the quality of the sound.

He had the similar problem with the initial design of Prestigio and Divina, where separated power supply would bring down the overall weight, but the sound would suffered in a major way. The result was a separation of two channels and the birth of mono integrated amplifiers, without the external power supplies.



The Genesi challenge was similar as the PCB grew larger and Max had to do something. He had decided to remove the balanced/unbalanced circuit to gain the space for the power supply circuits. In a way the Genesi signal circuit became more "essential" than their little brothers. This particular decision closely followed Massimiliano philosophy. He strongly believe in the superiority of the balanced signals and this is what the Genesi as a flagship preamplifier fully adopted this approach. Massimiliano strongly advice against the use of RCA/XLR adaptor to obtain a balanced signal and also recommend to check out if the certain product that claims fully balanced design actually implements the real topology.



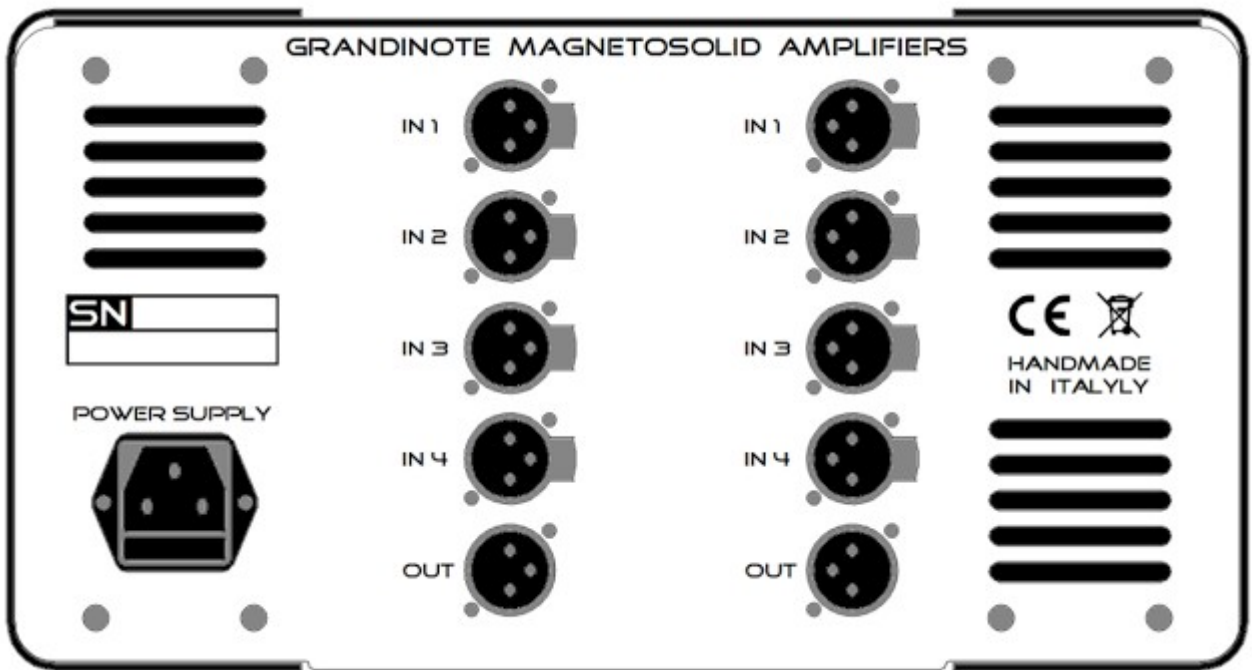
Grandinote Genesi flagship preamplifier is a complex device. Like any extreme ultra high end audio product it was born around the idea. With Genesi all started with the new polarisation system! All the rest was only painstaking path and had to realise it. The result embraces all the efforts within the very unique preamplifier.

OPERATIONAL

Genesi has only balanced inputs and one balanced output and as all Grandinote's product everything is straightforward and simple to use. Genesi comes with remote control, that covers basic functions that includes volume, mute and input selection. The same goes for the front panel, but with the addition of PRG and ON/OFF button.



The program button allows few interesting settings. Each input volume level can be saved and if it's for example set to 20, the device will slowly increase the volume to arrive at the set value. Automatic volume can be stopped at any time by pressing any button.



Next function is automatic turn off the display in automatic if there is no active change. the display don't changes for some seconds. Display will instantly turn on with the next key pressing.



And the last, but not least function is the change of the “In1” input into the line output. This reduces the number of the inputs to three and the display will indicate "OUT" instead of “In1”.

THE SOUND

Over the years I've come to conclusion how preamplifier gain works best at lower dB. Genesi uses 10dB gain and this reflects intimately within the sound. With much higher gain the sound too often starts to take over sort of a push forward and steps into the equalisation or compression realms.



While I'm yet to arrive to the optimal operating status with the 24/7 operation as suggested by the Massimiliano, the intrinsic nature of the Genesi already displayed its virtues...

There is a sense of musical clarity and sound purity with less of unwanted sonic paraphernalia. Over the years I've had a pleasure of trying many different preamplifier from both tube and solid state camps as well as some of the finest passive ones and at the end there are really not so much proud examples of the prime time! The role of preamplification is taken too often too easily and the sonic results clearly follow this logic. It's more about the higher prices these days, than about the higher performance.

The preamplifier represents the core of the gain where every single nuance is of utmost importance. Especially in the upper echelon of the high end audio nothing should be neglected or compromised. While we might reach far even in the entry level of the high end audio products, the very ultra high end audio demands much more attention and dedication. The same logic of getting the very last few percent out of any extreme product regardless of the kind follows all of the high end industries.

Within extreme high end audio, more or less we're always exposed to some exotic idea, that is followed by the electronic design, yet not everything esoteric will sound right. Its not that easy! This is why with quite few of the "ultimate" preamplifiers the sonic output follows rather the phenomena of glossolalia rather than pure musical language.



Grandinote Genesi is quite a different beast where sound is never lackadaisical, corrupt or augmented. Genesi follows the path of purity and simplicity in the signal amplification.

We're living in the 21st century where technology advancement is reaching the new heights by each year, yet still we're bound to our inner core when it comes to the something as transcendental as music and its reproduction.

Let me conclude this first part of the review with the quote from the Little Prince, that might closely follow the juxtaposition of technology and inclusion of human sensory for something as sublime and essential as audio reproduction:

"Voici mon secret. Il est très simple: on ne voit bien qu'avec le cœur. L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux."

"Here is my secret. It is very simple: one sees well only with the heart. The essential is invisible to the eyes."

Yes, it takes more than a skilful mind to create something very different and radiant. It demands a "heart" that can fine tune electronic side and morph it sublimely to work in synergy of the inner core of the music. From what I'm discovering by each new Massimiliano Magri's product coming in for an evaluation, this man knows, what he's doing!

Matej Isak

PRICE

19.800 €

TECHNICAL

Linea preamplifier

Four balanced inputs XLR (full-balanced)

One balanced output XLR (full-balanced)

Frequency response 0,5Hz - 650 kHz

Gain = 10 dB

Class "A"

No feedback

Direct coupling stages: no capacitor used

Full-dual mono

Absorption 30 W

Weight 18kg

W=318 x H=196 x L=408 [mm]

Grandinote's warranty of 5 years

CONTACT

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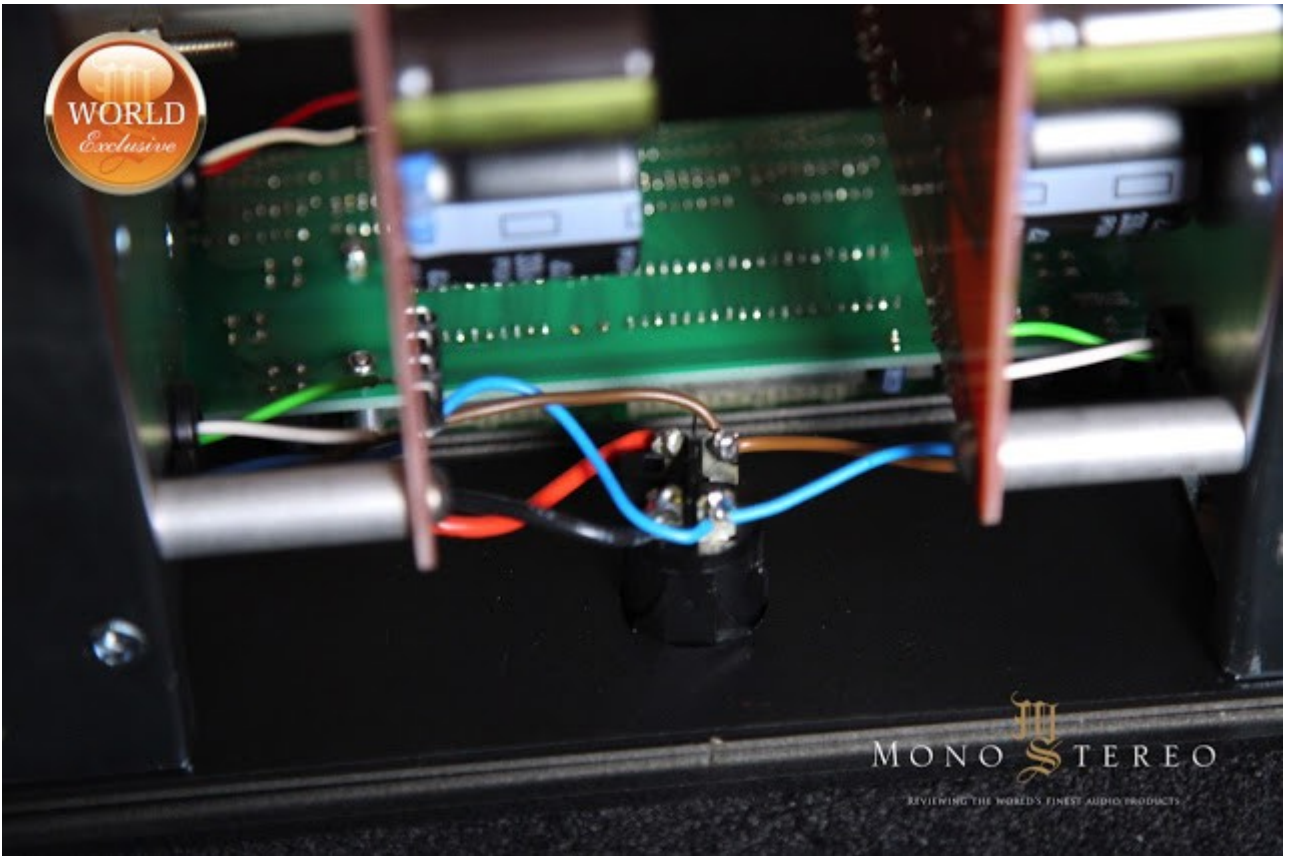
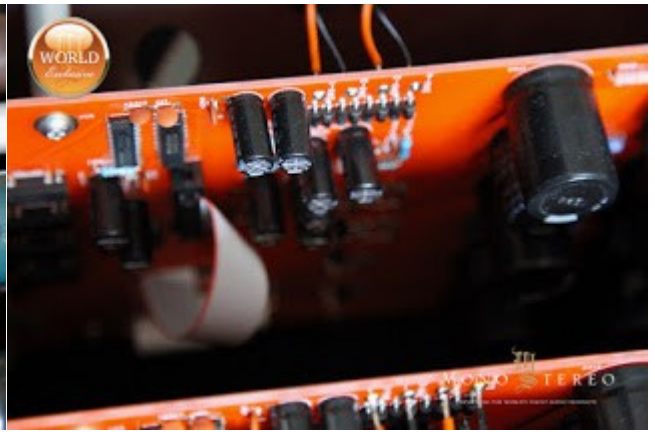
ITALY

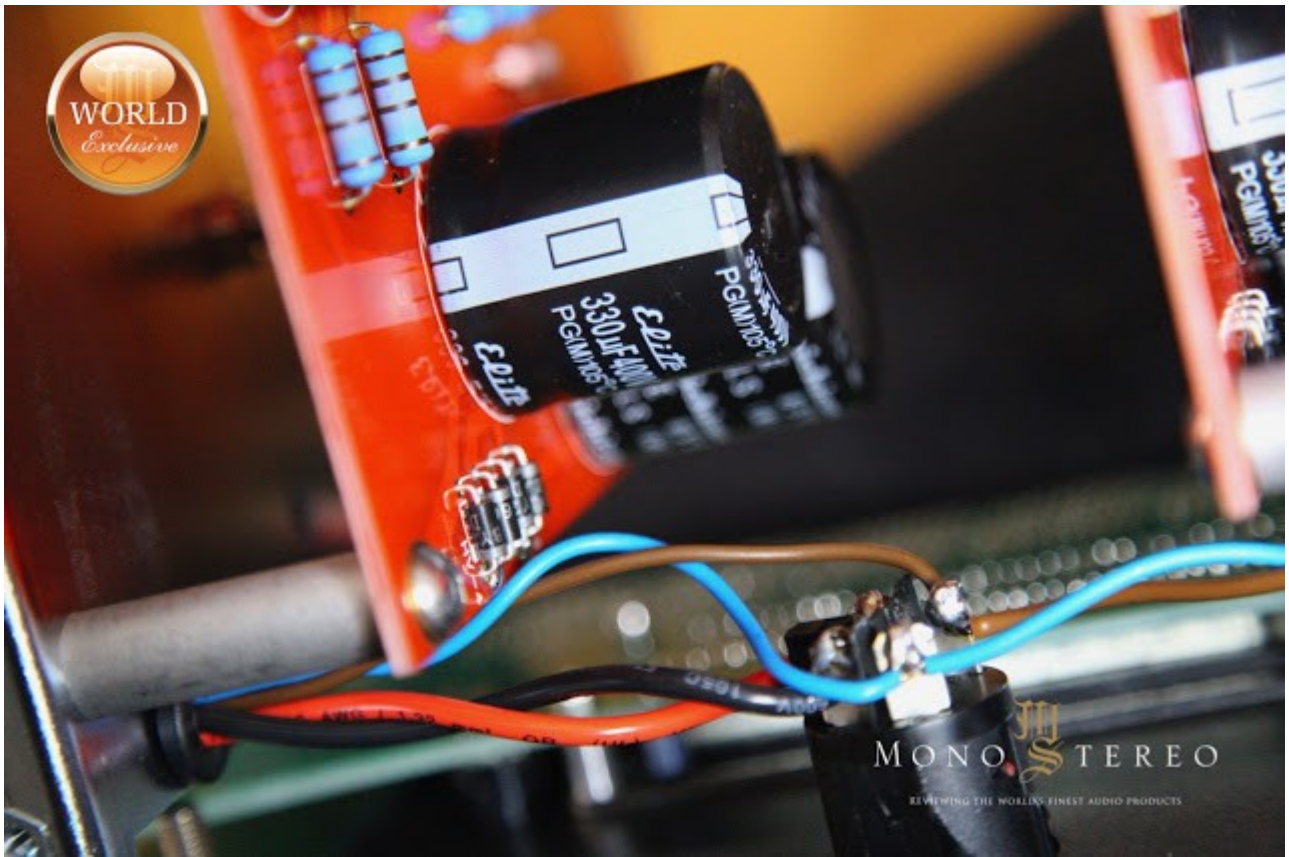
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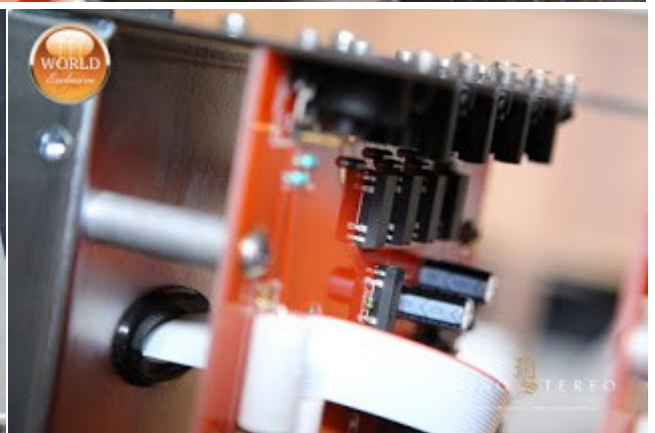
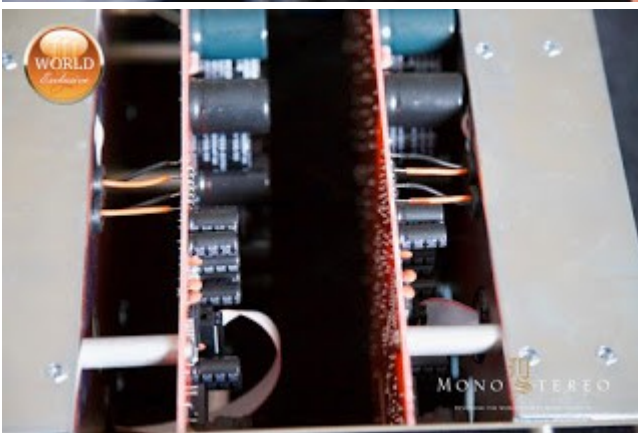
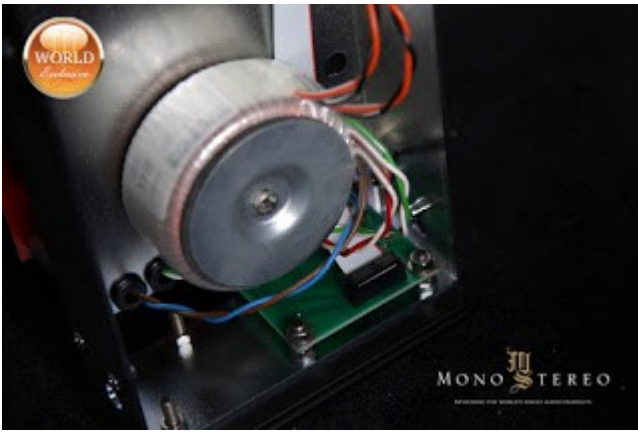


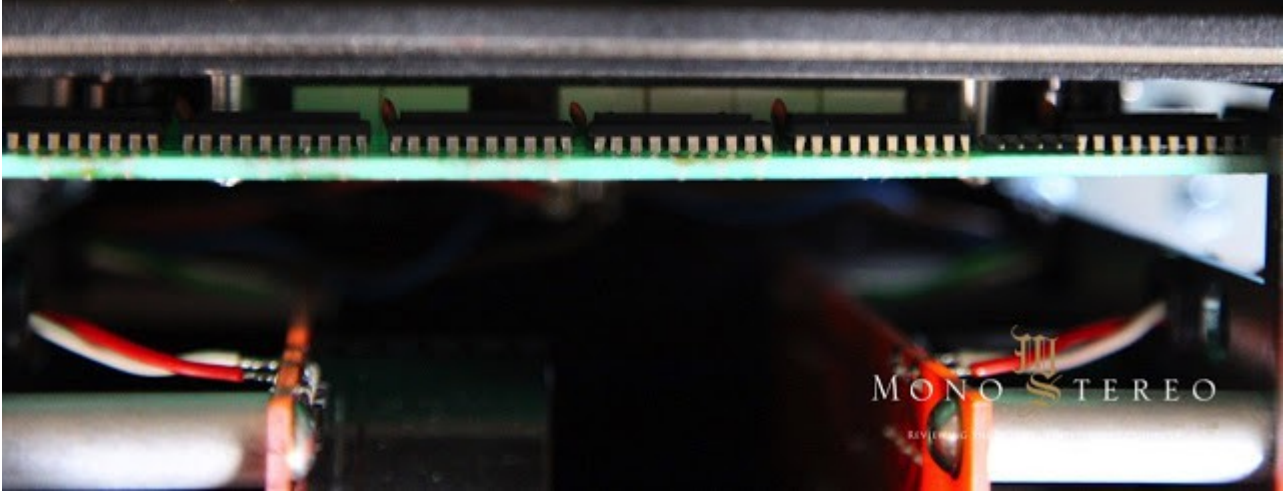
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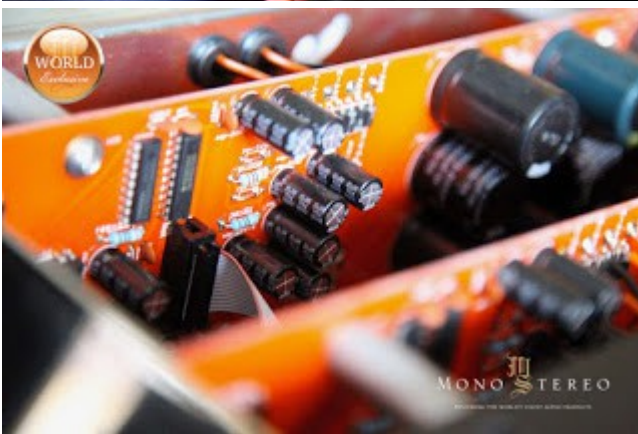
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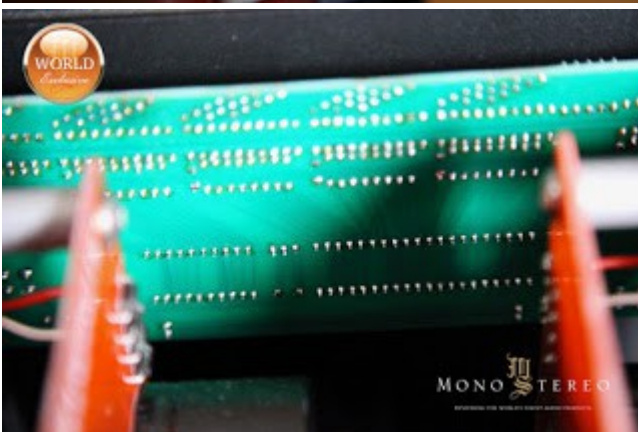
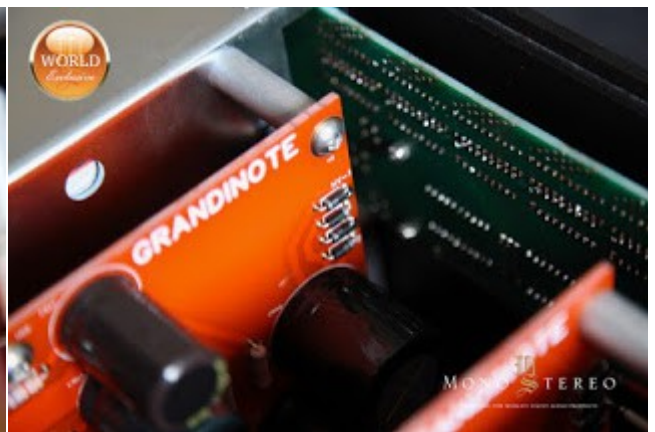
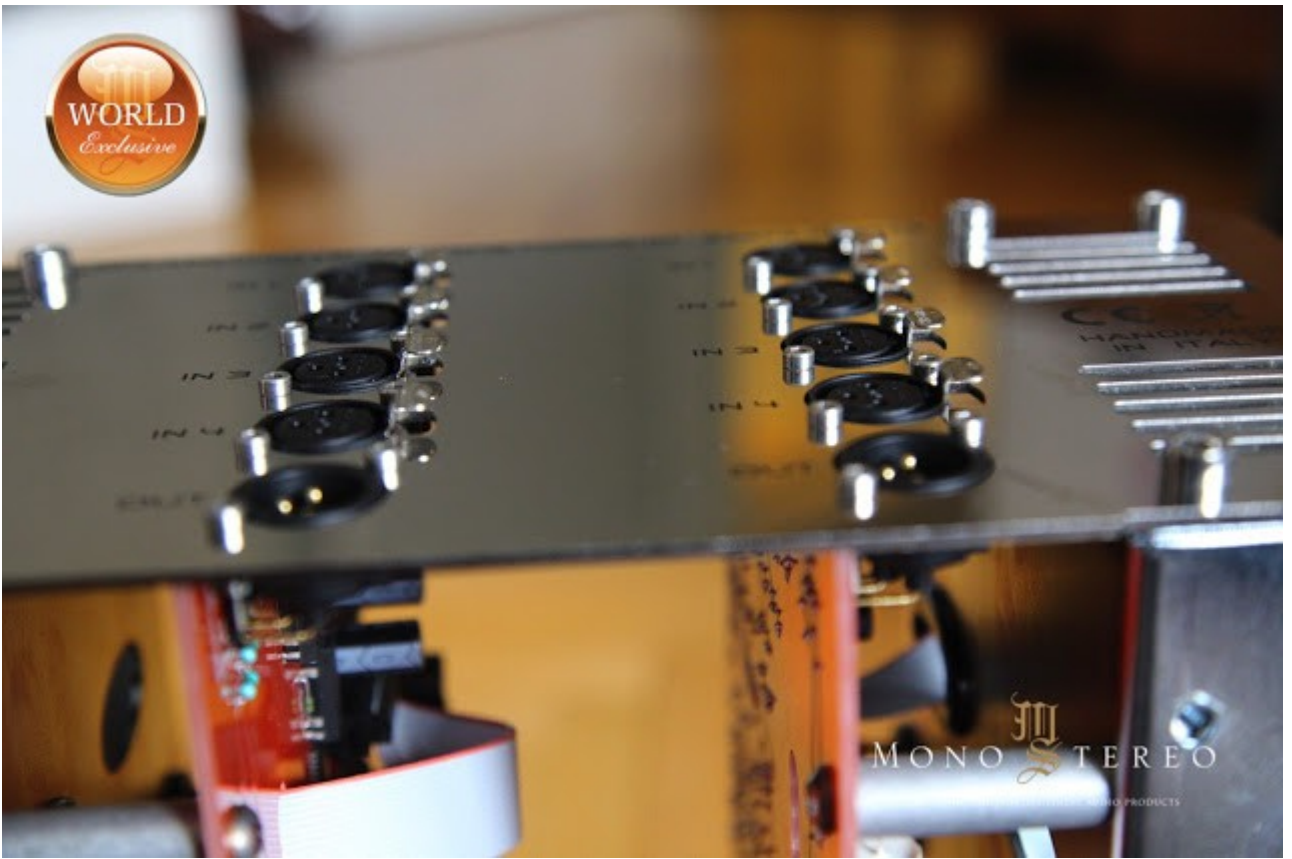
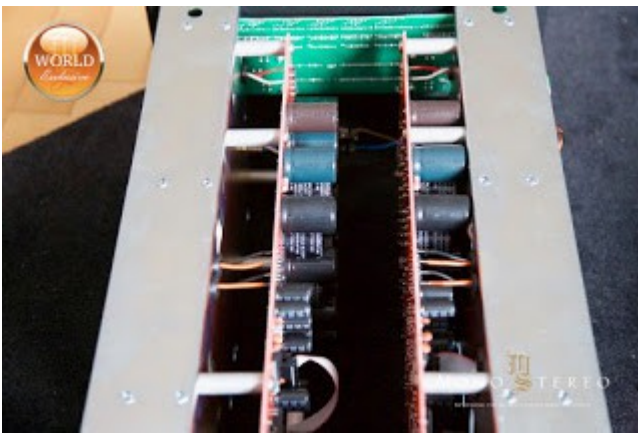
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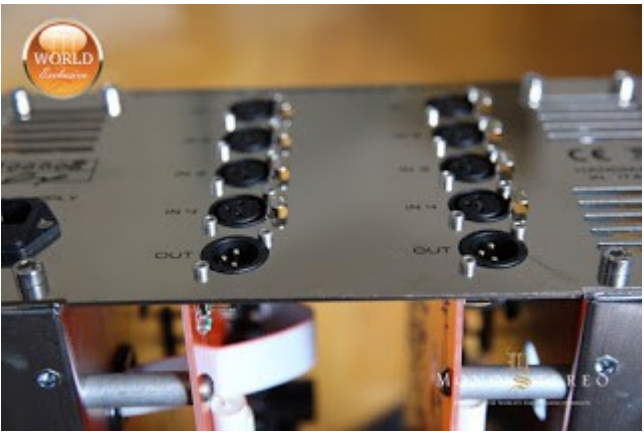


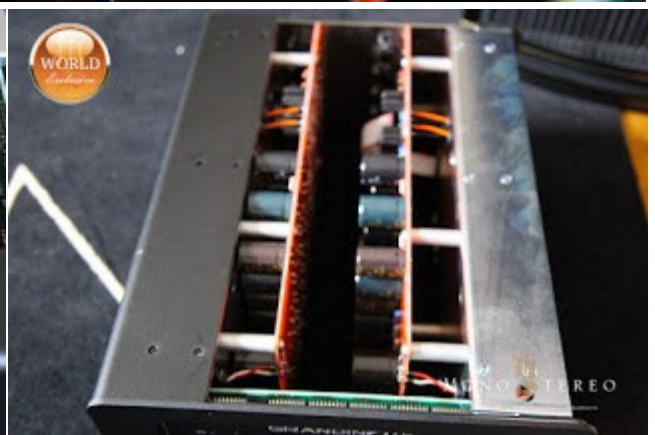
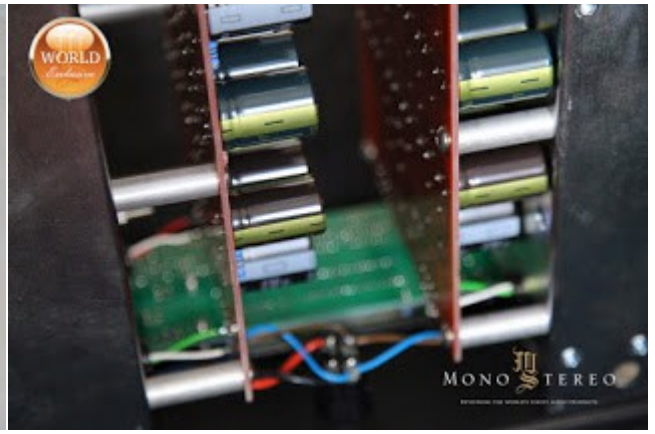
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