



Marantz PM6007 £500

Can the latest take on one of recent history's most praised amps stay ahead of the pack?

▶ DETAILS
PRODUCT
 Marantz PM6007
ORIGIN
 UK/China
TYPE
 Integrated amplifier
WEIGHT
 7.6kg
DIMENSIONS
 (WxHxD)
 440 x 105 x 370mm
FEATURES
 • Quoted power output: 2x 45W (8ohm)
 • Inputs: 4x RCA; 1x MM phono stage; 1x coaxial; 2x optical
 • AKM AK4490 DAC
DISTRIBUTOR
 D&M Audiovisual Ltd.

Assiduously evolved and improved over the years, the basic design is little changed from that of 2007's PM6002 and, just like all the successors, the PM6007's prime objective is to keep its price competitors eating dust in the rear-view mirror. Judging by past efforts, the success rate hasn't been too shabby at all.

Were physical presence and the number of twirly knobs determining factors, this race would already be won by the Japanese amp. In a group containing the super-svelte NAD, the diminutive Rega and the yet daintier Pro-Ject, the PM6007 is a battleship. Just to look at it, you know you're getting your £500's worth in sheer surface area alone.

It's really well made too, right down to the copper screws. All right, the 14-year-old styling may grate with some and a series of blue LEDs stand in for a proper display, but there's no arguing with the way it's put together. This is also the first amp we're looking at in the group with a DAC on board. It uses the highly regarded AKM

AK4490 chipset trickled down from the company's SA series and even has two filter settings – slow roll-off and sharp roll-off.

On the digital side, there are two optical inputs and a single coaxial. These sit alongside the four line-level analogue ins and MM phono stage. The power amp and phono stage get new components and the latter upgraded FET circuitry is derived from that in the more expensive PM7000N's phono stage.

Sound quality

My first note is: "sounds like the Cambridge with more chutzpah, drive and refinement". I think it's a fair first impression. The Marantz is comparably open, clean and resolute, but also weightier and more dynamic without the occasionally acerbic edge. The latter virtue is no surprise, although the step up in pace and punch is. The PM6007's many predecessors have all shared a presentation that, give or take, has been notably smooth, just the warm side of neutral and, all in all, both flattering and forgiving. Part of the appeal. That's changed

with a shift in balance to the front foot and dialled up rhythmic emphasis. A slight loss of silkiness and midband body results, but the livelier, more assertive demeanour certainly pulls the design closer to that of temporally on-point designs such as the Rega and Pro-Ject.

Streaming via the Chord DAC and listening to Elvis Costello's exquisitely nuanced and timed emotional croaks pillowed by Burt Bacharach's lush, Sixties-infused orchestral arrangements, the PM6007 sounds exactly what it is – a keenly transparent budget design that's been honed, re-zoned and fine-tooth combed to within an inch of its life. The upshot is easy to admire, but perhaps a little harder to love. Swapping to the amp's own on-board DAC is the way to go in this instance, sacrificing a little definition and acuity for a more relaxed and warmer balance that's clearly been engineered in from the start.

Just as expertly judged, the phono stage does a fine job with *Edith And The Kingpin*, conveying the purity in a young Joni's voice, imaging solidly and with precise separation but, ultimately, not quite able to convey the dreamy balm that washes over the track and is more successfully rendered by the NAD, Pro-Ject and Rega, and especially the Edwards ● ▶

Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY
 ★★★★★ **LIKE:** Covers-all-bases sound; excellent DAC and phono stage; build

VALUE FOR MONEY
 ★★★★★ **DISLIKE:** Old-fashioned ergonomics; no USB input or Bluetooth

BUILD QUALITY
 ★★★★★ **WE SAY:** A formidable skill set that has bags of appeal

FEATURES
 ★★★★★

OVERALL

