



# Pro-Ject RPM 1 Carbon £325



The latest edition to the RPM range, this affordable hi-fi deck looks the part but can its sonics impress?

## DETAILS

- PRODUCT**  
Pro-Ject RPM 1 Carbon
- ORIGIN**  
Austria
- TYPE**  
Belt-drive turntable
- WEIGHT**  
3.8kg
- DIMENSIONS (WxHxD)**  
380 x 110 x 350mm
- FEATURES**
- 33 & 45rpm
  - S-shaped tonearm made from carbon
  - Ortofon 2M Red MM cartridge supplied
- DISTRIBUTOR**  
Henley Designs
- TELEPHONE**  
01235 511116
- WEBSITE**  
henleydesigns.co.uk

**T**he distinctive, minimalist design of the Pro-Ject RPM 1 Carbon is available in striking red, white and black high gloss finishes. It will certainly add an air of modern elegance to any hi-fi setup and has a real feel of quality about it.

The motor is mounted outside the platter and the drive is taken from the pulley to the circumference of the platter via the belt. The motor sits inside a hole in the plinth, but doesn't touch it. It stands on your equipment support and so is completely decoupled from the deck itself, apart from the drive belt, which runs around the platter's circumference. This motor is of a similar design to the one used on the more expensive Xpression Carbon and is powered by an AC generator connected to a DC power supply. The 33 and 45rpm speeds are selected by moving the belt between the two pulleys of different diameters on the

motor. The platter is made from MDF and is supplied with a felt mat. The main bearing is an inverted design with a ceramic ball to minimise friction.

The S-shaped tonearm has a fixed headshell and is made from a one-piece carbon fibre and aluminium resin construct that is manufactured using special heat and pressure treatments. It is fitted with a magnetic anti-skating device of a new design. The counterweight utilises TPE damping in the form of an anti-resonant ring around the fixing point. At the business end, the arm is fitted with an Ortofon 2M Red moving magnet cartridge. The RCA phono connectors at the rear are connected directly to the cartridge, so a separate phono stage or dedicated phono input on an amplifier is required.

## Sound quality

The sheer power and authority of the orchestra with the Borodin track is totally captivating – so much so that I am compelled to flip the LP over and listen to some of Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. What strikes me most is the realism of the performance, and I almost jump out of my seat when the drum strikes and the trumpets blast. On balance, I feel the supplied Ortofon out-performs the Goldring reference cartridge.

Changing to the Simon and Garfunkel track, I can hear the breath of Art Garfunkel during his solo section in *Bridge Over Troubled Water*. Then when the bass drum and backing orchestra comes in, there is no sense that the cartridge and arm

## NEEDLE CRAFT

The Ortofon 2M Red cartridge supplied with the RPM 1 Carbon has a good reputation in its own right. The cartridge makes use of Ortofon's split pole pins, which is a design feature to enable moving magnet cartridges to have a flat frequency response similar to that obtained from a moving coil cartridge. This cartridge is fitted to other Pro-Ject turntables that use a carbon fibre arm and this has proven to be a combination that works well in terms of appropriate tonearm/cartridge resonant frequency combined with a good tracking ability.

The phono stage or amplifier phono input will need to be set up for a moving magnet for the 2M Red cartridge. A separate earth connection is also provided to connect to the corresponding earth point on the amplifier or phono stage.

are being overloaded and they take the crescendos in their stride.

The sax in Miles Davis' *So What* is incredibly clear and lifelike and yet does not swamp the drum accompaniment in any way. I get the feeling that the drums are being reproduced on a completely separate system. However, that's not to say that the music is not totally cohesive and well integrated.

By contrast, the driving techno rhythm in Laurent Garnier's *Desireless* is tight and beautifully controlled, which confirms the great marriage of the tonearm and cartridge. Vocal growls in the recording are perfectly projected in front of the soundstage, demonstrating the genuine three-dimensionality of the performance that is so well rendered by the Pro-Ject and has many of the characteristics of the company's more expensive turntable packages, which is quite an achievement ●



www.hifichoice.co.uk

## Hi-Fi Choice

### OUR VERDICT

- SOUND QUALITY**  
★★★★★ **LIKE:** Excellent build quality and superb tonearm/cartridge combination
- VALUE FOR MONEY**  
★★★★★ **DISLIKE:** Nothing at the price
- BUILD QUALITY**  
★★★★★ **WESAY:** A modern and elegant design resulting in a superb-sounding turntable
- FEATURES**  
★★★★★

### OVERALL



REPRINTED FROM **Hi-Fi Choice**