

M2TECH ROCKSTAR YOUNG MKIII: THE HALF-SIZED DAC THAT FIGHTS THE GIANTS

Let's face it: fight with the giants, but it is not a killer.

It is not a Davide against Golia, but it is all that is enough to convince me and sign a review that is very different from the one I dedicated to the EVO electronics of M2Tech itself.

DESCRIPTION

Let's start with the one that usually interests the most: the price. The M2Tech Young MKIII costs € 1450 retail; but personally I had the opportunity to listen to him mostly with the Van Der Graaf MKII power supply, which belongs to the same series. In this case we have to add another 949 Euros (again, MSRP), but in the end we must consider that this power supply can supply power to as many as four devices, so you can very well see it as a future crowning upgrade maybe with a pair of M2Tech Nash preamplifiers (which I hope to try soon).

Having said that the Rockstars series devices are equipped with decidedly contained measures: wide and 20cm deep; 5cm high. However, this containment is not so extreme as to invalidate its sonic rendering.

The design reminds me of something futuristic, elegant, but sober and without unnecessary frills; I personally appreciate it, but *de gustibus non est disputandum* and I leave the consideration of beauty to you readers.

Moving on to the input park, I have to say that this is definitely well equipped: USB, coaxial, optical, AES / EBU, Bluetooth with Qualcomm aptX coding. (very nice M2Tech app, but honestly I don't have music on smartphone so I didn't go into it)

Also interesting is the possibility of MQA streaming, as long as you listen in streaming.

However a special mention also deserves the unbalanced analogue input, present in order to use the Young MKIII coupled with a PHONO preamplifier.

The output park is reduced to the bone and we only have balanced XLR stereo outputs. Those who need unbalanced outputs, however, do not worry: M2Tech offers two female XLR / RCA converters bundled with the DAC. Do not imagine large circuits present in these converters: the XLR you can easily see it as two RCA signals of which one is in phase ... very bad description, but that shows that just take the only hot pole from the XLR to get an RCA also to those who are completely free from the theory of electro-acoustic signals.

The interior is definitely more interesting than anything we see outside. First of all, we notice that the space actually occupied is equal to about two thirds of the space used ... here I am granted the only note: we could not have opted to use this space for a headphone amplifier, there is already the preamplifier. ... did 30 faces 31?

However, everything on the board is extremely orderly, indicating a certain work philosophy, which not only wants to use the best components, but also to make the most of them.

The volume control is digital, but works in the analog domain: therefore it is digitally controlled, but works similarly to the classic potentiometer ... to tell the truth clearly better than the classic potentiometer.

While to characterize the sound is the old glory Texas Instrument PCM1795.

I LISTEN

Technically it looks great ... but how does it sound?

Ultimately this is what these devices need to do!

The premises were not the best: in the past I had listened to the EVO series electronics and those creatures of Marco Manunta had not affected me at all, although I had read a lot of good about them. Nevertheless I asked Marco to try the new Rockstars series without prejudice.

Well, in no uncertain terms, through the Young MK III Marco fully shows his design ability, proposing a decidedly competitive DAC and preamplifier on the market. Sounds solid with a good balance over the whole range and an excellent stage, even if this is perhaps the less exciting side, since it is not very extensive. The PCM1795 colours it all with its typical sonic watermark, but I must admit that up until a few years ago it was one of my favourite chips, and it is clear that even today it is fully capable of having its say. The technical backwardness matters little: if well used, as on the Young MKIII it is still capable of making hearts beat and making our muscle fibers move.

However to conclude, it seems to me correct to add a brief description of the differences between the smooth Young MKIII, or with the Van Der Graaf MKII power supply.

Honestly speaking the differences are not epochal, but they are mostly all included in a lower noise and a slightly wider stage thanks to the presence of a better power supply ... however, as I said earlier, you can consider it as an upgrade to the system ... despite the colourful facebook world will try to convince you that the changes are remarkable and epochal.

TESTS

There are those who offer you two and a half billion graphs, there are those who propose one quite disconcerting: the undersigned.

In fact I would not have expected this answer: as a demonstration of what I have been repeating for years about the instrumental band and how something is recorded.

In practice all that matters is below ± 0.1 db ... the rest decays very quickly ... but rest assured it's not a problem, indeed if you love transients and naturalness is the DAC for you.

SUMMARY

Regardless of the measurements; it matters how it sounds and the M2Teck Young MKIII does it so naturally that it sends the various graphics to me and makes us focus on the purpose of everything: Music.

REFERENCE SYSTEM

Turntable: TEAC TN570.

Cables: self-made.

Anti-vibration base: self-made, Ladysound Telluric Base.

Power strip: Ladysound Multi-outlet 6.

Amplifier: Anaview AMS 0100-2300,

Connex Electronics CxD250-HP.

Speakers: Audio Nirvana Classic Ferrite 15 in modified cabinet 13.6,

Maurilio Sound Marlene,

Maurilio Sound Minas Rill.