

## M2Tech Nash

M2Tech is a name mainly related to digital, if only for the historical importance of the famous USB>S/PDIF stick HiFace which has introduced countless audiophiles to musical liquids; this time instead we even have a phono stage, dedicated to Graham Nash.

Not that the analogue is an absolute novelty for the company, we remind that the A / DJoplin converter incorporates a digital RIAA emphasis network, which therefore allows nothing else to record from the turntable without the need for a phono stage (and if necessary, listen to the monitor). The Nash under test is instead a real and proper stage in its own right: even it is expressly designed as an extension of a system based on the pre / DACYoung, nothing prevents it of amplification of other brands; let's say that the main advantage of using it in pairs with a Young one comes from the possibility of sharing the Van Der Graaf external power supply (capable of feeding up to 4 compatible units). M2Tech: the frame is a monocoque of aluminum, half rack unit with nicely rounded corners that acts as a shell for the appliance, the translucent black front is pleasant, with the only multi-function knob and the liquid crystal display (excludible). The interior shows a very rational and orderly construction, with the connectors soldered directly on the motherboard and the only flying cable is the flat one that connects the display; excellent components. The rear panel is very crowded; from the right we find a Blue-tooth antenna, a trigger to synchronize switching on and off with other devices, 2 inputs for the power supply, one coaxial for the power supply of mobile phone series and a 4-pole DIN socket for connection to a M2Tech Van Der Graaf power supply; near a small slide switch to select one of the 2 power supplies, then the output RCAs.

Continuing to the left we find 2 line inputs, which will therefore allow to connect as many analog sources, if we want to complement the versatility of the system based on the pre / DAC Young. So we have a series of dip switches to adjust the capacity of the MM input, the 2 MMe MC inputs, the earth terminal and finally 2 small potentiometers: one allows you to continuously adjust the load of the MC input from 10 to 1k ohm, the other adjusts the additional gain of the MC input, adding up to 30 dB. The declared characteristics are noteworthy, especially as regards noise; the gain of the MC input, which with the special potentiometer set to the maximum reaches up to 95 dB, is also very remarkable. I would even say too many. In my opinion, too many are certainly the 55dB of minimum gain of the MM input, precisely adjustable between 55, 60 and 65dB; seems to have been made on purpose to make the use of an external step-up transformer problematic, frankly it would have seemed more sensible to scale 3 values of 5 dB, in order to have a more manageable 50 dB as a minimum. Finally we have a remote control, similar to the one supplied with the Young, which allows you to control an entire M2Tech chain; alternatively we can control the device with an Android or iOS app via Bluetooth. The setup using the multifunction knob is very simple, it is a matter of choosing the input, the gain of the MM input and the use or not of the 16 Hz subsonic filter (obviously disabled for the 2 line inputs). Switched to use, aiming to realize that in fact the exaggerated gain of the MM input is not a real problem, that is, even with transformers with a ratio of 1:40 I did not happen to go into saturation. As an archinote I do not like the MC active inputs and I try them just because, as if to say: it's a dirty job that someone has to do. With this predisposition I am not exactly benevolent, I find it forbidden in front of the potentiometer that controls the resistive load of the MC input. Basically it is the MC version of my step-up load selector (AR n.400) and in this respect I can only approve: the fine regulation of the load, in some cases, can lead to sensational results ; however, I am a little frightened by the constant control that makes it almost impossible to take references, or repeat a setting with absolute precision, which is the reason that in my time had led me to discard the solution of the continuous potentiometer in favor of a selector with 24 positions. In any case, the mere fact that the designer has posed the problem certainly deserves praise, in an era in which it still happens to hear hi-end designers claim that the pickups that do not adapt to the values of their entrances are poorly designed; I don't tell you where I would hang them and how. Out of controversy, although not perfect and possible source of insecurity anxiety for the

average audiophile, the Nash load control allows you to search for the right load for our head by varying it while listening, possibility almost absent all stages are commercially available; let's also say that if a single head is used, it will no longer touch the potentiometer. Listens confirm positive impressions: the signal / noise ratio is actually very good, and even with low output level sensors the MC input does not show background noise problems (which you then personally consider scoundrel not to use a step-up with low output heads is another matter); nothing to laugh about on the tonal balance, noteworthy is the detail - a typical feature of M2Tech products - and the correct presentation; scene not very wide but absolutely coherent. Using the VanDer Graaf external power supply, the jump is remarkable: above all you can notice a finer grain, I would say a more noble tone, but I also noticed a greater dynamics and a better better articulation of the low range. I add that I would have marveled at the opposite, since I know very well the benefits brought by Van Der Graaf used with the Young, but in this case I suspect that the benefit of external power is even greater. In conclusion, a healthy and intelligently designed product. Definitely recommendable in its price range, it becomes a logical choice, I would say almost obvious, for those who already use the Young as a preamplifier and want to integrate a turntable (and perhaps other analog sources, thanks to the 2 auxiliary line inputs). M2Tech confirms itself as one of the most brilliant realities of the Italian hi-fi, with a product out of the chorus with innovative features.

Marco Benedetti