

Stereophile's Products of 2017 Joint Analog Components of the Year

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Joint Analog Components of the Year

Sutherland Engineering Duo phono preamplifier (\$4000/pair; reviewed by Brian Damkroger, September 2017, Vol.40 No.9 [review](#))

VPI Prime Scout turntable with JMW 9 tonearm (\$2199; reviewed by Art Dudley, October 2017, Vol.40 No.10 [review](#))

First place in our Analog Component of the Year competition is a tie between two solid and solidly American audio components, one the upmarket refinement of a well-proven design, the other a product whose perfectionism is tempered with enough thrift that it also tied for second place in the category of Budget Product of the Year.



Sutherland's Duo phono preamplifier is as dual-mono as dual-mono gets: two separate, identical enclosures, each with its own power supply, gain and loading adjustments, solid-state voltage amplifiers—even two separate shipping cartons. If you could talk Ron Sutherland into selling you just a single Duo, it would be perfectly at home in any monophile's system.

With the Prime Scout turntable, VPI nudges their well-loved, budget-priced Scout in the direction of their more upmarket Prime (darned if I know where they got the name). The result is a belt-drive turntable with a curvy solid plinth, a damped aluminum platter, and a sturdy outboard motor. It's bundled with VPI's JMW 9 tonearm, an aluminum-and-stainless-steel unipivot with an effective length of about 9.5".



Notes on the Vote: There was a big drop in the number of votes—around 33%, appropriately enough—from the two first-place winners to the product that took second place, Audio Union's Döhmann Helix 1 turntable with Schröder CB tonearm. The drop from there to the number of votes won by our two third-place winners was no less precipitous, and it's a remarkable pairing, given their drastically different prices: CH Precision's P1 phono preamplifier, which so impressed Mikey, and the half-century-old Denon DL-103 cartridge, which has found favor with Herb Reichert, Ken Micallef, and me, among others.

Finalists (*in alphabetical order*)

AMG Giro turntable with 9W2 tonearm (\$10,000; reviewed by Herb Reichert, October 2017, Vol.40 No.10 [review](#))

Audio Research Phono Ref 3 phono preamplifier (\$14,000; reviewed by Michael Fremer, January 2017, Vol.40 No.1)

Audio Union Döhmann Helix 1 turntable with Schröder CB tonearm (\$40,300; reviewed by Michael Fremer, March 2017, Vol.40 No.3)

Bob's Devices Sky 40 MC step-up transformer (\$1250; reviewed by Art Dudley, March 2017, Vol.40 No.3 [review](#))

CH Precision P1 phono preamplifier (\$31,000; reviewed by Michael Fremer, April & June 2017, Vol.40 Nos. 4 & 6)

Dan D'Agostino Master Audio Systems Momentum Phono Stage (\$28,000; reviewed by Michael Fremer, February 2017, Vol.40 No.3)

Denon DL-103 phono cartridge (\$379; reviewed by J. Gordon Holt, Art Dudley, Stephen Mejias, Ken Micallef, September 1975, October & December 2007, April 2010, June & August 2017, Vol.3 No.9, Vol.30 Nos. 10 & 12, Vol.40 Nos. 6 & 8 [review](#))

Kuzma Stabi M turntable with 4Point 14" tonearm (\$28,220; reviewed by Michael Fremer, November 2016, Vol.39 No.11)

Rega Research Planar 3 turntable (\$1145; reviewed by Herb Reichert, February 2017, Vol.40 No.2 [review](#))