

NAGRA PL-P FULL-FUNCTION PREAMP Although a little cooler in the upper midrange and darker overall than the real thing, the Nagra PL-P is an extremely exciting piece of audio gear to listen to. Its low end is the most dynamic JV has heard from a tube unit—taut, deep, extremely well-defined, and sensationally powerful. Though not the last word in bloom, its midrange is also highly competitive with the best, thanks to the PL-P's low noise floor (this is a battery-powered unit). Although it may seem a bit "super-charged" in the treble on some (not all) classical and acoustic music, it is a stone killer when it comes to jazz and pop. It is also the single sexiest component JV has ever played with. Great sound in a *sui generis* package. [Reviewed by JV in *Fi Vol.3, #2, February 1998*]

Product/Features: Full-function tube-powered preamp, with internal battery power supply and external AC charger/DC converter; Modulometer; stereo/mono switch; internal tube-timer (to signal when you need to retube); internal trim pots for I/O level-matching, transformer coupled headphone outputs; phono stage with user-selectable loading; 3 line level, 1 phono, 1 tape inputs (all RCA); 1 tape, 2 line out, 1 headphone outputs (all RCA) **Compatibility:** Any front end components with RCA outputs and amplifiers with RCA inputs. (A superior match with the Goldmund SR-Ms and Audio Research amplifiers.) **Incompatibility:** Balanced-only components must be connected with adapters. **Set-up and Maintenance:** The Nagra offers you such a plethora of functions that it may take a little time finding your way around the unit. Fear not: like all Swiss products the PL-P is thoroughly well-designed. Although the Modulometer (a big meter



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in the center of the faceplate) is really more window dressing than anything else, it can be used to trim balance precisely. It's certainly fun to look at. Like the Atma-Sphere, the Nagra sounds better with its top cover off. **Other Products to Consider:** VAC CPA 1 MK II, Atma-Sphere MP-1 Mk. II. **Price:** \$9500