

PrimaLuna Prologue One

Suggested retail: 1 250 €

Features:



- **Type:** integrated tube amp/preamplifier
- **Power:** 2 x 35 watts
- **Remote control:** no
- **Phono input:** no
- **Headphone jack:** no
- **Origin:** China
- **Distribution:** Audio Quartet
- **Tel.** 01 34 21 34 21

Without a doubt, well-engineered tube designs offer a musical satisfaction that solid state products—despite indisputable progress—still have a hard time matching. Simply put, the former presents a sonic experience that is more liquid, more naturally musical and less abstract than the latter. The small and very affordable prologue one integrated amplifier captures this exceptional sound quality while avoiding associative tube coloration. Although manufactured in china, these electronics are undeniably european—designed by an engineering team that's notably led by dutchman Herman van den Dungen and includes goldmund's Marcel Croese (who conceived the primaluna transformers). The group created this amplifier to be low maintenance therefore replacing a single tube, or all of them, does not require readjusting the bias. The input stages use standard tubes (the famous 12ax7 and no less famous 12au7) while the output stages are entrusted to el34s, also well-known and easy to find. Each channel uses two el34s in push-pull configuration. You will also appreciate the point-to-point wiring with its well-recognized subjective virtues. Finally, the speaker binding posts offer a choice of 4 or 8 ohms termination. The end result is that this little integrated amp elicits the unique sonic virtues of tubes. Is it an extra dimension, a more natural quality endowing electronically reproduced music with the realism of a live performance? At any rate, once again, the magic works. The ProLogue also

evokes a feeling of warmth, a natural presence very close to the one you feel during a concert. One may sense in the spectral balance a low end with a slight lack of articulation and tension. This is the only weak point, a minor one, and at no time does it deter from the amp's accomplishment and coherence. The sonic presentation leans towards a natural silkiness as opposed to brilliance. Timbres are remarkably differentiated, devoid of any strenuous intermodulation artifacts. Strings are ample, silky and luminous. The stereo image possesses a very convincing, airy dimension. Resolution leaves nothing to be desired and is devoid of any overly analytical or surgical exaggerations. Finally, you will appreciate the finely nuanced dynamic contrasts and the expressiveness of the recorded music. Tube magic for just a little over 1000 euros.

Strong points: Peerless openness and liquidity in this price-range. Three dimensional soundstage.

Weak points: Minor lack of tension in the lower end.

