

## Press release

---

November 2018

Press contact: Tim Bower

020 8654 8945

07854 966 071

[tim@hashstar.co.uk](mailto:tim@hashstar.co.uk)

[www.quad-hifi.co.uk](http://www.quad-hifi.co.uk)

+44 (0)1480 447700



---

Above: Quad Vena II integrated amplifier in Sapele Mahogany finish

## Music in the blood

**Quad upgrades the versatile Vena integrated amplifier to deliver an even richer specification with pure musicality coursing through its circuits**

*Cambridgeshire, England* -- Quad, the distinguished British audio brand, is launching a new version of one of its most popular products of recent years – the Vena integrated amplifier. The new Vena II builds upon the strengths of its predecessor – compact design, a useful range of facilities and thoroughly engaging sound – by adding new features and enhancing sonic performance to form the beating heart of an affordable, high-performance audio system.

The original Vena offered an unusually forward-thinking feature set when it arrived in 2014, offering hi-res USB, optical and coaxial digital inputs in addition to wireless streaming via aptX Bluetooth. Just 313mm wide, the diminutive Vena II maintains the aesthetic of its predecessor – smart and contemporary, yet still distinctly 'Quad'. A neat row of source-selection buttons and a large, smooth-acting volume control adorn its fascia, tidily proportioned and elegantly functional. The same impressive range of digital and analogue inputs is provided, with the addition of a phono stage to allow the direct connection of a turntable – a facility for which there has been a resurgence of demand in recent years.

## Digital developments

Beneath the hood, the Vena II sports significant upgrades. The digital audio circuitry has been improved, the Cirrus Logic DAC chip found in the original Vena replaced by an ES9018K2M from the Sabre32 Reference family. This enables the Vena II to benefit from ESS Technology's 32-bit HyperStream architecture and Time Domain Jitter Eliminator to deliver ultra-low noise and high dynamic range.

Though technically excellent, Sabre32 Reference DAC chips can be challenging to implement effectively. If the circuitry that surrounds them it is not of a sufficient standard, the resulting sound can seem a little cold and hard; treat them right, however, and the level of musical expression that these chips dig from the digital signal is captivating. One such critical element is the post-DAC active filter; Quad's design team has paid great attention to this circuit, using op-amps that were specifically chosen for their synergy with the ES9018K2M.

In terms of hi-res file compatibility, the original Vena maxed out at 24-bit/192kHz PCM via USB. The Vena II stretches this to 32-bit/384kHz, alongside DSD (up to DSD256). This ensures the amp is fully equipped to make the most of today's hi-res music formats, as well as future advances in ultra-high-definition digital sound.



Above: Quad Vena II in Lancaster Grey finish, front and rear

## Analogue upgrades

Significant improvements have also been made to the Vena II's analogue stages. Like the original model, the new amp sports a Class AB power amp section that draws on Quad's many decades of design experience. Here, though, the power supply has been upgraded, a new 200VA toroidal transformer lying at its heart. This is followed by 2x15000uF reservoir capacity (30000uF in total), helping the amp to maintain firm control of the music whilst enabling excellent dynamic range.

Vinyl lovers will appreciate the addition of a phono stage for moving magnet cartridges – a high-quality, low-noise, JFET-based circuit with precise RIAA equalisation – adding to the Vena II's already formidable format flexibility.

Headphone users are also better catered for. The original Vena included a headphone output, but this was connected to the amp's main output stage rather than to a specialised headphone amp circuit. The

Vena II incorporates a dedicated headphone amp with current-feedback circuitry, its gain bandwidth and high slew rate delivering a more dynamic, detailed and engaging performance with all manner of headphone types.

The preamp section is kept as simple as possible to maintain signal purity, with line input signals passing to a precision analogue volume stage controlled by a motorised ALPS potentiometer. Much effort has gone into the physical layout of the Vena II's circuitry, protecting the sensitive preamp section from noise interference. This, plus the use of independent low-noise power supplies for all critical stages, helps the Vena II to excel sonically at its price point – even before taking its impressive feature set into account.

The original Vena was praised for its smooth yet bold and engaging sound quality; the Vena II retains this infectious musicality and adds greater resolution and refinement. Crisply defined detail reveals the character of voices and instruments, impressive dynamic range conveys natural impact and the amp's transient ability keeps feet tapping with rhythmic music. For all its versatility, this is an amp that always puts the music first.



Above: Quad Vena II in Gloss Black, Sapele Mahogany and Gloss White premium finishes

### Simply well connected

Simplicity is key to the Vena II's outward design. Quad's design team selected Bluetooth wireless streaming, with support for the sonically superior aptX and AAC codecs, to ensure easy pairing with all manner of smartphones, tablets, PCs and Macs – expertly implemented to deliver an adroit balance of quality and convenience. The Vena II feels like a traditional hi-fi amplifier, with its uncomplicated front-mounted controls and simple remote, yet its specification is tailor-made for modern-day music lovers.

Copious cable connections enhance the amp's flexibility. Inputs for digital sources comprise asynchronous USB and three S/PDIF sockets (one coaxial and two optical), while digital outputs are provided in optical and coaxial flavours. Analogue signals are catered for by three stereo RCA inputs – two line-level plus the new MM phono input for turntables – while pre-out sockets permit the addition of an external power amplifier.

### Vena en vogue

Smart aesthetics are important to today's music lovers. The Vena II's small footprint (compared to many amps in its class) allows flexible positioning and ensures the amp slips tidily into a range of

environments. The amp's dapper design is enhanced by a choice of four finishes: Quad's classic Lancaster Grey is the standard option, while three premium finishes – Sapele Mahogany, Gloss Black and Gloss White – wrap the Vena II's aluminium housing in veneered or lacquered wood.

The Vena II is an exceptionally neat and convenient way to bring true high-fidelity sound to the varied nature of modern music collections – from vinyl and CD to digital streaming and hi-res files – via all manner of playback devices. The Lancaster Grey finish has an RRP of £649, while the three premium finish options add £100 to the price tag.

Quad is also offering a specially priced system pack, which combines the company's five-star-rated S-1 compact speakers in Black Oak with the Vena II in Lancaster Grey, for an RRP of £999 – a £150 saving compared to the individual RRPs.

Both the Vena II integrated amplifier and the Vena II/S-1 system pack are available from the end of this month.

###



Above: Quad Vena II/S-1 system pack

## SPECIFICATIONS – QUAD VENA II

Preamplifier Section	
Analogue Inputs	2x line-level RCA / 1x MM phono
Analogue Outputs	1 x RCA (pre-out)
Analogue Input sensitivity	450mV (line-level) / 4.1mV (MM phono)
Analogue Input impedance	10k $\Omega$ (line-level); 47k $\Omega$ / 100pF (MM phono)
Frequency Response	20Hz-20kHz (+/- 0.5dB)
Total Harmonic Distortion (THD)	< 0.002%
Signal-to-Noise	> 110dB (A-weighted)
Power Amplifier Section	
Power Output	2x 45W RMS (8 $\Omega$ ) / 2x 65W RMS (4 $\Omega$ )
Frequency Response	20Hz-20kHz (+/- 0.5dB)
Total Harmonic Distortion (THD)	< 0.005% (30W, 8 $\Omega$ )
Signal-to-Noise	> 108dB (A-weighted)
Digital Section	
DAC Chip	ESS Sabre32 ES9018K2M
Digital Inputs	2x optical / 1x coaxial / 1x USB Type A / Bluetooth
Max Sampling Frequency – USB	PCM 384kHz / DSD256
Max Sampling Frequency – Optical/Coaxial	PCM 192kHz
Digital Outputs	1x coaxial / 1x optical

# QUAD

Of all the British high-end hi-fi brands, Quad boasts the longest and most distinguished history. The company has been at the cutting edge of audio since 1936, continually pushing back the boundaries of performance with technologies both new and established. In 1953, the Quad II valve amplifier was launched, setting new standards for audio amplification, and three years later Quad invented the first full-range electrostatic speaker – later known as the legendary ESL 57.

Throughout the ensuing years, Quad products have continued to win worldwide acclaim, building a reputation for excellence that bears comparison with the most distinguished brands in any field. Quad has been part of the International Audio Group (IAG) since 1998, following its acquisition from the Verity Group (alongside Wharfedale). The company's design and technical support teams and much-admired servicing department continue to be based in Cambridgeshire, England, supported by key personnel who have worked with Quad for decades.

IAG's exceptional resources and unrivalled audio manufacturing facilities ensure that Quad's current range boasts many award-winning products, including the latest generation of ESL electrostatic speakers, class-leading valve amplifiers, dynamic 'box' speakers, planar magnetic headphones and a range of solid-state audio electronics that fuse high-end performance with elegant, versatile design. More than 80 years after its formation, Quad continues to be driven by the philosophy of its founder, Peter Walker, to produce "the closest approach to the original sound".

[www.quad-hifi.co.uk](http://www.quad-hifi.co.uk)

---

hashstar  

For more information and high res images please contact Tim Bownern  
T: 020 8654 8945 M: 07854 966071 E: tim@hashstar.co.uk

---