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## Vintage Asylum

### ... and, conversely, the Fisher phono section ain't "all that"

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Posted by [mhardy6647](#) ([A](#)) on December 02, 2010 at 09:12:38

In Reply to: [RE: The Bottlehead Seduction is very good.](#) posted by Mossback on December 02, 2010 at 05:26:44

Sad but true, most of the vintage hardware that some of us love drops the ball pretty badly in the phono-preamp zone. One widely-quoted exception were the HH Scott integrates; I have yet to actually spend much time listening to the phono section of one, though - and I have never attempted to "tweak" one.

I have been very happy with my Seduction (which is "BOTL", lacking even the C4S mods, although I did retrofit the shielded power [transformer](#) a couple of years back -- not shown in the cheesecake photo below). My only quibble (which is pretty minor) is that I could use a little more gain than it has.

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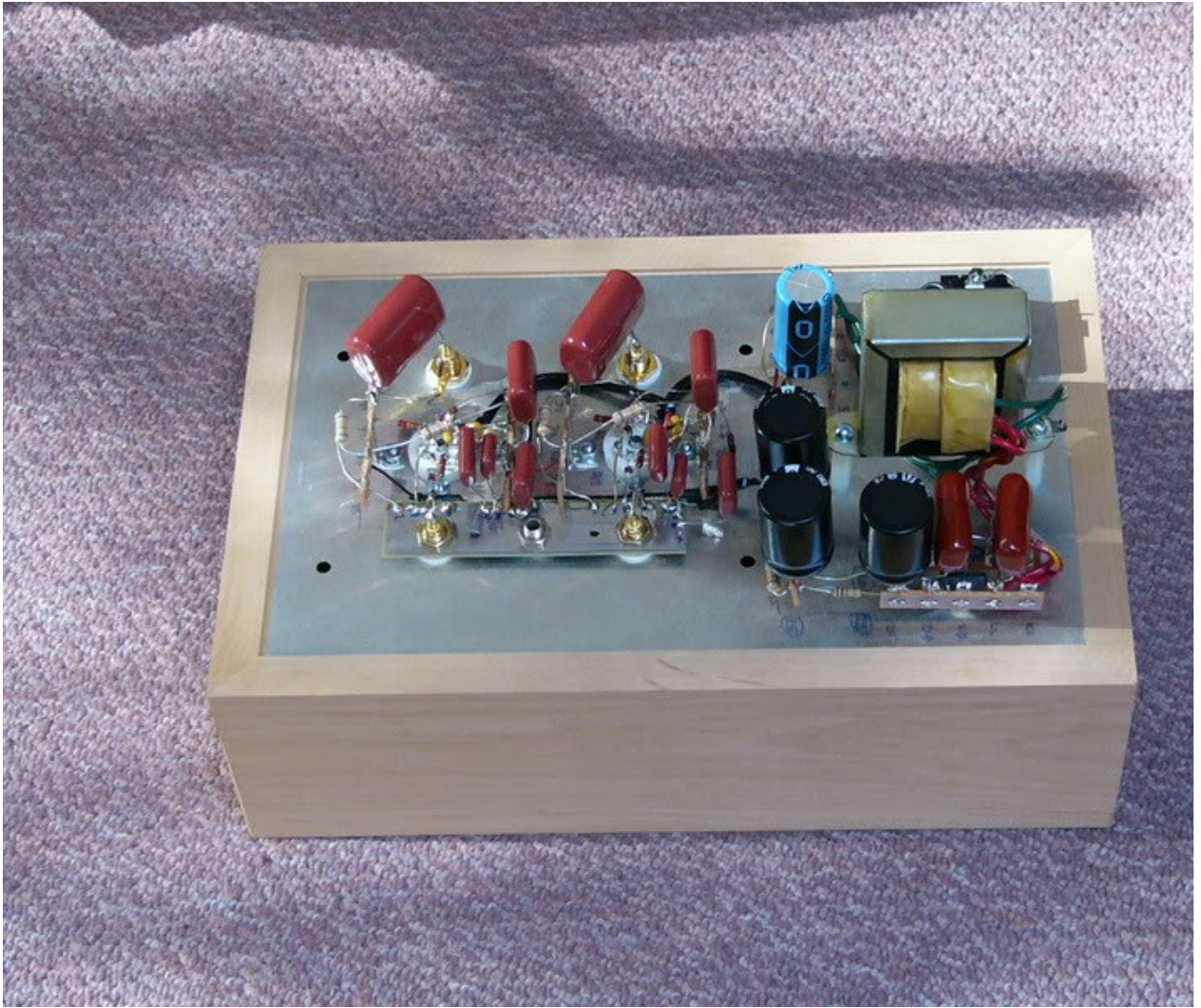
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Jim Hagerman's soiled state Bugle and vacuum tubed Cornet2 phono preamps are also contendahs.  
[www.hagtech.com](http://www.hagtech.com)

Finally, note this interesting little gizmo now being offered by "Boozhound Labs" (see link below).

all the best,  
mrh

- <http://boozhoundlabs.com/> (Open in New Window)

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- [RE: ... and, conversely, the Fisher phono section ain't "all that"](#) - **Eli Duttman** 18:54:04 12/02/10 (2)





In Reply to: [RE: the Fisher phono section ain't "all that" what ? What is wrong with tried and true active feedback EQ ?](#) posted by Interstage Tranny on December 02, 2010 at 18:01:44

What's wrong with active EQ? In the case of 100% tubed circuitry, mediocre overload handling capability, along with questionable ability to drive the NFB loop and the downstream load simultaneously. FWIW, the AVA FET-Valve phono section I've been known to use is active EQ and it's FINE. However, big honking power MOSFETs do the load and loop driving, leaving the triodes to just voltage gain duty.

I've had a hankering to try a phono section that uses passive EQ for the HF roll off and active EQ for the other 2 poles. That would address the overload issue and retain the benefits loop NFB can provide.

Eli D.

- 
- [What overload or driving capability is needed ? Maybe, I can help you understand better....](#) - **Interstage Tranny** 13:17:15 12/06/10 (0)

In Reply to: [RE: the Fisher phono section ain't "all that" what ? What is wrong with tried and true active feedback EQ ?](#) posted by Eli Duttman on December 02, 2010 at 18:28:33

What "overload capability" is needed, at all ? Which high output magnetic cartridge will be overloading ANY tube phono preamp stage ? My high output mono or stereo carts, like GE VR or Stanton 380 or Ortofon SPU-GT( with it's SUT step-up trannies mounted in tandem in the headshell) cannot overload any tube preamp I have ever used, going on more than few decades, now. The [dynamic](#) overload capability of a tube phono stage is in fact very understated. With a bias voltage of -1 to -2 on a typical 12AX7 grid, it cannot be overloaded with any magnetic cart you wish to try, with whatever test disc you can produce. You must know that, right ? Which cart will yield over 1 volt, with any test disc, in order to induce any possible overload ?

What "questionable ability to drive the NFB loop" are you talking about ? Active phono stages with feedback loops were clearly the standard for most of the stereo LP era. This is fact, my friend; unarguable. Now, if you want to tell us how you hear something better with passive EQ preamps, we can discuss these sonic matters. Plus, since the hobby/obsession/profession requires subjectivity, we are all entitled to our sole opinions. Nobody can [take away](#) anybody else's listening enjoyment, right ? Somewhere, within your constant recommendation of this RCA passive EQ updated circuit, I sense you are trying to help some of us enjoy our systems even more, right ? Please explain how this passive unit betters active units, from a listening concern ? Passive preamp stages change the time constants recorded in most stereo era discs, because most stereo discs were encoded/recorded with feedback EQ. You may enjoy that changed sound; that's cool. Passive EQ tubed preamp units tend to be noisier and tougher to achieve high gain, compared with their active feedback competitive preamps. I have tried many [types](#) and still prefer active feedback EQ. When you can prove to me that passive sounds better, I'll change my tune. Different, yes; better, no...

Downstream drive ability ? What "downstream drive ability" is your concern ? We are talking about a phono stage, inherently requiring more gain downstream to interface to a power amp stage. Nobody connects any phono stage directly to a power amp. At the very least, there is padding with a volume control and/or balance pot or resistors. Most of us presume the use of a "line level" preamp gain stage after the phono stage. We are not afraid of another simple gain stage. are we ? Your

tweaked RCA phono stage even uses another gain/buffer MosFet stage ? Why go solid state ? Does it sound better ? Can you describe it's sound ? Can you describe the sound of the RCA passive phono stage with or without the MosFet ? Have you built this recommended phono stage which you tout highly ? You seem to spend alot of your time and energy researching via a sampling program ? Does your sampling program have ears ? Can your program tell you how something will sound ? Or, is it a crutch for seemingly technical mastery ? Do you bring this program with you to listen at friend's systems ? or to audio stores(if you can find any anymore...)? I am not trying to attack you. I do realize your good intentions. So, please describe the sonic benefits of this RCA passive EQ phono stage, or any passive EQ tube phono preamp stage, compared to known acceptable active feedback EQ phono stages ? Different sound ? Yes. Inherently better sound ? You know better...



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