

## ARGO / integrated amplifier

constellation



Line Stage Gain Module for perfect signal balance

125-watt-per-channel Balanced Bridged amplification

Two XLR and two RCA inputs plus headphone output

Dual-mono power supply rectification and storage capacitors

We confess that in our efforts to create the world's finest, most musical audio components, we may have overlooked a few practical concerns. Although our talented designers work diligently to make our products look handsome and distinctive, we realize there are situations where a 220-pound amplifier doesn't quite suit the surroundings. This is why we created the Performance Series Argo integrated amplifier.

The Argo combines many of the best technologies developed by our "dream team" of audio engineers and industrial designers. Signals entering through the Argo's two XLR and two RCA analog inputs are first treated to our Line Stage Gain Module, the same basic circuit used in our Altair II and Virgo II preamps. The Module uses hand-selected field-effect

transistors (FETs) and servo circuits to assure that the balance between the positive and negative halves of the audio signal is essentially perfect.

To control the Argo's volume, we use a digitally controlled resistive ladder, so the signal travels directly through precision resistors rather than through a notoriously imprecise potentiometer. Thus, the signal remains pristine and accurate left/right channel balance is preserved.

The impeccably clean, musical signals from the Argo's dual-mono Line Stage Gain Modules then travel to a pair of 125-watt amplifiers. These employ the same Balanced Bridged modular concept used in our Hercules II and Centaur amps, combining single-ended modules in a unique balanced configuration. The

Argo sounds like a small, single-ended amplifier, but has the dynamics and control of a large Class AB amplifier.

#### Constellation-class construction

Even though we built the Argo into the same size chassis we use for our line-level Performance Series components, we retained the incomparable construction and materials quality that has become a Constellation Audio hallmark.

Key components of the Argo's chassis are machined from 8.2mm solid aluminum slabs, thick enough to block all forms of electromagnetic radiation encountered in the home. Audio and control circuits are carefully isolated from one another to effectively eliminate internal interference.

(more...)

The Argo's power supply uses a custom-wound toroidal transformer that feeds separate left- and right-channel rectifiers, storage capacitors and voltage regulators. This dual-mono power supply circuitry ensures that the two channels operate independently of one another, preserving the subtlest musical details no matter what the demands on the adjacent channel.

The dual-mono design carries into the preamplifier and amplifier circuits as well. All components and circuits are arranged in a mirror-image configuration that reduces interaction between the channels to a bare minimum.

### An entertainment center in itself

The Argo is the first Constellation Audio component built with a modular approach that allows expansion and addition of new features.

There's also one more feature as yet found on no other Constellation Audio component: a full-size headphone jack, which lets you enjoy the Constellation Audio sound on a more intimate scale. The headphone amp is powerful enough to drive any dynamic or planar-magnetic headphone—even notoriously insensitive designs—to live concert levels with no dynamic compression.

For many users, home theater is part of the same system as two-channel music

listening. To facilitate this, one of Argo's inputs can be configured for home theater bypass, so that it passes the left and right front channels from a surround-sound decoder directly through to the amplifiers and speakers, without affecting the surround-sound system's volume or channel-to-channel balance. Selecting any other input returns the system to two-channel mode.

### Convenient control

Given that we designed the Argo for convenience, to deliver Constellation Audio performance in a compact chassis, we knew we would have to equip it with the same user-friendly interface we use for our other Performance Series components.

The primary interface is a 432 x 230-pixel high-contrast touchscreen on the front panel. This screen provides a comfortable, intuitive method of control as well as detailed information about operating status and adjustments. We also provided familiar volume and balance control knobs to preserve a traditional feel.

Of course, we also supply a remote control for accessing the Argo's most-used functions—and of course, it's the same hefty, machined-aluminum remote we use for our Virgo II line stage.

Although the audio world has produced

quite a few excellent integrated amplifiers, we like to think the Argo is the best one ever designed. We are, however, utterly convinced that the Argo is the only way to get the musicality of Constellation Audio in a compact, living-room-friendly component.

## SPECIFICATIONS

### Inputs

2 XLR  
2 RCA  
USB (for service and control systems)  
3.5mm jack for 12-volt trigger

Power output, 8 $\Omega$  (1 kHz @ 1% THD+N)  
Power output, 4 $\Omega$  (1 kHz @ 1% THD+N)  
Power output, 2 $\Omega$  (1 kHz @ 1% THD+N)

154 W  
231 W  
197 W

### Outputs

Argento Clamps speaker cable connectors  
XLR balanced line-level  
1/4-inch/6.2mm headphone jack  
10 Hz to 200 kHz, +0.5/-0.25 dB

### Frequency response

38.6 dB  
0.5 dB steps from 0 dB to -99.5 dBFS

### Gain

Volume control resolution  
THD+N (1 kHz @ 25W into 8 $\Omega$ )

0.005%

### Output impedance

0.08 $\Omega$

### Damping factor (8 $\Omega$ load)

100

### Input impedance

20K $\Omega$  unbalanced, 40K $\Omega$  balanced

### Output noise

-83 dB A-weighted

### Weight

40 lbs

### Dimensions

5.5"/140mm x 17"/432mm x  
15.75"/400mm (hwd)

*Constellation reserves the right to change designs, and / or specifications*

  
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Audio That Inspires

e: [info@constellationaudio.com](mailto:info@constellationaudio.com)  
w: [www.constellationaudio.com](http://www.constellationaudio.com)