PYXIS / system controller

constellation audio

Controls and communicates with all Constellation Audio components

Elegant machined aluminum front panel with leather-covered back

Full-color LCD touchscreen expands system capabilities

Volume potentiometer provides traditional high-end component feel

RF technology for dependable operation, IR technology for inter-brand compatibility

The remote control is usually the primary interface between an audio component and its owner. Yet many high-end audio products are equipped with the same remotes supplied with mass-market components. We feel our customers deserve far better, which is why we created the Pyxis system controller. The Pyxis is not only easy to use and incomparably elegant, it also allowed us to expand the functionality and user adjustment capabilities of our audio components. We include the Pyxis with the Altair line stage, the Sirius HD digital music source, and the Orion phono preamplifier.

The Look

No other remote control can match the visual sophistication of the Pyxis. The front panel and the control knobs are machined from solid aluminum. The angular lines perfectly complement our components' striking industrial design.

The back is hand-upholstered in rich leather by an artisan whose clients include the world's most fashion accessories makers. The luxurious leather provides a practical non-slip surface.

The front panel hosts a 432- by 230-pixel full-color touchscreen display. Not content to settle for a generic display font, we experimented with dozens of fonts to see how they looked and worked on the screen, then fine-tuned our favorite to eliminate aliasing and other artifacts. The result is a display that looks almost as if it were lettered by DaVinci himself.

The Feel

We designed the Pyxis to capture the feel of classic audio gear while delivering the convenience and versatility of an advanced touchscreen remote. Its solid heft and smooth-as-silk controls make it easy to use—and hard to put down.

For the controls most often used, we chose traditional buttons and knobs. In fact, our volume control uses the same sort of high-quality potentiometer found on many of the world's finest preamplifiers. The hand will think it is adjusting a typical volume knob—but when the eye sees the volume readout on the Pyxis'

display scrolling smoothly with a resolution of 0.1 dB, one immediately realizes this is no ordinary remote.

The Pyxis touchscreen reconfigures itself depending on which component is being used. It also provides labels for the five multifunction buttons below the screen. For example, when the Pyxis controls the Sirius HD digital music source, the screen can display numeric keys that allow direct track selection. Once the track is playing, the numeric keys disappear and the display shows the current track number and a progress bar with a time elapsed/time remaining readout. Switch the source to a USB stick or networked hard drive, and the screen lets you browse the stored music by artist, album, song, etc.

The Pyxis sits upright so its screen can be seen easily. With a tap on the touchscreen, the screen's soft backlighting illuminates and it is instantly ready to receive commands.

The Technology

So that our customers do not have to point the Pyxis at their Constellation Audio components, we designed it with 2.4-gigahertz IEEE 802.15.4 radio-frequency (RF) transmission and reception. It even works through walls. In no way does the wireless technology affect sound quality; the antennas on the components are positioned outside the chassis so their transmissions cannot affect the circuits within.

A conventional infrared (IR) emitter on the back of the Pyxis allows it to control components of other brands—an important convenience if a system is to incorporate, say, a satellite radio tuner. The Pyxis can learn codes from any standard IR remote.
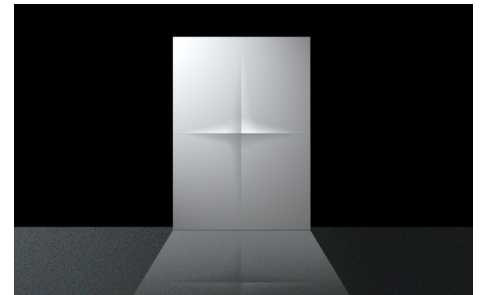
The Pyxis also allows the user to access the advanced features of Constellation Audio components. On the Orion phono preamp, for example, it can be used to set load impedance and input capacitance for a phono cartridge, with the settings appearing right on the touchscreen. On the Sirius HD digital music source, it can adjust the upconversion parameters of the digital-to-analog converter. On the Hercules and Pegasus amplifiers, it can monitor such functions as temperature, power output, and hours of use. On the Altair line stage, it

lets the user set minimum and maximum gain, input naming, and resolution of the volume control.

An included charging stand, styled to match the look of other Constellation Audio components, brings the NiMH batteries back to full charge in a few hours.

The Result

It has long been considered impossible to combine the comforting simplicity of a minimalist high-end audio component with the capabilities of today's most technologically advanced audio products. Yet the Pyxis system controller accomplishes all of this—and at the same time, it is the most handsome and refined remote control ever produced. Only the Constellation Audio dream team of the world's finest audio engineers, industrial designers, and software engineers could create a control so singular. Pick it up once and you may never want to put it down.

the mark that is light years ahead

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

SPECIFICATIONS

Pyxis System Controller

Screen Resolution..432 x 230 pixels

Controls

volume knob

multifunction digital encoder knob

5 multifunction buttons

multifunction backlit touchscreen

Batteries.. 4 rechargeable NiMH AAA

Weight..1.2 lbs / .55kg

Dimensions...Controller: 2.75"/69.9mm x 8.25"/209.6mm x 2.0"/.50.8mm (hwd)
Charger: 0.92"/23.4mm x 10.00"/254.0mm x 3.20."/81.2mm (hwd)

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