



Marantz: 60 years – a tribute to music. because music matters.

This year, Marantz celebrates its 60th Anniversary. To mark the event, the company is launching a new network player, the NA-11S1: This is the first ever player to realize the full potential of high-resolution new media. It enables users to playback downloaded high resolution files and create true 'studio master' quality audio, right in their own living room. Alongside the NA-11S1, is the Marantz Consolette: the first ever Wireless Streaming Speaker for audiophiles. These are both "firsts of their kind" and are powerful examples of the type of breakthrough innovation for which Marantz has become renowned in its 60-year history. But how can just one company continuously break the mould of what is possible, so consistently, and for so long?

"The answer lies in our sign-off," says Terry O'Connell, Managing Director, Marantz. "On every piece of printed literature we publish, on every website and every advert, we state 'because music matters'. But this is not just a slogan, a piece of marketing. It is a philosophy that has driven our company from the very beginning and I believe it is what makes Marantz stand out from other audio solution manufacturers."

Started almost by accident

It is a well-known anecdote that Saul B. Marantz started the company almost by accident. He simply wanted to play his own records at a higher quality than the playback equipment of the time would allow. He spent four years designing, constructing and reconstructing his own pre-amplifier, equipped with every equalizer curve for records he could find. He did this primarily for himself, but the pre-amp which he named Audio Consolette, made such an impression on anyone who heard it that they wanted one too. So in 1952 he decided to make 100 sets and less than 12 months later he had produced more than 400. It was this success that led him to make a commercial version of the Audio Consolette named the Model 1 and in 1953 the Marantz company was born.

Saul B. Marantz was first and foremost a music lover. He not only loved listening to music, but was a gifted amateur musician who loved making it also. This gave him and the company he created an edge over other HiFi set makers. He knew that when it comes to performing live music, each individual musician must 'fit in' with the rest and that no matter how good an individual musician may be technically, if he doesn't fit perfectly, he's simply not right. Saul applied this principle to his component and subsystem selection when building his sets. That's the Marantz difference. It is the music that matters, not the performance readings in R&D labs.

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Nothing has changed

Although the audio solutions industry itself has undergone many extreme revolutions in the last 60 years, according to Terry O'Connell, the way the company goes about its mission remains completely unchanged. "When one of our engineers, either in Japan or Europe, auditions a transformer or a DAC, for example, they are not interested whether it's good or bad, only how it performs with other components. You could say that developing a new HiFi set is like assembling a sports team. With enough money, you could get the best players in the world but that doesn't mean they are going to win. The whole team must interact harmoniously, each individual player must be excellent at what he does but that same individual must also help ensure that all his teammates perform to their best abilities as well. All Marantz design engineers understand this and fortunately, we have a very experienced team, especially in Japan. They live and breathe this philosophy at every stage of new product development."

So it's 'sports coaching' - not electronics?

"No, of course we have electronic tools and instruments," says Ken Ishiwata, Marantz Brand Ambassador. "But these can only measure sonic parameters in a static way. Instruments can only measure instantaneously, like a photo camera taking a picture of a dancer. The image will be extremely precise, but it will show nothing of the dynamics, speed and rhythm of the dancer. Music is also dynamic. Its tone, volume, pitch, and intensity continuously change. That's why every time we work on a product, we measure its quality by referencing a piece of music that we absolutely know sonically and perceptually from its original source. Only then can we relate the character of each component as a part of a whole."

If that analysis is correct, it could explain how Marantz has not only survived the revolutions of valves-to-transistors-to-ICs, and vinyl-to-CD-to-downloads, but has also emerged from those revolutions stronger and more resolute in its mission. Whatever the source, packaged or unpackaged, Marantz is most interested in which 'new team' can best play with that new ball, not how the new ball can be made to fit with an existing team.

From the very start of Marantz there was an unswerving passion for perfection and devotion to music and these were the defining factors of the company that pushed and redefined playback boundaries. Sixty years on, inspired by the spirit of Saul B Marantz, Marantz design engineers are still pushing the boundaries of technical excellence because at Marantz, technical excellence is a journey, not a destination. Each incremental breakthrough is celebrated by the company as a forward step that brings music reproduction closer to exactly what the creating artist intended. It's a journey everyone at Marantz is proud to travel. Because music matters.

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A history of milestones

One of the most pivotal moments in the Marantz history came with the simultaneous release of three legends in 1958. These were the Model 7 (pre-amplifier), Model 8 (stereo power amp) and the Model 9 (mono power amp). These units redefined HiFi quality by such a quantum leap that they remained benchmark models for 11 consecutive years, with the Model 7 selling more than 130,000 units. Soon after in 1963, the Model 10B also redefined quality for FM tuners with its in-built oscilloscope that verified power and balance.

The 1970s saw Marantz reach new heights with very powerful amplifiers and receivers, of which the Model 500 produced a remarkable 2x 250W / 8 ohm. To handle the heat from this mega-amp Marantz designed an innovative cooling tunnel with special heat dispersion technology.

Then followed the Esotec Series, which included the 42kg SM1000 stereo power amp with 2x 400W / 8 ohms. The Esotec Series is also treasured by audiophiles for its unique TT1000 turntable, which features a glass-aluminium sandwich chassis.

By the early 80s the Model 2600 2ch receiver was also gaining popularity. This 32kg unit boasted 300 watts RMS per channel x2 at 8 ohms.

Within one year of the CD format being finalized in 1983, Marantz, Philips and Sony were some of the first to launch commercial CD-Players. At that time decoders only delivered a 14bit resolution, however with 4x oversampling, the Marantz player CD63 reached a resolution of 16bit and the company immediately won the deserved reputation as the CD-Specialist.

1985 saw Marantz setting new standards in the AV world, with the revolutionary RV-55. This was the first commercially available set with a Dolby Surround processor, making it possible to enjoy fantastic cinema sound at home. Thanks to stereo front, a dedicated center and surround audio channels, people could experience the ear-cracking Star Wars Trilogy, the thunder of Ghostbusters and the music of Flashdance from the comfort of their own living room.

The AX1000 audio processor was released in 1991 as an all-digital signal processor, utilizing state of the art signal 1 bit A/D and SAA7350 bit stream D/A converters. The AX1000 was capable of measuring and compensating for audio deficiencies in listening rooms and featured a three band parametric equalizer, a sound field processor that emulates reverberation characters of known performance halls, a compressor/limiter, a de-noiser, a square wave/white noise/pink noise generator and real time analyser.

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Today you would simply call it room calibration and surround effects, but in 1991 it was something revolutionary and the foundation of Marantz success in digital audio processing. This knowledge has led to technologies such as MRAC (Marantz Room Acoustic Calibration) in our AV-Receivers and Marantz Musical Mastering in our Premium Network Audio and CD-Player. It also helped to build up Marantz's understanding of digital audio and how crucial the selection of a quality DAC and the digital filtering is to achieve top class audio reproduction.

In 1993, a new CD63 was developed. Although it carried the same name as its predecessor it was light years from the original CD63 technology. This player sold more than 160,000 pieces and was the inspiration behind the first ever KI Signature model in 1995.

Then in 1999, Marantz applied its expertise in Premium Audio reproduction to introduce the first audiophile 5-channel AV-Receiver, the SR-14. The result was a completely new benchmark in AV quality and not surprisingly the SR-14 won many awards and was installed in many reviewer listening rooms as the "one to beat". It offered 5x 140W into 8 ohm rms from a massive Toroidal transformer, surrounded by an incredible safe-like housing with thick aluminium front and heavy solid copper foot.

Since then Marantz, as a CD-Specialist, has continued to lead the way and when the Super Audio CD (SA-CD) was introduced in 1999, the company launched the reference player SA-1. In 2006, it was time for a new reference Player SA-7S1, which was guided by the preamplifier SC-7S1 and the power mono amp MA-9S1.

Now, in the year of its 60th Anniversary, Marantz unveils a new era in audiophile sensation. Just as the first pre-amp made the very most of LP vinyl records and the Marantz CD63 defined a new level CD quality, the new NA-11S1 Network Player and the new Console Wireless Streaming Speaker bestow the Marantz touch of excellence on the next new media. What a fabulously poetic way to start the next 60 years!

Explore the history of Marantz on our anniversary microsite: <http://www.marantz.eu/history>.

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About Marantz:

Marantz is a part of D+M Group. The company can trace its roots back to the dawn of the first mono LP, when Saul Bernard Marantz, a native of New York, was unhappy with the equipment available to play his cherished record collection on. So he had to build his own! Saul officially founded the Marantz Company in 1953. Then, as now, the company's cornerstones were quality and innovation. For over half a century Marantz has been developing unique technologies and bringing landmark hi-fi and home entertainment products to market through its tireless and extensive R&D programs. Such commitment to audio and video excellence ensures each Marantz design delivers class-leading performance. Additional information is available at www.marantz.eu.

About D+M:

D+M Group is a global operating company providing worldwide management and distribution platforms for premium consumer, automotive, commercial and professional audio and video businesses including Denon®, Marantz®, Boston Acoustics®, Calrec Audio, Denon DJ, Allen & Heath, D+M Professional and D+M Premium Sound Solutions. Our technologies improve the quality of any audio and visual experience. All product and brand names with a trademark symbol are trademarks or registered trademarks of D+M Group or its subsidiaries. For more information visit www.dmglobal.com.

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