



LEJONKLOU SAGATUN Line Stage Preamps

From the Swedish laboratory of Lejonklou HiFi AB come the **Sagatun** and **Sagatun Mono** line stage preamps. The Sagatun preamps were designed to bring you closer to the studio, concert hall, jazz club, etc. than any other preamp.

Fredrik Lejonklou started out to make the finest stereo preamp possible by exacting circuit design and incredible attention to detail. As he was designing this, a business advisor suggested that he also design a mono version to see if improved performance could be attained. Although Fredrik was skeptical of the idea, he undertook the work necessary to prototype a mono version which, after much additional tuning, gave us the Sagatun Mono – easily the finest preamp system we have ever heard. In designing these units he came up with several unique systems to allow the most musical energy to flow through including the proprietary volume color-change display system, an unusual optical linking system to sync multiple units and a special, Direct input for the ultimate performance on your most important source.

The volume color-change display came about because Fredrik found that all digital display systems had a negative effect on the music. This was not acceptable to him so he developed a system using a single LED for all functional indications. It indicates input selection through White flashes and volume level by a continuous spectrum of color from dark violet for 0 through to bright red for 100, making slight changes in color for each 1dB increment in volume. While this system has the least effect possible on the sound, the LED and driving circuits are turned off 3 seconds after a command is executed to further improve the sound. Along with the included remote control, the Sagatun preamps also feature a simple three-button front control panel that handles all functions: Volume, Muting, Source selection and a unique front panel lockout

Despite the substantial work done to create the most transparent switching system possible, there is still a small but audible loss going through any switch. The Direct input is in addition to the four standard line-level inputs and, as the name might imply, bypasses the switching circuitry being directly connected to the preamp circuit at all times. The Direct input allows those with a single source device, or with one device that is more often used or more crucial than the others, to obtain

even better performance than that through the normal inputs. A mechanical flip switch on the right back panel shuts off the other inputs when using the Direct input for the most transparent musical performance possible.

The Optical linking system was developed to allow multiple Sagatun units to be controlled by a single unit keeping input selection and volume levels in perfect sync. After trying a number of common control linking systems, all of which had their own sonic penalties, Fredrik found the answer in using, in essence, an IR flasher to allow the Master unit to forward control information to the Servant units. This combines with a Master/Servant switch that disconnects the front panel IR receiver in any units switched to Servant mode. This was actually originally developed to allow linking of stereo units for those wanting the highest musical quality in a 5.1 channel preamp when using a BluRay player with internal surround processing. But it obviously came in very handy for the Sagatun Monos. Any number of Sagatuns and/or Sagatun Monos may be connected together in this way. Want an exceptional analog 5.1 channel preamp? Three Sagatuns connected together will take care of this for you. Want the ultimate 7.1 setup? Connect together 8 Sagatun Monos and you are ready to go!

In designing and refining these preamps Fredrik not only developed unique circuit designs and control systems, he also manufactures them using the best possible parts for every location within the units and for connecting to other components. In addition to using the most musical sounding components, connectors, wire and other parts throughout, the critical parts are hand matched to levels of precision much higher than even the best manufacturing tolerances. However, that is only a part of the work that goes into these units. For a number of years Fredrik has been using precision torques on turntables, speakers and electronics based on a method discovered by Thomas O’Keefe of Nokturne Audio in 2005 and developed by Thomas, Fredrik and others since then. Indeed you will find a label inside all Lejonklou preamps and power amps with the precise torques for all fasteners in the unit – torques specified to levels of one or two hundredths of a Nm! An even more extreme example of this attention to detail are the washers under the bolts that hold circuit boards to the chassis. It was discovered that different washers had a musical effect on the sound as did which face you had contacting the circuit board. Because of this Fredrik performed listening tests on over 25 different washers, listening to the top and bottom of each one, to choose the final washer that gives the most musical results. We could go on for pages documenting this level of attention to detail. Some have called him “mad” but Fredrik insists on making each design as good as it can be so thousands of listening tests, many of them blind, are carried out before a design is finalized.

These exceptional designs are encased in simple, clean casework of aluminum with a hardwearing black speckle finish that tends to hide fingerprints. You will not find fancy machined pieces of metalwork that serve no musical function but add substantially to the cost. The aesthetics are clean and simple and give you the most musical performance available at prices that are a fraction of what you can pay for other preamps with less musical performance. At \$4950 a piece for either the **Sagatun** or the **Sagatun Mono** units, these preamps represent a completely new level of performance for the money.

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