

High End 2019: Thorens TM 1600 – High-End-Tape Machine

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Thorens as the oldest brand in audio opens a new chapter in history of high quality analogue reproduction with the presentation of the new tape machine TM 1600

This time not only records, which are called “vinyls” today, are experiencing a strong revival, also the for a long time seen dead magnetic tape technology with quarter inch tapes is rising like a phoenix from the ashes.

In connection with Duesseldorf based tape machine manufactory Ballfinger Thorens meets the rising demand for master tape copies with it's brand new tape machine TM 1600. A lot of pre-recorded tapes are distributed e.g. by STS-Analog, Analogy Records, Zavalinka Records or Analogify from Berlin.

Tape Machine Thorens TM 1600

The new Thorens TM 1600 comes in a plinth very similar to that of new TD 1600 series record players in black high gloss or walnut high gloss. It's designed as playback device for half track quarter inch tape.

Base for the new machine is the newly developed very compact tape drive from Ballfinger. Within its 50 mm height it gives a freedom of design that has not been seen before. Nevertheless it contains direct drive motors with tension controls for the reels. To keep the whole drive as compact as possible the tape path geometry was totally new designed. So the sensors are not located below the reels as normally but between them above the heads.

The tape machine is driven by three motors. The reel motors are electronically commuted disc motors that use rotor angle detection by hall sensor feedback. The capstan motor is an ironless bell-shaped rotor motor from a German manufacturer that runs a round belt.

Although very compact these motors supply an enormous torque with very small torque variation and are very silent running. Head and capstan motor could be placed far from each other to generate a very high signal to noise ratio. Additionally power supply is outsourced which reduces noise level even more and so extensive measures for magnetic shielding of the heads could be avoided.

Thorens TM 1600 handles reels up to 10.5" with 19 and 38 cm/s. CCIR equalization for most European recordings and NAB for Americas and Asia can be selected.

The tape machine comes with real time counter with hours/minutes/seconds/hundredth seconds and as common with professional studio machines there is an edit function with pre-listening for single hand operation.

Generally Thorens TM 1600 has been designed for horizontal operation. But it's prepared for wall mounting, too.

Availability and Price of Thorens TM 1600

Thorens TM 1600 will be available from summer 2020. Plinth and dust cover are the same as on the new record players TM 1600/1601 (<https://www.thorens.com>).

The tape machine will be presented on German High End 2019 show in Munich. Later 100 pieces will be manufactured as special edition individually numbered. Price will be € 11.999,00 (RRP).

Manufacturing will take place in Duesseldorf, Germany in cooperation with Ballfinger and RecordingTheMasters, vendor of analogue tape located in Avranches, France.

With launch of TM 1600 in summer 2020 by Thorens a new long overdue chapter of analogue tape recording is written. For decades tapes were the only available medium for music production and recording that gave long playing times without need to change from side A to B. Later digital technology drove out the expensive and very complex tape machines from recording studios and private homes. But today's fantastic rebirth of vinyl and tape proves the world isn't that simple and music cannot be reduced only to sounds – no matter how high the tonal quality is.



(/images/downloads/Tonbandmaschinen/TM1600/Pressefoto_Thorens_TM1600_25.jpg).

High resolution pictures will be available in press area next time.