

THE  
GRYPHON



# Scorpio

Owners manual

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## Introduction

Welcome to the global family of proud owners of fine audio components from Gryphon Audio Designs of Denmark. Your new Gryphon unit has been painstakingly designed to re-create the sound of live music taking place in its original recorded space. Every Gryphon product is designed to cater to the needs of the most discerning music enthusiast with sumptuous styling and superb user-friendliness which elevate it above the mundane world of conventional audio components.

As audiophiles, the members of the Gryphon design team are constantly reminded to keep their priorities straight. We are not involved in “hi-fi” for its own sake, but strictly as a means to an end, in the service of our lifelong love of the live music experience in all its sonic and emotional glory.

Our higher goal is to bring to the listener a “You-Are-There” sensation. In taking up this challenge, the Gryphon designers go back to basics to analyze the essential nature of the live music experience. For us, an awareness of soundstaging, ambience

and concert hall dimensions are necessary components. Dynamics and an unambiguous sense of instrument location even in the loudest passages are also high priorities. To achieve these objectives, Gryphon products offer exceptional speed and agility along with seamless coherence in the time domain.

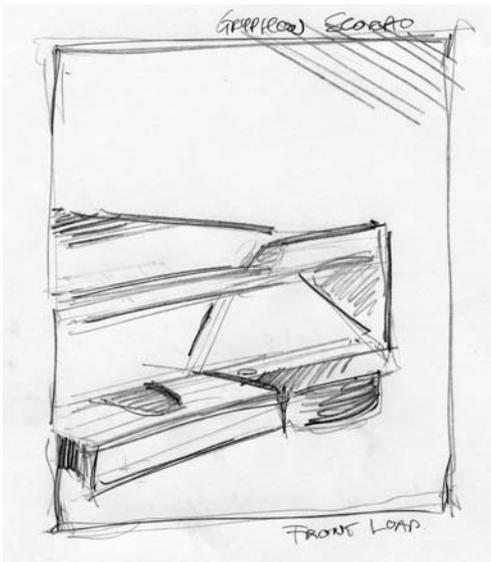
Since 1985, Gryphon Audio Designs has quietly gone about the business of creating fine home audio components. We know that you will appreciate and enjoy the benefits of our accumulated experience and share our abiding passion for music.



## The Gryphon

In Greek mythology: A fabled creature, half-lion and half-eagle, combining the power of the “King of Beasts” with the grace of the “King of Birds”. The guardian of the source of gold and protector of the Dionysian cup of infinite wealth.

In the real world: An acclaimed Danish audio engineering company employing cutting edge technology and common sense in the pursuit of the purest musical experience. We feel that the gryphon is an appropriate symbol for our high sonic goals.



# Scorpio

1. Astronomy. *Scorpius.*
2. Astrology. a. *the eighth sign of the zodiac: the fixed water sign.*  
b. *a person born under this sign, usually between October 23rd and November 21st.*



Flemming E. Rasmussen painting 1967

## The man

Gryphon Audio Designs is the brainchild of Flemming E. Rasmussen and the fulfillment of a lifelong dream to allow the purest essence of the live music experience to be recreated in the home environment.

Rasmussen holds a degree in painting and graphic arts from the Aarhus Art Academy, Denmark. During his studies, Rasmussen developed close relationships with the local music community and designed many LP covers and concert posters. After graduation, he taught photography and painting and designed textiles, before founding 2R Marketing, which quickly became Denmark's leading High End audio import company.

Gryphon Audio Designs was founded in 1985 as an offshoot of 2R Marketing. The first product, the now legendary Gryphon Head Amp, grew from a one-off spare time project developed only for the designers' own home systems. Although the Gryphon project was initially strictly a



The Gryphon Head Amp 1985

hobby, not an actively pursued commercial venture, demand generated by reviews and word-of-mouth led to the formal establishment of Gryphon Audio Designs as a separate corporate entity.

Following the immediate success of the Gryphon brand, all import business was phased out in 1993, so that Rasmussen could dedicate his efforts entirely to Gryphon.

## Made In Denmark

Every product from Gryphon Audio Designs is designed and built in Denmark. This is much more than just a geographical fact. It is also a seal of approval, a stamp of quality. Living in a region with no natural resources (no oil, coal, precious metals, etc.), the Danes have learned to rely on their quick wits and skilled hands. Innovative technology, beautiful craftsmanship, pride in one's craft and a keen eye for attractive design are some of the long-standing Danish traditions which are distilled to their finest essence in every unit that bears the Gryphon name.

## Musical Objectives

While scientific method and sophisticated technology play an important role in our electronics design work, at Gryphon we never lose sight of the fact that the keen ears of an experienced listener are the most crucial “calibration tools.” Therefore, every Gryphon product exists for one simple purpose: to bring the user closer in the never-ending quest for a more natural and convincing musical illusion.

Every Gryphon design has been built to cruise effortlessly through even the most demanding musical passages, regardless of volume level, with a musical presentation defined by supreme articulation and immediacy, subtle dynamic shading and razor-sharp focus. Refinement and delicacy are combined with power and authority for a natural, involving listening experience.



Gryphon is located in beautiful tranquil surroundings.

## The Gryphon Master Tape Collection

In the Gryphon listening rooms, we are fortunate to possess a

unique library of more than 1,000 original master tapes of recordings made during the Golden Age of studio engineering from 1956-1976.

Unlike conventional commercial releases, our master tapes capture the dynamic contrasts and subtle inner harmonic structure of the musical event, forcing us to work to a higher standard in our efforts to maintain the integrity of the original musical performance.

## Design Principles

With state of the art technical equipment and some of the finest minds in the audio engineering field at our disposal, the Gryphon brand name continues to define the highest audiophile standards of subjective and technical performance.

The dual mono configuration radically eliminates any possibility of crosstalk or other interference between channels and provides infinite channel separation which contributes to the ability to create space, focus, depth and transparency.

Because the electrical power coming out of your wall fluctuates wildly in terms of voltage and distortion, Gryphon incorporates heavily regulated multi-

stage power supplies that act as effective mains conditioning filters. Displays and control circuits are fed by a separate power supply to isolate any digital noise artifacts and effectively prevent them from contaminating the signal path.

While the printed circuit boards in more conventional audio products utilize conductor tracks a mere 35  $\mu\text{m}$  thick, Gryphon employs at least 70  $\mu\text{m}$  traces of the highest purity.

Beginning with our very first product, “The Head Amp” all Gryphon products have featured extremely wide frequency bandwidth, because the ability to reproduce ultra-sonic frequencies with no difficulty ensures linear phase across the audible frequency range.

The implementation of circuits with wideband frequency response is a painstaking endeavor in which the actual layout and ground pattern of the PC boards are crucial to the achievement of superior sonic performance with no loss of inherent stability.

Wideband frequency response ensures the high slew rate essential to the realistic handling of the ultra-fast transients which

routinely occur in live music and is crucial in recreating the natural decay of musical instruments. Wide bandwidth also improves phase characteristics, for more correct soundstaging and imaging.

All Gryphon designs are realized with an absolute minimum of negative feedback, which when present in large amounts can actually increase TIM distortion. All Gryphon preamplifiers are designed with zero negative feedback. Gryphon power amplifiers apply negative feedback judiciously for improved linearity and bandwidth.

Gryphon research into the detrimental effects of magnetically induced distorted (MID) has led to the elimination of magnetizable materials wherever possible. To eliminate the effects of stray magnetic fields, non-magnetic materials are employed throughout, with the unavoidable exception of the transformer shield box.

The mechanical design of the cabinet and assembly methods are all carefully calculated to ensure minimal resonance, either through the use of mechanically grounded high mass or decoupling. Vibration-sensitive components, capaci-



Typical Gryphon module

tors in particular, are thus guaranteed a non-resonant environment.

The heavy, thick chassis offers a vibration-proof environment for the sensitive electronics inside and provides crucial shielding from a polluted world of low and high-frequency radio waves, power-line radiation and other electrical interference. Meticulous attention to such issues makes a significant contribution to the relaxing, open and transparent Gryphon sound.

Unique, non-invasive protection circuitry offers reliable, fuss-free protection without compromising signal purity and signal path simplicity, with no conventional relays in the signal path to degrade or compress sound.

The ground path has been carefully laid out in order to achieve superior sonic performance with no loss of stability. Component layout has been designed to ensure the shortest conceivable signal path.

Exhaustive investigation underlies the selection of every component part and many original, proprietary components are custom-built exclusively for Gryphon. Because what is left out is just as important as what

goes in, an absolute minimum of internal wiring is included.

By lavishing attention on each aspect of the circuit and fully understanding the purpose and behavior of every single part of the whole, our designers can optimize performance in each section, before moving on to the next step. This ensures simplicity, a short signal path and a unity of purpose with a single, well-defined objective: musical purity.

In the interest of ultimate fidelity, tone controls, balance controls and other unnecessary components have been banished from the signal path.

## Exterior Design

From the very beginning, every Gryphon product has offered stunning audio performance, sumptuous styling and superb user-friendliness, catering to the needs of the discerning audiophile who demands musicality, convenience and aesthetics, all without compromise.

In every Gryphon product, form follows function in a unique synthesis of aesthetics and practicality. Gryphon stands for sophisticated technology with a high standard of industrial finish that also incorporates the best of



Gryphon Audio Designs in the outskirts of the small town of Ry

handcraftsmanship. The peerless finish, build quality, ergonomics and pride of ownership that contribute to the totality of the Gryphon concept can only be fully understood and appreciated up close and in person.

Rasmussen's background in fine arts and industrial design gives every Gryphon product a distinctive, luxuriant finish which arises organically out of the audio circuit design and the user interface for a truly unique integration of form and function.

## Manufacture and Assembly

At our laboratories and manufacturing facilities in Denmark, we maintain full control over every aspect of development and production, and the members of our conscientious staff diligently follow each Gryphon model from initial concept to early prototype, through to final quality control.

Printed circuit boards are assembled by a supplier of precision military and medical equipment with strict standards of quality control and pre-inspection of components. Chassis parts are manufactured by a specialist chosen solely for the

outstanding quality of workmanship. In every aspect of every Gryphon product, the same stringent standards of excellence apply.

Following a 48-hour burn-in, each product is tested again, before being subjected to Gryphon's custom-developed transport simulator which simulates the inevitable shaking that a product will encounter in transit. The product is placed on top of a very large loudspeaker which plays a special CD with low frequencies which simulate the vibrations of an airplane. Each unit "travels" the equivalent of 40 round trips from Denmark to Australia before leaving the factory.

## AC Voltage

Your Gryphon unit is especially made for the AC voltage of the country to which it has been shipped. If the voltage has been changed, the warranty is void and the product may be unsafe or malfunction.

Correct AC polarity contributes greatly to optimum performance. If you are not using a three-pin, non-reversible power plug, please experiment with the orientation of the plug for optimum performance.

Correct AC polarity contributes greatly to optimum performance.

## Burn-In and Warm-Up

Your Gryphon has been thoroughly tested and burned in before shipping. Performance will continue to improve during the first 40 – 50 hours of normal use. After this period optimum performance will be reached approximately 45 minutes after turn-on. With the exception of Class A power amplifiers, we recommend leaving your Gryphon components powered up at all times.

## Balanced Connections

All Gryphon products uses the AES standard for balanced connections.

1. Ground
2. Positive
3. Negative

We recommend the use of dedicated balanced cables. Avoid the use of adaptors as they degrade performance.

## Choice of Cables

Because your Scorpio is a high-resolution audio device, it will immediately reveal the characteristics and possible limitations

of the other components in your system, as well as those of the interconnects and loudspeaker cables used to connect your system.

Wiring should never be utilized as "equalizers" to correct errors elsewhere in the system. Instead, any error should be corrected at the source, so that interconnects and loudspeaker cables can be selected solely on the basis of sonic neutrality. For this reason, we employ Gryphon's own range of interconnects and cables in every stage of the design of every Gryphon product.

## Placing the Scorpio

1. Do not place the Scorpio on top of power amplifiers or other components that contains large power supplies.
2. Pay attention to the routing of AC cords to keep them from interfering with audio interconnects.
3. Keep interconnects as short as practical possible.

## Connections

The backside of the Scorpio is very strait forward and features

- A. 1 Pair of balanced outputs to

We recommend the use of dedicated balanced cables. Avoid the use of adaptors as they degrade performance.

be connected to any line input on your pre amplifier or integrated amplifier. \*

B.1 S/PDIF 75 to be connected to an external D/A converter.

\* We do not recommend the use of direct connection to power amplifiers via a passive volume control.

### **AC Master switch**

Placed under unit at front.

We know that the Scorpio is not your first CD player and you do not need to learn how to use the basic functions of a CD player.

In the following we shall only address the more complicated features of the Mikado

**The master On/Off switch on the Scorpio is placed on the underside of the unit near the front.**

## **Remote control functions:**

### **Amp.**

Pressing this button simultaneously with the: INP-, INP+, VOL-, VOL+, allow you to remotecontrol basic functions of the Atilla Integrated amplifier.

### **Stand-by**

Sets the Mikado in a powersaving stand-by mode.

### **Tray**

Open/close the disc tray

### **Time:**

1 push - total time played  
2 push - return ( shows status of single track )

### **Repeat**

1 Push - repeats the entire disc  
2 Push - repeats current track

### **Disp- / Disp+**

Here the display light intensity can be adjusted.

High

Medium

Low

Off

When display is off, pressing any button will briefly turn display on. Press again to activate the display function.

Display off is indicated by blue LED on front of player.

### **Search**

When holding the button 'NEXT' or 'PREV' down for more than 1 sec., the Scorpio will perform a search forward or search backward on the CD playing.

Copied CD's may not  
work in this machine

## Operation:

### **Playing a CD**

Press the button that opens the Tray. On the remote control it is the Tray button - on the Scorpio front it is a symbol illustrating the Tray.

Place the CD firmly label side up. Be sure to center the disc. Push the tray button to close the tray again.

## Care and Maintenance

Gryphon products are handcrafted by individuals who take great pride in the high level of fit and finish which we achieve. To maintain your Gryphon components in pristine condition, please follow these simple instructions.

Metal surfaces may be cleaned with a damp cloth. Some product made for treatment of vinyl interiors in cars may be useful. Test the product on a non-visible surface, before using any fluids.

Acrylic surfaces should only be wiped with a very soft, dry cloth. Small scratches may be removed with fiberglass polish. Fingerprints may be removed with a damp cloth. Do NOT use spirits or paper tissue.

## Warranty

The Gryphon Scorpio is warranted against failures arising through faulty workmanship and materials for a period of 3 years ( laser/transport 2 years ) from date of purchase. The warranty is not transferable. **This warranty is only valid in the country where the product was purchased.**

All claims under this warranty must be made to the distributor in the buyer's country by returning the unit securely packed in the original box with all accessories, postage/freight prepaid and insured. Original sales slip must be included. The unit will be repaired or replaced at no charge for parts and labor.

**This warranty remains valid only if the serial number of the unit has not been defaced or removed and if repairs are performed only by authorized Gryphon dealers or distributors. If the voltage has been changed, the warranty is void and the product may be unsafe or malfunction.**

Warranty does not cover damage due to misuse, accident or neglect. The distributor or manufacturer, Gryphon Audio Designs, Denmark, retains the exclusive right to make such

judgement on the basis of inspection.

The retailer, distributor or manufacturer of the Gryphon shall not be liable for consequential damage arising from the use, misuse or failure of this product, including injuries to persons or property.

**To secure the best service, the enclosed warranty registration card must be filled out and returned to the manufacturer within 10 days of purchase. Alternatively, you may wish to register online from our website. [www.gryphon-audio.com](http://www.gryphon-audio.com)**

*To confirm your warranty registration, you will receive a little Gryphon token to welcome you to the family of Gryphon owners.*



## SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS



**Hazardous live AC power**

Do not expose the unit to dripping water or moist.

### Placement:

Do not place your Scorpio on top of any heat producing products, such as power amplifiers or DACs. If you place the Scorpio inside any Hi-Fi furniture or cabinets, there must be a clearance of a minimum of 10cm (4 inches) above the product and a minimum of 5cm (2 inches) along the sides. To allow a flow of cooling air the back of the cabinet must be open. If these guidelines are not observed, overheating may result.

**CLASS 1 LASER PRODUCT**

**Caution** – use of controls or adjustments or performance of procedures other than those Specified herein may result in hazardous radiation exposure.

Laser radiation is only accessible when cover is removed and switch is overridden.