

*Acoustic
Image*®

*Musical Amplification:
Setting The Standard*

*Owner's
Manual*



Integrated
Amplifiers

Contents

Welcome	
The Basics	1
Operation	2
Power	2
Preamp	2
Inputs	2
Controls	3
Notch/Low Cut Filter	3
Effects Loop	3
Control Panel Drawings	4
Signal Flow Diagram	4
Direct Out	6
Mute Switch	6
Stereo Operation	6
Effects	7
Power Amp	7
Focus SA	8
Amp Placement	8
Care	8
Warranty And Repair	8
Specifications	9

The information in this manual is subject to change without notice. No part of this manual may be reproduced by mechanical, electronic or other means in any form without prior written permission from Acoustic Image.

The Acoustic Image logo is a registered trademark of Acoustic Image LLC. Clarus and Focus are trademarks of Acoustic Image LLC.

Welcome to Acoustic Image!

You have purchased a state-of-the-art musical instrument amplifier, combining purity, power and portability in a package that sets a new standard in high fidelity amplification.

Each of our designs is engineered to accurately reproduce the sound of acoustic and electric instruments, delivering flat frequency response across the entire musical spectrum; extended, tight, well-controlled bass; and complete clarity of sound reproduction.

This manual provides operating information for your Acoustic Image Clarus 1, Clarus 2R, Focus 1 and Focus 2R integrated amplifiers.

The Basics

All Acoustic Image integrated amplifiers are based on the same superb class-D power amp that delivers 400-watts into 4 ohms (Clarus amps) or 800-watts into 4 ohms (Focus amps) power amplifier and on a sophisticated, sensitive preamplifier. The features of the preamp and the power amp rating define the specific amplifier model.

The power amp is a high efficiency design that requires no external heat sinks or cooling fans and is capable of driving loads as low as 2 ohms. AC power and output speaker jacks are located on the rear of the chassis. A standard, three-prong detachable AC power cord is used to provide power to the unit, while AC voltage selection switch allows the unit to operate at 115V/60 Hz or 230V/50 Hz. Japan models operate at 100V, 50/60 Hz only. See the rear panel of your amp to verify the AC voltage capability.

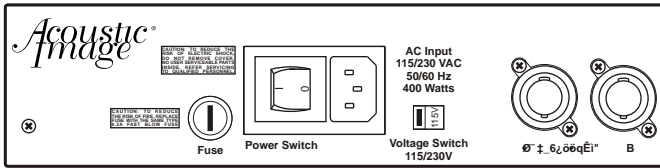
The Clarus 1 and Focus 1 are equipped with a one-channel preamp, the Clarus 2R and Focus 2R add a second, identical channel and a six-program effects unit. The input channels of both preamp types incorporate combo jack interfaces that allow either a high impedance instrument input (to optimize the sound of piezo-type pickups) or a mic input, a three-band EQ, an effects loop with return level control, a selectable notch/low cut filter for feedback control and reduction of low frequency boominess, a direct out capability with ground lift and pre/post EQ switch, a master level control and a mute switch. The two-channel preamp has a switch that allows the second channel to be disconnected from the main amp and connected to a satellite power amp to create a stereo system.

Yours is a high fidelity amplifier with full-range frequency response and low distortion and noise that will accurately amplify your sound. Onboard EQ is sufficient to overcome room acoustics and subtly shape the sound of your instrument. However, you should note that our amps are not designed to play at tonal extremes or to allow an overdriven distorted output. To achieve these, use an external effects box.

Your amp comes with a padded case and a speaker cable (Speakon to 1/4 inch).

Operation

Power



Clarus Rear Panel (Focus rear panel is similar)

Plug the detachable AC power cord into the receptacle on the back of the amp and into a wall receptacle. A power switch next to the AC connector turns on power to the pre- and power amps, illuminating a “power on” indicator on the front panel of the amp. A 6.3-amp fast blow fuse (Clarus models) or 8-amp fast blow fuse (Focus models) is mounted on the back panel. To replace the fuse, turn off the amp, remove the AC cord and use a small screwdriver to remove the fuse from the fuse holder. A spare fuse is included with this manual.

All amps will work with either 115 volt, 60 Hz AC or 230 volt, 50 Hz AC power. A switch located on the rear panel selects the appropriate voltage. Note that the correct AC power cord must be used for connection to the appropriate wall plug. If you do not have the right cord, you can buy one from an electronics or computer store. Be sure the switch is in the correct position for the intended application. **Operation at 230 volts with the switch in the 115 volt position will damage the unit.**

Please note that units sold in Japan operate at 100 volts only. The above mentioned voltage switch is not available for these units. **Operation of a 100 volt amp at any other voltage than 100 volts will damage the unit.**

Preamp

Refer to the signal flow diagram and the control panel drawings (page 4).

Inputs

The Clarus and Focus amps use combo jacks for the input to each channel of their preamp. Either an XLR or 1/4 inch connector can be plugged into this type of jack. The 1/4 inch input has a 1 megohm input impedance that is optimized to get the best sound from piezo pickups. The XLR input is a low impedance balanced input with sufficient gain to allow microphones to be plugged into it. Phantom power is available through the connector for powering a mic or outboard preamp and can be activated using the push button switch located next to the connector. To avoid an audible “pop”, set the mic input level control all the way off when switching on the phantom power. An LED indicates when phantom power is on. The two channels of the Clarus 2R and Focus 2R can be blended to mix two instruments, 2 microphones or a mic and an instrument thereby performing much like a small PA system.

Controls

The preamp has the following controls in each channel: input level, bass, mid, treble and effects level. In addition, there is a variable frequency, selectable

notch/low cut filter in each channel and a master level control that affects both channels.

Level

The input level controls the level of the signal at the input stage of the preamp. The master volume controls the level of the signal at the output of the preamp (at the input of the power amp). Set the master control at “12 o’clock” and the input level at zero. The input level should then be used to control the overall output of the unit. The two controls are provided to allow independent control of “house” volume and “stage” volume when the unit is used on stage with a connection to a house PA. See the discussion under “Direct Out” below.

Tone

Each tone control has a center detent at the flat position. Experiment with settings to achieve the frequency balance that sounds best to you. In general, small values of boost and cut are best. The amp is designed with flat frequency response so only minor corrections should be required to compensate for room effects or “peaky” pickups in order to maintain the balanced response desired for acoustic instrument amplification. To minimize electronic noise, avoid operating all controls simultaneously at their maximum settings.

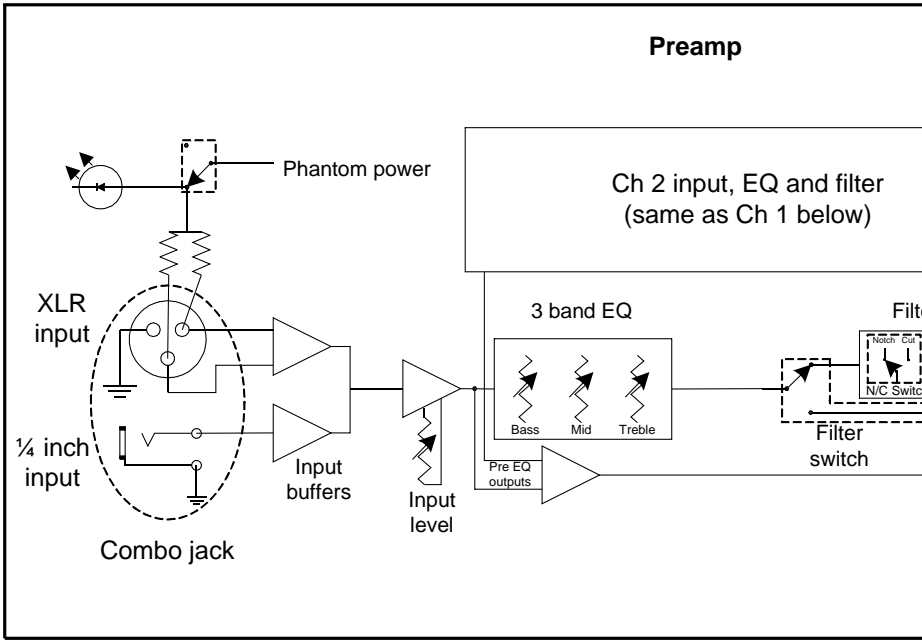
The bass control is a shelving-type that affects frequencies below 250 Hz and with a maximum boost/cut of 15 dB. The mid control affects frequencies between 300 Hz and 2000 Hz and has a maximum boost/cut of 15 dB. The treble control is also a shelving-type that affects frequencies above 1000 Hz with a maximum boost/cut of 25 dB.

Notch/Low Cut Filter

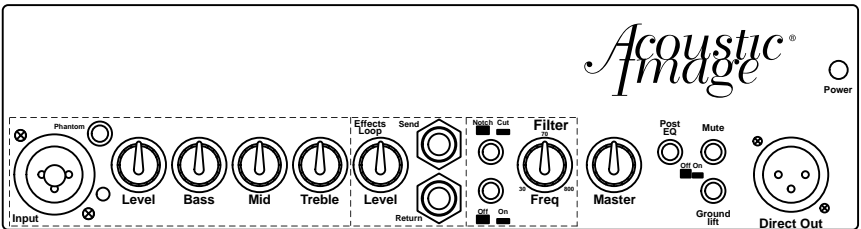
The notch/low cut filter is a fixed amplitude, variable frequency type that inserts either an 18 dB cut or a 12 dB per octave rolloff at frequencies between 30 and 800 Hz, depending on the position of the control. Approximate frequency settings are noted on the frequency control. Note that the first half of the control’s rotation affects frequencies from 30 to 70 Hz, the last half of the rotation affects frequencies between 70 and 800 Hz. This is done so that there is plenty of control in the critical low frequency range. The notch filter is used to remove a given feedback frequency to reduce feedback “howl”. The low cut filter is used to reduce the bass output in cases where room location or instrument/pickup combination results in “boomy” sound. To use either, push the on/off switch to turn on the filter circuit then select the filter type using the notch/cut switch. Start with the control fully counterclockwise and gradually turn it clockwise until the desired effect is achieved. Experiment with the position of the control to give you the sound you like best.

Effects Loop

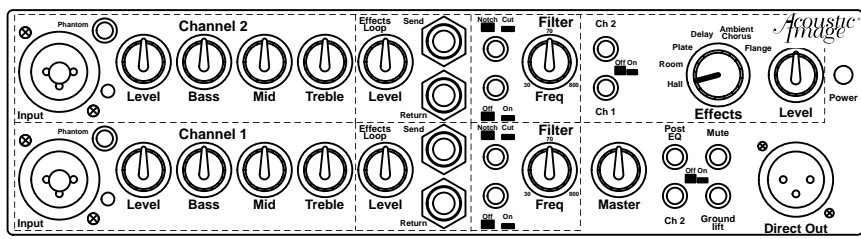
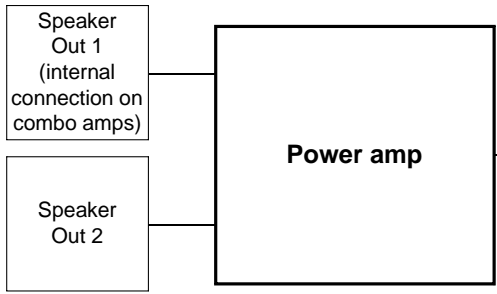
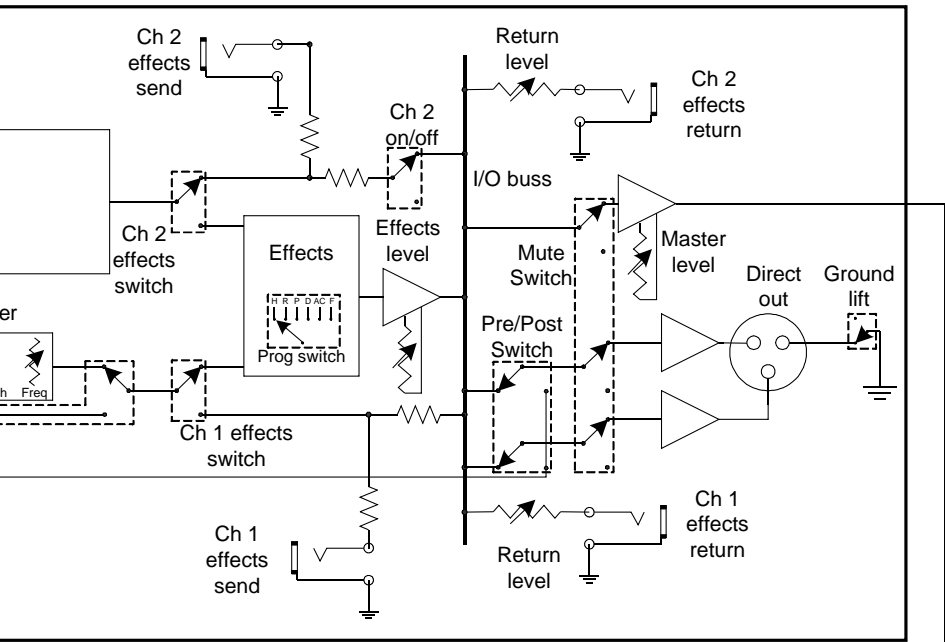
Acoustic Image preamps have output (“Send”) and input (“Return”) capability in each channel to allow you to use effects boxes. The send output is affected by the input volume and tone controls and can also be used as a preamp output for driving other power amplifiers. The Return input can be used to directly



Signal Flow Diagram



Clarus 1 and Focus 1 Control Panel



Clarus 2R and Focus 2R Control Panel

connect an external preamp to the unit's power amp. The effects level control in each channel controls the volume of the returned ("wet") signal relative to the original ("dry") signal. Because the effects loop is a parallel type, plugging something into the send output does not interrupt the signal path. So, a tuner can be plugged into the send output without affecting the signal going through the amp. When the effects loops are not used, the level controls should be set at zero.

The return input can also be used as an auxiliary input for connecting other line level signals such as a CD player.

Direct Out

An XLR jack is provided for a Direct Out connection that allows the system's output to be fed to mixing boards of house PA systems or recording studios. As a result, the instrument amplified by the unit can be recorded or further amplified by the house PA system. In the Clarus 2R and Focus 2R amps, the Direct Out signal is the combined output of the two channels. A switch is provided to allow you to select whether the output from the Direct Out jack is affected by the tone controls (post EQ) or not (pre EQ).

The input level control affects the level of the Direct Out signal, the master level does not. This allows independent adjustment of the "stage" volume (the volume coming from the amp and speaker on stage) and the "house" volume (the volume in the house PA system) when the unit is used as a stage monitor. Once the level has been set for the house, if more volume is needed on stage, the master level can be increased. This will increase the stage volume but not the volume in the house PA.

A ground lift switch is available to "lift" the ground from the output of the direct out--reducing noise should a ground loop create hum when the unit is connected to a mixing board.

Mute Switch

A switch is provided to allow you to mute the output of the amplifier without having to turn the amp off. This will allow you to tune your instrument on stage without being heard. The amp output and direct out signals are both muted by the switch.

Stereo Operation

The two-channel preamp of the Clarus 2R or Focus 2R can be operated in stereo mode. When it is in the "on" position, the switch labeled "Ch 2" connects the channel to the internal power amp. When it is in the "off" position, it is disconnected from the internal amp but is accessible from the channel 2 send output. By connecting the send output to a satellite power amplifier (such as our Focus SA), and putting the switch in the off position, the preamp operates in stereo mode. Note that channel 2 remains in the direct out signal even when the switch is in the off position. This is done since stereo operation is typically a "Stage" mode but not a "house" mode (house systems are typically not stereo).

Note that channel 2 will not be heard through the speaker system

connected to the amplifier unless the Ch 2 switch is in the depressed or on position. If you are not hearing channel 2 in the output, check to be sure that the switch is on.

Effects (Clarus 2R and Focus 2R)

Our high-quality effects units (which use the Alesis DSP chips) offer 6 program selections: 3 reverb programs (Hall, Room and Plate), a delay, an ambient chorus and a flanger. There are switches to select which of the two channels are processed by the effects unit. Either channel can be connected to the effects unit. If both switches are engaged, the selected program appears in both channels. A level control affects the level of the reverb signal that is mixed with the "dry" signal to control the overall effect of the selected program. You should experiment with both the program selection and the level control to find the sound that you prefer. When effects are not used, the switches for both channels should be off and the level control should be turned fully counterclockwise.

Power Amp

Speakers are connected to the amps via Neutrik Speakon connectors ("twist lock" type). These connectors are used because of their low contact resistance and non-shorting operation. The output of each Speakon connector is wired to pole "1." Make sure the cables you use to connect a speaker are similarly wired. Cables with Speakon connectors are available from Acoustic Image if you are unable to obtain them from your local music store. One 6 foot Speakon to 1/4 inch cable is supplied with the unit.

The power amp of both the Clarus and Focus amps is capable of driving speaker loads as low as 2 ohms. Use a high quality speaker system in order to get the maximum performance from the amp. The Acoustic Image Contra EX is an excellent choice.

The power amp is short circuit protected. If a short is connected to one of the speaker jacks, the output signal will be interrupted until the short is removed. If a short is present, you will hear a ticking sound at 3 to 4 second intervals which indicates that the short circuit protection is working. **To be on the safe side, you should shut off the power to the amp before connecting or disconnecting speakers from the unit.**

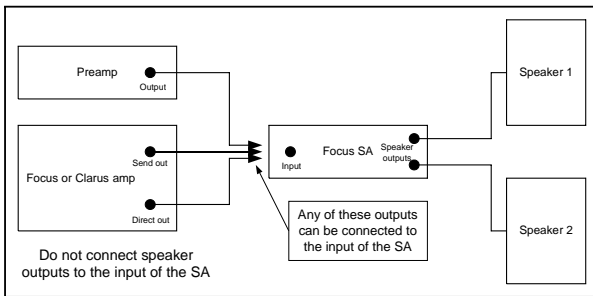
We highly recommend the use of Speakon connectors at both the amp and speaker ends of the connecting cable. If you use these connectors, you will get the highest possible performance and reliability from your amp. Conversion of your speaker to Speakon connectors is a simple job. Contact your local repair shop or Acoustic Image for more information.

All Acoustic Image amps can be operated without a speaker load if required. **When operating without a speaker attached, turn the master level to zero (all the way counterclockwise). This will prevent the power amp section of the amp from being driven and protect it from damage.**

Focus SA

The Focus SA is a standalone power amp that is designed to be used with any preamp or to be used in conjunction with another integrated amp (such as our Clarus or Focus amps) to increase the total system power output. The Focus SA uses the same power amp section as our Focus amps so it has the same sound and specs as those amps.

The Focus SA is connected as shown in the diagram below. One or two speakers are connected via the Speakon connectors on the rear panel (2 ohm minimum load). The output of a preamp is connected directly to the input of the SA using either a ¼ inch plug or an XLR plug. The level control is used to adjust the sensitivity of the SA to the output of the preamp. **DO NOT CONNECT A SPEAKER OUTPUT TO THE INPUT OF THE SA. THAT WILL DAMAGE THE AMP.**



Amp Placement

The small size and light weight of the amps allow them to be placed almost anywhere that is convenient for the performer. The best results will be achieved from the amp/speaker combination if the resistance of the speaker cable is kept as low as possible. That means that a shorter cable is better.

Care

The amp chassis is made of powder coated aluminum. A little caution in how it is handled will keep it looking new for years to come. Use a clean, dry cloth to wipe the surfaces of the amplifier. Note that there are no user-serviceable parts inside the amp. Refer servicing to qualified Acoustic Image or other technicians.

Warranty and Repair

We stand behind our products with a full warranty of five years from the date of purchase. Should a problem arise, please call us before returning your amplifier or enclosure. Naturally, our warranty does not cover products that have been damaged through misuse. Be sure to check our web site regularly, we have an FAQ section and we post helpful information for getting the most out of your Acoustic Image product.

Specifications

System

Frequency Response	20 Hz - 20 kHz, ± 0.5 dB
Distortion	<0.5%, full output, <0.1%, typical
Hum and Noise	-85 dB or better
AC Power	115V/60 Hz or 230V/50 Hz, switchable Japan version is 100V, 50/60 Hz only
Size	10x8x3.5 inches (Clarus/Focus) 10x6.5x3.1 (Focus SA)
Weight	Less than 5 lbs for all models 3.5 lbs (Focus SA)

Preamp (Mic and Instrument Inputs through combo jack)

Mic Input	600 ohm balanced, XLR connector
Phantom Power	38 volts, on/off switch w/LED indicator
Instrument Input	1 M Ω impedance, 1/4 inch jack
Direct Out	+4 dB, balanced, XLR connector, ground lift, pre/post EQ selector
Effects Loop	Parallel type with return level control
Bass Control	Shelving type, ± 15 dB at 60 Hz
Mid Control	± 15 dB at 650 Hz
Treble Control	Shelving type, ± 25 dB at 10 kHz
Notch Filter	>-18 dB sweepable from 30 to 800 Hz
Low Cut Filter	-12 dB/octave sweepable from 30 to 800 Hz

Effects (Clarus 2R and Focus 2R)

Type	Digital with 6 presets and level control
Program Presets	3 reverb (hall, room, plate), delay, ambient chorus, flange

Power Amp (all models)

Topology	Class D (PWM)
Switching Frequency	200 kHz
Output Power-Clarus	>250W (8 Ω), >400 W (4 Ω), >500W (2 Ω)
Output Power-Focus	>450W (8 Ω), >800 W (4 Ω), >1000W (2 Ω)
Minimum Load	2 Ω
Output Connectors	Neutrik Speakon type (pole 1)
Input (Focus SA only)	XLR-1/4 in combo jack, 5k
Sensitivity (SA only)	250 mVrms for full output ("instrument level")

Included Accessories

Gig bag with shoulder strap, 6 foot
Speakon to 1/4 inch cable

Warranty Information

Serial Number _____

Acoustic Image
7517 Precision Dr, Suite 102
Raleigh, NC 27617

Phone: 919-598-3113
Fax: 919-957-3294
www.acousticimg.com

CLARUS 1[™]
SERIES III
Model 500 IA

CLARUS 2R[™]
SERIES III
Model 501 IA

FOCUS 1[™]
SERIES III
Model 530 IA

FOCUS 2R[™]
SERIES III
Model 531 IA

FOCUS SA[™]
Model 440 SA

*Acoustic
Image*[®] **Musical Amplification:
Setting The Standard**