



# Marantz SR6011



It's sometimes hard to keep up with AV receiver trends. No other segment of the home entertainment arena sees such frequent model updates, with new features and functions added at every opportunity.

The Marantz SR-6011 is the replacement of the SR-6010, and brings nine channels of amplification to the surround sound table, together with full compatibility with the latest, object-based surround sound formats: Dolby Atmos and DTS:X.

Each of the nine on-board amplifiers delivers a muscular 110 watts (8 ohms, 20 Hz – 20 kHz) which should be more than ample for even challenging speaker systems, as well as allowing the Marantz to breeze through the demanding dynamics often associated with movie sound effects.

With nine channels to play with, users can set up a Dolby Atmos system in various configurations, including 7.1.2 (with the '.2' being two height/overhead channels) and 5.1.4 (with four overhead channels).

For those who want even more immersive sound, the SR6011's 11.2 processing capability means that adding an extra two-channel power amplifier will allow a full 7.1.4 Dolby Atmos or DTS:X set-up. Of course, that could also serve as a useful future upgrade path.

Naturally, the Marantz also decodes all the conventional (and still more commonly employed) surround formats, such as Dolby TrueHD and DTS-HD Master Audio, as well as the long list of legacy formats that

preceded them.

Video support extends (naturally) to 4K/60 Hz full-rate pass-through, 4:4:4 colour resolution, HDR and BT.2020. No less than eight HDMI inputs cater for extensive ancillary components, while two HDMI outputs means two display devices can be served simultaneously.

In the modern home theatre, connectivity has become a vital aspect, and the SR6011 doesn't disappoint. Wired connectivity via Ethernet is augmented by dual-band Wi-Fi, both of which open the door to content access from the Internet (including Internet radio and streaming services), as well as DLNA and UPnP devices such as NAS servers and PCs.

Bluetooth and AirPlay are also supported, making it easy to hook up mobile devices. A USB Type A port on the front panel caters for direct connections, including flash drives.

The Marantz is compatible with an extensive list of high-res audio formats, including WAV and FLAC at up to 192 kHz/24-bit resolutions. Perhaps more surprising is the ability to play back DSD files (at 2,8 and 5,6 MHz), either from the USB port or streamed from network sources.

The SR6011's styling and control layout follows the familiar Marantz template, with a smart, uncluttered front fascia dominated by a large alphanumeric display, with rotary controllers for volume adjustment and source selection. A hinged flap conceals secondary switchgear and auxiliary inputs.

The rear panel is densely populated but

nicely laid out, with clear markings that include usefully colour-coded speaker binding posts.

While the Marantz comes with a fully-fledged remote control handset, the best way to access and control this AV receiver is via the latest Marantz AVR Remote app, offered as a free download for iOS and Android devices. It's especially good when accessing extensive music libraries, and the interface is both clear and intuitive.

On the subject of control, the Marantz's combination of network connectivity and an RS232 port allows easy integration with home automation solutions from the likes of Crestron and Control4.

The SR6011 was hooked up to our Atlantic Technology 7.1 speaker system, with an Oppo BDP-95EU acting as source component. An Optoma HD80 provided the visuals. A wired network connection allowed access to a Synology NAS.

Set-up was quick and intuitive, thanks in part to the Audyssey MultEQ XT32 digital signal processing system, which includes automated room correction. The system measures the room's acoustic properties and the speaker system's response, and then generates a DSP signature that corrects frequency and time domain anomalies.

The process is user-friendly, but it's worth noting that measuring multiple points enhances accuracy and overall results. The Audyssey DSP also offers several other processing functions, such

as dynamic volume control and real-time equalisation.

The Marantz digs into both movie and music content with gusto. The surround sound performance was compelling, with the surround sound field seamlessly rendered, and directional effects delivered with conviction.

*Inception* remains one of my favourite Christopher Nolan movies, not only because of the plot's brilliance and originality, but because the cinematography makes that plot come alive so convincingly. It also has a riveting soundtrack.

The SR6011 did full justice to the movie's sound, combining a talent for clear, emphatically projected dialogue with the ability to deliver the full impact of the atmospheric and tension-inducing soundtrack.

The Alpine combat scene is one of many where the special effects are executed with explosive precision, and the Marantz was particularly good at matching the on-screen action to accurate, directionally plausible effects and crystal-clear dialogue. The result was utterly enthralling, and even though I've watched this movie many times, I was spellbound all over again.

The same trends manifested themselves when I switched to *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. The SR6011 approached the space battle scenes with relish, endowing cannon fire, laser shots and flybys with enough presence to make me want to duck, while adding plenty of substance and momentum to explosions. And yet, it was equally adept at keeping different layers of sound discrete, and to expose finer nuances and details.

Video, by the way was excellent, although our review studio isn't kitted out for 4K. The Marantz can upscale SD and HD

content to 4K UHD, but its vivid treatment of Blu-ray content via the Optoma was so good that I never felt the need for more resolution or deeper colour at any stage.

Music playback remains a strong point of current-generation Marantz AV receivers, and the SR6011 is no exception. It's excellent with surround sound music content, such as the DTS soundtrack of the 2013 *Crossroads Guitar Festival* on Blu-ray.

While there's a lot of indifferent focusing and sloppy editing, the soundtrack makes it all worthwhile – and the Marantz only added to the experience. Its combination of pace and heft made the Sonny Landreth/Derek Trucks collaboration 'Congo Square' pure joy to listen to.

The DTS mix had just the right combination of air and dimensionality to ensure realism and involvement, while retaining the electricity and ambience so vital to a live recording. And the Rolling Stones classic, 'Tumblin' Dice', performed here by Albert Lee, Vince Gill and Keith Urban, almost had me on my feet.

Interestingly, the Marantz does a great job of the stereo soundtrack, too: running in 2.1, with no surround channel help, the stereo mix still sounded open and accessible, with a strong sense of dimensionality and plenty of grunt. That's good news for music lovers who need an AV receiver with equally compelling stereo and surround sound talents.

Using the Marantz Remote app, accessing and playing content from the Synology NAS was a breeze, and again, the wholesome tonality, the plentiful harvest of detail and the expansive soundstage made listening to anything from Chopin to Chicago a pleasurable, entertaining affair.

The SR6011 fits in neatly between the slightly more modestly equipped but similarly talented SR5011 and the larger,

even more muscular SR7011 flagship. But given its broad range of talents at a competitive price point, it arguably represents the sweet spot in the range.

Deon Schoeman

## VITAL STATS

Channels .....	9.2
Power output ...	110 watts per channel (8 ohms, 20 Hz – 20 kHz, 0.08% THD)
Surround sound formats ...	Dolby TrueHD, Dolby Atmos, DTS-HD Master Audio, DTS:X
Frequency response ...	10 Hz – 100 kHz (+1, -3 dB)
Signal-to-noise ratio .....	102 dB (IHF A-weighted)
HDMI inputs/outputs .....	8/2
Video inputs/outputs ...	2x component, 4x composite/ 1x component, 1x composite
Audio inputs .....	6x stereo RCA, 7.1 RCA set
Audio outputs ....	1x Zone 2 stereo RCA, 11.2 RCA set
Digital inputs .....	2x coaxial RCA, 2x Toslink optical
Connectivity ...	Ethernet, 802.11 Wi-Fi, AirPlay, Bluetooth. RS-232
Dimensions (WxHxD)	440 x 398 x 161 mm
Weight .....	12.7 kg

### Verdict

Extensive features list, ample urge and beguiling surround sound decoding in all the latest formats are headline plus points. But it's the expressive authority of the Marantz across stereo and multi-channel formats that makes this such a thrilling and entertaining AVR.

Price ..... R29 990

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OUR RATING: 86/100

