



Marantz CD6006

The Marantz CD6006 is the latest in a line of compact disc players that links meaningful technology, user-friendly features and impressive sonic talents to a value-added asking price.

The fact that the brand is releasing a CD player at a time when the once ubiquitous shiny disc is under threat from download and streaming services suggests that the format is far from dead – and that there are still lots of music fans with significant CD collections.

The CD6006 is the successor to the award-winning CD6005, and not surprisingly, it looks quite similar. However, there are several significant changes and improvements, most of them under the skin.

Arguably the most important upgrade is a newly designed circuit layout with even more rigorously selected circuit components, and an upgraded power supply. Vibration control has been enhanced via more inert feet and a double-layer bottom plate.

However, there's a lot that's still familiar, and that's not a bad thing. The CD6006 inherits its predecessor's styling cues, including the profiled fascia, which sees the

display and transport tray centrally located, and framed by slightly curved cheeks.

The display is bright and easily legible, and will even show title, artist and track information when a CD Text-compatible disc is inserted. Of course, it also shows disc and track time.

Basic switchgear is located on either side of the display, while this central section also houses a headphone jack with volume control on the right, and a USB Type A socket with input selector on the left.

The headphone jack gets its own, discrete HDAM S2 amplifier module, by the way, which allows the Marantz to drive even more challenging headphone loads with ease.

The rear panel offers an IEC power socket, a stereo RCA output set, and both coaxial and Toslink optical digital outputs. However, given this player's inherent talents, I'm not sure you'll have any desire to upgrade to an external DAC.

The CD6006 was tested in conjunction with its natural amplifier companion, the equally new Marantz PM6006 integrated amplifier (review pending). But I also tried it

with our Electrocompaniet PI-2D integrated amp. Speakers were the revealing and slightly challenging B&W PM1 monitors.

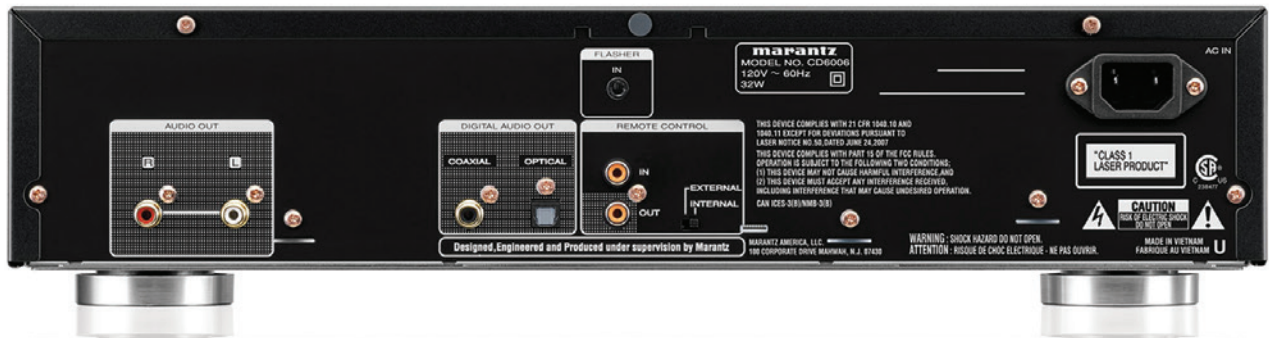
Sonically, the Marantz is a smooth and composed player, delivering a delightfully entertaining, highly accessible performance. There's a slight tinge of warmth to the upper frequencies that flatters brighter recordings.

It certainly exudes a strong sense of musical authenticity, both as far as tonal breadth and precise, dimensionally believable imaging are concerned. The low frequencies are precisely presented, reaching down to almost tactile levels, yet retaining a keen, incisive edge.

The midrange delivery is slick and full, but never becomes too saturated, while the trebles are lucidly rendered, with a slight glow to the upper edges that benefit accessibility, but not at the expense of outright resolution.

Listening to Mark Knopfler's 'Lights of Taormina' (off *Tracker*, Verve CD), the CD6006 accurately placed the percussion, the liquid lead guitars, the rambling, almost mournful bass and the affable accordion across a layered, tidily rendered soundstage.





Knopfler's vocals were richly textured, and positioned dead centre, but never smothered the accompaniment, while the acoustic and electric guitars embroidered the musical theme with sparkle and vivacity.

Indeed, the Marantz created a real sense of space and paid close attention to individual instruments, but never at the expense of the music's overall thrust or cohesion. The result was an all-enveloping, musical landscape that invited the listener to enjoy every element.

The big, wide, cinematic soundstage that permeates Melody Gardot's *The Absence* (Universal CD) is almost too densely, too lavishly populated. However,

the CD6006 easily retained its composure and eloquence.

It rendered Gardot's evocative, rich, breathy vocals with real immediacy, and wasn't in the least unsettled by the big, resonant bass. While that bass was delivered with authority and intent, the Marantz also did full justice to the delicate acoustic guitar, and the subtle strains of the string quartet.

The soundstage was filled edge to edge, but the Marantz's scrutiny of the music remained unwavering, and it extracted both the broad, exotic strokes and the fine details of the performance with an attentive truthfulness that added to the realism of the music.

Dan Patlansky's *Dear Silence Thieves* (Self-released CD) can sound busy and abrasive, with multiple guitars and over-dubbed vocals adding to a vividly painted, almost oversaturated sound picture.

On the slow-burning ballad 'Hold On', Patlansky's incendiary guitar takes centre stage against a backdrop of driving bass, splashy percussion and his slightly reticent vocals. The recording is edgy in the treble region, but the Marantz retained its tonal equilibrium, and took the upper-edge bite in its stride, while delivering an exemplary soundstage brimming with air and dimension.

The Marantz CD6006 is a fine, smooth-sounding CD player that communicates its musical wares with an easy assurance and accessibility. It always makes the most of what's in the transport tray.

While it may be more forgiving of glare and bite than many decks, it's also a revealing, articulate and musically adept player that does full justice to the CD

format – and the music embedded on those shiny discs.

Add a competent headphone amp, and the ability to conveniently hook up iDevices, and the CD6006 proves that there's still scope for an eloquent and versatile CD player.

Deon Schoeman

VITAL STATS

Digital conversion	Up to 192 kHz/ 24-bit
Frequency response	2 Hz – 20 kHz
Signal-to-noise ratio	110 dB
Inputs	iPod-compatible USB Type A
Analogue outputs	1x stereo RCA
Digital outputs	1x coaxial RCA, 1x Toslink optical
Dimensions (WxHxD)	440 x 340 x 105 mm
Weight	6.5 kg

Verdict

A smooth operator in every sense of the word, the Marantz offers a lucid, accessible sound that makes the most of the material on offer.

Price R10 990

Supplied by HFX Systems
011-907-9092

e-Mail sales@hfxsystems.co.za

Website www.hfxsystems.co.za

OUR RATING: 82/100

