

Epson EMP-TW600

Epson EMP-TW600 video projector.

\$3499.

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Upon un-boxing the projector, the first thing you notice is just how big it is, compared to many projectors. The actual measurements don't do it justice so I'll use mine. It's about two hand spans across and almost one and a half front to back. My hands aren't huge, but they're not small either, just big enough to palm a basketball.

Hot stuff baby!

Being big isn't necessarily a problem. In fact, it allows ample cooling for the 170w, 1600 ANSI lumens lamp. Make sure your viewing room has plenty of ventilation, as the Epson is so efficient in cooling itself that your room will become like a sauna. None of the projectors I have had at home pump out this much heat – I run my Panasonic 500 everyday and never have this problem.

Maybe I should get the Epson back for those winter months?

More importantly, it pumps this heat out in near silence.

It's much quieter

than any of the current generation projectors under \$5k, Panasonic 900 included. Since the Epson is front venting, if placed behind viewers they may hear the slight fan noise and probably have the hairs on the back of their necks singed. If your viewing room is big enough and the projector is placed in front, you will never notice the noise but for the quietest of scenes.

Lost forever

My first movie with the Epson was *Vanity Fair* (not one I would have chosen but it was one of my partner's picks from DVD Unlimited). The movie was crap but the Epson does a great job of producing the bright and vibrant outfits while keeping very natural with the skin tones.

I was then lured by the synopsis for *Citizen Kane* which stated: "Can justifiably be called the greatest picture of all time. Countless classic moments". I'd



like to tell you how the projector performed for this black and white film, but I am simply unable to. I am still flabbergasted at how poor this supposedly brilliant movie was. I am a dumber man for wasting two hours of my life watching the movie. Please don't fall victim to the same trap. [Email address for telling the reviewer he has no taste is info@audioenz.co.nz—Editor]

Experimentation

Initially, I was pretty ho-hum about the Epson's performance after having the Panasonic 900 in house recently. If the Epson was a school kid, its mid term report would read "an above average student but struggling in a couple of key areas". I experimented with the menu but failed to make substantial improvements.

However, the manual said if you have a really dark room you should use one of the two Theatre Black colour modes. So I tried them both and wow what a difference! The improvement was enormous. Theatre Black 1 was my favourite because of the realistic skin tones and blacks such as Batman's suit now had significant definition and texture. I found the Epson very similar to the excellent Dreamy DLP projector in terms of colouring and picture sharpness. Both were infinitely better in all areas than my own Panasonic 500.

The on-screen menu is very simple to navigate with clearly defined options. I love the ability to make adjustments without the need to delve into several sub menus. The manual also is very thorough, offering layman's explanations to changes that can be made to the projectors settings.

Remote access

The EMP-TW600 comes with the best projector remote I seen. It has a long, tapered remote that fits very easily in your hand. The large, well-spaced buttons are sensibly grouped and best of all, it's one of the only remotes where you can read the button's purpose when illuminated in a dark room.

Another excellent feature of the EMP-TW600 is the manual lens shift feature. The Epson has two small wheels to lift and pane the lens to allow you to place the picture exactly where you want it. This brilliant feature is a must have as it means you do not need to play with the keystone correction which just about always adds some picture noise.

Going by the specs sheet alone, the Epson measures up to anything in the under \$5k price bracket. The EMP-TW600 features all the standard inputs (HDMI included), has a phenomenal 5000:1 contrast ratio, massively bright 1600 ANSI lumen lamp and an ultra quiet cooling fan.

This translates to brilliant skin tones, bright colours and great colour saturation. It throws a huge picture from a short distance and with the right location it is deathly quiet. Although it lacks the extreme details with the darker colours displayed by the Panasonic 900, at \$3500, it's cheaper and quieter.—*Jamie Gemming*

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