



Wilson Benesch Torus Infrasonic Generator

\$10,300 (with amp/crossover)
soundorg.com

The W-B generates bass by suspending a featherweight 18" carbon-fiber membrane between two massive rare-earth magnets fitted to a pole piece that runs through the center of the driver. Like a carbon-fiber Magneplanar, the membrane is pushed and pulled between the two magnets, resulting in outstanding control of starting and stopping. Though not the deepest-reaching sub, the W-B Torus is high among the most articulate and musical.

Reviewed by JV, Issue 170

Audio Physic Minos

\$6995
audiophysic.com

The Audio Physic Minos comes close to being the perfect subwoofer, albeit at a hefty price. It has truly deep bass extension, to well below 20Hz, can deliver enormous output levels, and is exceptionally low in distortion. Its sound is smooth and non-resonant, with superb pitch definition and all but flawless transient behavior.

Reviewed by REG, TPV Issue 42

Krell Master Reference

\$40,000
krell.com

Let's face it—you'd have to be nuts to spend \$40,000 on a subwoofer. (And, BTW, you only get one of these monsters for your 40Gs.) But, assuming you are nuts, and assuming you're not fazed by the sheer girth of this 2600W, twin-15", servo-woofered, 450-pound chunk of near-solid aluminum, then you're gonna have a hard time finding more powerful, more coherent bass for music recordings and home-theater soundtracks. A *sui generis* masterpiece that, because of its outrageous cost and size, is likely to be heard only by a lucky few—and owned by an even luckier fewer.

JV

POWER AMPLIFIERS

Under \$1000

NAD C 272

\$799
nadelectronics.com

Every few years, we encounter certain NAD products that seem to have that extra ounce of sonic magic, and the C 272 is one of them. At 150Wpc, it offers the current needed to handle difficult speaker loads, and sounds more powerful than its specifications would suggest, with good resolution, three-dimensionality, and overall warmth and robustness on most types of music.

Reviewed by CM, Issue 148

Parasound Halo A23

\$850
parasound.com

Parasound's A23 isn't the last word in low-end authority, and it's a bit cool in the midrange, but what it lacks in oomph it makes up for in finesse and pitch definition. Moreover, this reasonably priced amp is musically quite involving.

Reviewed by SB, Issue 138

Belles Soloist 5

\$995
belles.com

A paradigm of minimalism and musicality, this small, cool-running sixty-five-watter is stuffed with sonic virtues: a forgiving tonal balance, good soundstage dimensionality, and naturalistic depth. Paired with its companion preamp, the solid Soloist 3 is a great way to get into separates at an integrated-amp price.

Reviewed by NG, Issue 174

Vincent Audio SP-331

\$999
vincent-tac.de

The SP-331 is one of the best-sounding sub-\$1k power amplifiers we've yet heard. A hybrid tube/solid-state amplifier, it combines the richness and subtlety of fine tube designs—especially through the midrange—with the sheer low-frequency grunt, control, and agility of a good solid-state amplifier. In the treble region the amplifier sounds slightly softer but also more delicate and refined than solid-state competitors in its price range.

Reviewed by CM, Issue 173

\$1000 - \$2000

Quad 909

\$1349
taigallc.com



Its sound quality sets a benchmark for its size and price. Its midrange, in particular, is exceptional. Up and down the scale, it displays ease, relaxation, and naturalness.

Reviewed by PS, Issue 128

Rotel RB-1091

\$1499
rotel.com

Rotel's new amplifier raises the stakes in the digital arena. It boasts ample wattage for most speakers, but takes up little real estate and emits no heat. It may sound a touch silvery in the highs, but the Rotel's excellent performance—solid bass and terrifying quickness—shows that switching amplifiers are here to stay.

Reviewed by Jacob Heilbrunn, Issue 167

PrimaLuna ProLogue 5

\$1599
upscaleaudio.com



The 36Wpc vacuum tube-powered ProLogue 5 sounds more authoritative than its rating would lead you to expect, and offers a warm, rich sound, yet really does not sound "tubey" in any traditional sense, producing clean, deep, tight bass and grand soundstaging. A synergistic match with the ProLogue 3 preamp.

Reviewed by SR, Issue 156

\$2000 - \$3000

Parasound Halo A21

\$2000
parasound.com

An excellent Class AB stereo transistor amp, designed by the redoubtable John Curl, capable of 250Wpc into 8 ohms (400 into 4 ohms). Though not the last word in solid-state amplification, the A21 comes close enough to the best, at such an affordable price, that JV could live with it contentedly in his very expensive reference system.

Reviewed by JV, Issue 168

Rogue Audio Stereo 90

\$2195
rogueaudio.com

This tube monoblock combines a rich tube treble and midrange with a gutsy, controlled bass and a brilliant clarity unusual in its class. Its soundstaging is particularly fine. Its one shortcoming is a tendency to push the midrange a bit