

## INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER

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DLS  
AMPLIFIER ONE  
1990

FOR

Remarkable musicality; texture of timbres shows both presence and naturalness; stereo image sometimes "holographic"; reserves of significant power; understated and practical presentation; numerous inputs (symmetrical inputs); able to compete with models two or three times more expensive with no problems!

AGAINST

Poor remote control: illogical distribution of buttons, ridiculously small labels; no headphone socket.

VERDICT

Indisputable master stroke for this initial venture by DLS into the area of high fidelity amplification. Powerful, extremely dynamic, the Amplifier One is also one of the most respectful devices of the music that we have ever listened to in this category. In fact it combines the highest quality level of timbre with transparency and unbelievable reproduction of the audio scene. Read all about it!

# Another superb discovery!



CHANCE SOMETIMES AMAZES. In this same issue, you can learn about the speaker system for the iPod from Kicker, an American specialist in the products usually reserved for in-car "sound systems". Well, imagine that this is the same thing for DLS, and we didn't do it deliberately! DLS is in fact a builder, Swedish in this case, which built its reputation on loudspeakers for cars, even if we have had occasion to test hi fi systems based on these speakers. But this time, it's the electronics we are interested in with this Amplifier One amplifier, and a CD One CD/SACD reader, which will be telling you about soon...

DLS is a company with very few employees, well qualified acoustics and electronics engineers, who have their equipment built in a factory in Taiwan while closely supervising the whole process of manufacture and distribution.

This Amplifier One is therefore the brand's first integrated amplifier. One notes right away that the Swedish builder has decided to set the bar rather high, without joining the excess of very expensive high-end equipment, in which several builders from Scandinavia are already specialists. For us therefore, this means an imposing but understated device, equipped with high power, with 100 Watts per channel for 8 ohm loads and close to double this for 4 ohms. The weight of the device testifies to the quality of implementation, notably with the inevitable very large supply transformer. Examination of the rear side reveals a complete range of options. In fact four different line inputs are available, plus one to the symmetrical standard, via a pair of XLR sockets. The output from the acoustic enclosure is via two pairs of superb sockets accepting all types of terminator, with top quality

connectors and protection against short circuits. The mains supply cable is of course detachable, and equipped with a general cut-off switch with a fuse protection cartridge.

The chassis itself is all metallic, and, let's say it right away; the Amplifier One barely heats up, even after several hours of listening at a comparatively high level.

On the front, we find only two large rotary buttons. The left one allows you to select the source, and the right one to control the volume button. Nevertheless, the remote control allows access to other well chosen supplementary controls. This includes for example, control of the balance or the

**"This amplifier offers an absolutely remarkable sound scene reproduction."**

brightness of the central display, with the possibility of turning it off completely; you can even display the version number of the device management software actually being used. Finally, it is possible to rename each input, and, better still, to separately regulate the input level of each of them, in order to balance the acoustic volume in any situation.

What a pity that, on the other hand, this remote is also badly designed. The arrangement of the two rows of buttons makes them unusable, they are so small that the inscriptions are tiny and certain keys are "dangerous", such as the Surround key, that has the effect of completely short circuiting the preamplifier section for using the device as a power amplifier (only on line input 4); but, in this case, the volume control is evidently no longer active and therefore the sound level is a maximum...

But all this is a mere trifle in the light of the really exceptional sound performance levels this device is capable of: levels which we honestly did not expect, even at this price level. Not content with being extremely dynamic, perfectly formed and precise in the bass, the Amplifier One from DLS also proves to be one of the best integrated amplifiers we have heard, in any price category, with regard to the texture of the timbres, the detail of the instruments and voices. This impression is again reinforced by an absolutely remarkable reproduction of the sound scene: when the recording quality allows it, one really gets the impression of "seeing" the instrumentalists and the singers, in a way that is almost holographic (tests on Aperrura Thema speakers)! We also welcome an absolutely invariable tonal balance whatever the volume level chosen and the lack of need for any comment on the timbre quality across the whole pass band. Result: we have spent hours listening to this amplifier, which, as we write these lines, is still connected for testing other acoustic sources and loudspeakers... Let's add finally that its price is in no way excessive, considering that we do not think it is an exaggeration to say you would normally expect to spend twice or three times as much to obtain the same overall quality...  
G.P.

TECHNICAL  
RATING



POWER 2x100W into 8 Ohm,  
2 x 180 W into 4 Ohm  
SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO > 106 dB  
TOTAL HARMONIC DISTORTION < 0.05 %  
FREQ. RANGE 1 Hz-100kHz(-3dB)  
INPUT SENSITIVITY  
550 mV (line); 2.5 mV (Phono MM)  
INPUTS 4x line RCA, symmetric XLR;  
OUTPUTS recording, preamp  
WEIGHT 16.8 kg  
DIMENSIONS (LxHxW) 43.5x13x43.5 cm  
FINISH black or silver