

## CD/SACD PLAYER

CD/SACD  
player  
DLS CD one  
€ 1750

# The perfect complement

## FOR

Musicality at the same level as that of the amplifier: detail and dynamics well presented; SACD player; symmetrical output; very sober construction.

## AGAINST

Poor remote control; controls poorly located on the top.

## VERDICT

The DLS CD player confirms all the good things that we already thought about the amplifier, its perfect complement... and vice versa!! The price is the same, which is justified by the compatibility with SACD discs. But is this really an argument for choosing it today... Prefer it for its excellent musicality in all circumstances!

LAST MONTH, we tested the DLS integrated amplifier. Let's briefly recall that this Swedish brand is mainly known for its in-car loud speakers, and also its acoustic speakers. It is only a short time since it decided to enter the high fidelity electronics market, with, for the moment, an integrated amplifier and this CD/SACD player.

Not unexpectedly, the CD player has several points in common with the amplifier; the first one being none other than the price. In practice, this will come as a surprise, considering that the components of an amplifier are more numerous and more expensive than those of a CD player.

However, we are dealing with the top of the range here, and it is possible to imagine that the development, research and selection of the different components are all as complicated on a source as on an amplifier. On the other hand, the CD One is compatible with SACD players, a category of equipment traditionally more expensive than devices that play "ordinary" CDs. Today, one can nevertheless seriously wonder about the interest in this format, that might never succeed in establishing itself... But whoever can do the most can do the least and, let's be honest, SACD players have always shown musical performance of excellent quality, representing in the process a sort of insurance against mediocrity.

Physically, the two devices, amp and CD player, use exactly the same chassis. We also find the same front face as before, with its transparent panel at the centre, pierced by the disc loading tray. The rotary buttons have disappeared, leaving the space for five flush-mounted push buttons for the controls for the playback mechanism. These keys, by the way, are particularly poorly located, at least on the black version of the device, which is very austere in its presentation. We personally prefer the silver version, which is more cheerful looking. That said, the quality of manufacture does not brook any criticism: to see this, it is enough to note the thickness of the cover, and the number of screws that hold it in place. The rear panel reveals the presence of all the connections necessary and desirable on such a high-end device. That is to say, double symmetrical (XLR sockets) and asymmetrical (RCA sockets) analogue outputs, as well as a double direct digital output: optical and for

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coaxial cable. The mains cable is removable, and linked to a general switch and fuse.

As one might suspect, the case size allows the internal components plenty of space. This in particular allows the toroidal linear supply transformer to be placed well away from the other circuits, which, evidently, is an excellent thing. The supply is very carefully designed as well, with multiple regulators, the transistors of which are carefully cooled by being directly fixed to the bottom of the case. The mechanism is a high-end Philips model, used with its own management circuit. The conversion cir-

**"A detailed but never tiring listening experience, with an excellent rhythmical consistency"**

uits (Burr-Brown converters) and also the output stage are accommodated on another printed circuit board, sensibly placed very close to the various output sockets.

Finally, as was the case for the amplifier, our only criticism will concern the remote control, which is quite normal, since it is the same! The keys are too small, poorly placed and it takes a certain amount of time to be able to use it properly.

After the excellent surprise presented by the audio performance of the DLS amplifier, we were of course expecting the CD/SACD player to do the same. The acknowledged goal of DLS was to design a device with an "analogue" sound (i.e. totally free of all electronic harshness). And, from this point of view, they have unquestionably succeeded. However, there is no suspicious roundness here, nor has any detail been omitted. Quite the contrary even, the CD One delivers a sound that is



well supported at the low end, and especially, offering a lot of dynamics and precision in the whole medium to medium-high section. The result is a listening experience that is detailed but never tiring, with an excellent rhythmical consistency. The SACD player confirms these impressions, and, what's more, with the kind of softness but also fineness that, in our opinion, characterizes the majority of the recordings available in this format. We should make it clear of course that we are talking about listening to the stereo tracks of the SACD, since the CD One is not compatible with the multichannel format. Finally, our small only reservation concerns the stereo image. It is also very precise and full, but we would perhaps have liked a little bit more depth, compared to other CD players in the same category. However, this opinion is ultimately a very personal one, especially as often you only need to change a modulation cable in order to affect the subjective impression of the image!

G.P.



CD/SACD PLAYER  
SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO 112dB  
TOTAL HARMONIC DISTORTION < 0.005%  
CHANNEL SEPARATION 110dB  
INPUT SENSITIVITY 550 mV (line);  
2.5mV (Phono)  
OUTPUTS RCA line and symmetrical XLR; digital  
optical and coaxial  
WEIGHT 8.6 Kg  
DIMENSIONS (L x H x D) 43.5 x 13 x 43.5cm  
AVAILABLE FINISHES black or silver