

Two world premieres

Gryphon Diablo 333 & Jadis JA170

Audiophile bars: Music & Wines

Exclusive interview: Renaud Capuçon

Behind the scenes: our editors' systems

Encounter: Frédéric Vedel from Audio Synthèse

Dark Side of the Moon turns 50

Tests : Audioquest Powerquest 707 - Aurorasound HFAS-01 - B Audio

Alpha One - B&W 603 S3 - Børresen X3 - Diptyque Audio DP-140 MkII

Esprit Lumina - GGTKT Model M1- Hana Umami Blue - iFi Audio iDSD

Neo 2 - Isol-8 MiniSub Axis & SubStation Integra - Luxman PD-191 A

Musical Fidelity LS3/5a - Neodio TMA - Solidsteel VL3 - SPEC RSA-BW7EX

Stromtank S1000 - Taga Harmony HTR-1500CD - Triangle Magellan

Cello 40th - Viablue UFO Dome, Rocket & Rocket XL - YBA Heritage A200S

POWER AMPLIFIERS

JADIS JA170

Estève Fabry & Laurent Thorin

To celebrate its fortieth anniversary, Jadis has decided to reissue some of its most emblematic products, such as the JPL and JA30. But the Carcassonne-based manufacturer has also released new power blocks, the JA170s, which in turn adopt the new square chassis we love so much. This duo delivers a pleasure of sound reproduction, with an inimitable warmth and musicality that's sure to appeal far beyond the brand's die-hard fans.

The JA170s sport the new, square, highly successful look that Jadis initiated with the I70 and I300 integrated systems. The same care has been taken in the design and construction of the cabinet, which features nameplates to enhance its elegance. These power amplifiers are no exception to the rule of stainless-steel casing and 24-carat gold plating, the «Jadis Touch» that also makes the brand famous for its blend of classicism and elegance.

TECHNICAL SHEET

ORIGIN

France

PRICE

€ 25.500 (pair)

DIMENSIONS

400 (15.7") x 265 (10.4") x 400 (15.7") mm

WEIGHT

34 kg (75 lbs)

POWER

85 W

BANDWIDTH

10 Hz to 63 KHz

SENSITIVITY

555 mV

TUBES

8 x KT170, 2 x ECC82, 2x ECC83

POWER CONSUMPTION

320 VA per block



While these amplifiers draw their references from the tubes that make up their power stages, it's interesting to note that Jadis makes these tubes work in conditions that preserve a more than comfortable safety margin. This ensures that JA170 blocks are always capable of meeting the challenges of reproducing certain works of art with the greatest of ease. At the heart of each JA170 is a double push-pull of Tung-Sol KT170 tetrodes.

These latest-generation tubes combine power and quality. What's more, so as not to lose any of the subtlety of the sound message, Jadis has chosen to work these push-pulls in pure Class A. Jadis is one of the few manufacturers to use this type of configuration. The vast majority of others are content to operate in «AB» or even «B» class. However, while full class «A» undeniably offers a significant gain in terms of finesse and subtlety, it has the drawback of making the tubes work with a relatively high quiescent current.

This high current also flows through the primary of the output transformer. It is therefore essential that the transformer can withstand this high quiescent current while retaining the primary inductance required to ensure satisfactory response at the lowest frequencies. Jadis therefore had to develop transformers specifically designed to work under these conditions. These transformers are mounted in drums and damped with resin, eliminating any risk of parasitic vibrations within the windings.

In all, no less than six tubes are used to meet the requirements of the JA170's audio schematics. In addition to the four KT170 directed-beam tetrodes equipping the double output push-pull, a double ECC83 high-gain triode and a double ECC82 medium-gain triode are used to manage them. These gain and driver stages follow a classic configuration similar to the manufacturer's other push-pull schemes.

As for the JA170's power supply, this is provided by a specific transformer with multiple secondary windings to suit the specific structure of these blocks. It separates the dual push-pull power supply from that of the amplifier and driver stages. This architecture avoids any interaction, particularly during current-hungry transient modulation peaks. Finally, high voltage is regulated by a transistor circuit whose heatsink can be seen on the chassis, while filament heating is also regulated and stabilized to eliminate any risk of induced noise.

Here, the layout of the exclusively analog and asymmetrical connectors has been dictated by the internal layout of the circuits wired in the air, which the manufacturer has improved. The rear panel is fitted with high-quality RCA connectors, as are the magnificent proprietary speaker terminals.

IN USE

The Carcassonne-based manufacturer has always favored asymmetrical analog connections. So we connected these blocks using RCA modulation cables. We were able to sample them on several occasions in very different environments and with a variety of loudspeakers. Each time, we were able to identify perfectly that the new JA170 mono blocks are capable of powering a very large number of loudspeakers with great ease. That said, they're as heavy as ever. They will therefore need to be placed on the floor on a dedicated anti-vibration platform. The preamp, on the other hand, will be installed close to the sources in a more conventional rack.

THE SOUND

We've been fervent fans of the Languedoc-based brand since its inception. But we've noticed a subtle evolution in its creations over the last few years. Firstly in terms of looks, as mentioned above, but also in terms of sound. The adoption of the new KT170 tetrode is cer-

tainly no stranger to this. Its particularly low distortion level, combined with pure Class A operation, results in an amplifier capable of delivering an exceptional sense of presence. Available in a monophonic version, this amplifier has nothing to envy of the legendary JA30, 80 and higher, so imperial is its sound. It is characterized first and foremost by the exceptional anchoring of the soundstage in your listening room. It's impossible to listen to these Jadis with a distracted ear, they're so imposing. The term holographic construction has rarely made so much sense. From the comfort of your sofa, you witness an almost embodied spatial reproduction, so remarkably structured is it. First and foremost, it's the punctuality of the elements, their position in space, that surprises you with its realism. One has the impression that one could almost walk around the various musicians. Their placement is unequivocal. And then there are the strikingly coherent proportions. The JA170s render bodies with a rare homogeneity. Last but not least, the fluidity of movement makes it easy to follow the musicians as they move around the stage. It is all part of a great show, but it is also the fruit of a lot of hard work on the part of the designers to respect the phase of the signal to the letter. Then there's the brand's trademark spectral balance. It's obviously shrouded in a delectable warmth and roundness, but has become considerably more accurate and clear since Jadis' debut. It is easy to recognize the inimitable flavor and grain that characterize the brand's achievements and forged its reputation for dense, lustrous yet impeccably accurate timbres.

Just listen to brass, voice or piano and you'll understand what the notion of presence can bring to sound production at this level. So you'll understand that with such an accomplished level of performance in terms of image and timbre, enjoying opera with this trio of Jadis electronics is a delight. But it would be nothing without



dynamic behavior worthy of the name. And here, too, is a favorable terrain for our duo, which fulfills its mission without fail. This excellent energy management not only ensures crystal-clear, comfortable listening to any type of message, and any modulation peak, but also guarantees excellent listening comfort over very long periods, even at high sound levels.

OUR CONCLUSION

Last spring, we were delighted to go and immerse ourselves in the Jadis team's energy. We had seen the very first JA170 blocks, but it goes without saying that we were sworn to secrecy! Today, we're delighted to tell you all about them. By the time you read this, VUmetre will be the first magazine in the world to tell you all

about it. We are always amazed by the creativity and fresh passion of the Villedubert-based manufacturer. The brand's historic references are still in the catalog after more than 40 years and have evolved intelligently with the times. But it is with these latest creations that Jadis seems most likely to reinforce its unique status as a manufacturer of tube amplifiers. Firstly, because it masters the entire R&D and manufacturing chain (the famous power supply and output transformers), but also because its vision of the subject is as profound and accomplished as ever. You'll have to pay a hefty sum for this elite duo, but not only will you be able to keep it for life, you'll be able to pass it on. These are products that, by their very nature, know no obsolescence and are made to outlast us all. ■