

## **Accuphase E-360 is a true example of pure exotica**

**In this issue, along with various other new products, we had the opportunity to show off a** component for which we can freely say is one of a kind. Not only because Accuphase products are famously exotic in the world of audio components but also because this is the first opportunity we have had to show off the products of this Japanese firm in the pages of our publication.

The Accuphase E-360 Intergrated Amplifier is the latest model on offer from this company, premiering a few months ago, and represents an evolution on the earlier model from which it does not differ in aesthetics aside from the label. Accuphase has a long tradition of producing high-end audio products and a continual design aesthetic which is closer to a retro style rather than a contemporary design.

### **Unsurpassed Quality in Engineering**

The usual vumeters and a small LED display are found in the middle of the thick anodized aluminium front panel, below which are placed the indicators of active functions. The quality of the product is unsurpassed which is the usual mark of an Accuphase product. The individual side panels form a solid housing with the top plate being coated with a special anti-resonant layer which minimizes any unwanted effects. The selection and volume dials are found on the front panel and utilize the patented Accuphase system AAVA. This solution has some advantages over classic volume dial in terms of higher quality of work and greater durability. A great many more controls are found behind the front panel cover, the most impressive being the round tone controls which are a rare inclusion on high-end amplifiers these days. There are also buttons for speaker controls for two pairs of speakers, changing phase, recording control, audio-direct controls, controls to turn off the display and vumeter, direct-audio inputs, and insofar as the amplifier has an integrated phono preamp (optional, modular type) you can select the sensitivity (MM or MC). The front panel also contains the attenuator and a port for headphones.

The rear panel also displays a high number of high quality connections. Six line inputs, two of which are balanced XLR with two pairs of solid speaker plugs. There is also the possibility of installing a DAC and phono preamp in module slots available on the rear panel.

We had no doubts that the aural results would also be of the highest standard. The sound presentation of differing musical material was breathtaking. The tonal balance is unique, with a beautiful mid-range and crystal clear high frequency and an extremely rich bass.

We were overcome with the incredibly skilful performance of three acoustic guitars from the song *Good Time Charlie's Got The Blues (Kings of Strings)*. The presentation of the K2HD

published album *Happy Coat (Shota Osabe Trio)* was also thoroughly enjoyable and contained fine technical details, while the bass in Ray Brown songs shows that such a voluminous bass lacks clear definition. By changing the speaker system while listening to a CD of *Bolero (Minnesota Orchestra)* we found much better sound results and finally discovered the full dynamic potential of this amplifier.

Accuphase E-360 is definitely a powerful unit which demands a very sophisticated match with the right speakers and other components. This class of engineering is deserving of respect and care, which is reflected in the final price. While it's true that this is an expensive intergrated amplifier, this level of quality, comfort and bounty of options justifies the price. In closing, keep in mind that Accuphase is also seen a status symbol.

**FOR:** perfect work and engineering quality, refined middle and high spectrum, great dynamic, luxury design, an incredible array of additional options.

**AGAINST:** the bass definition could be better, can be demanding when matching speakers, price.

**CONCLUSION:** Extremely powerful amplifier, with a unique sound character and many potential addons