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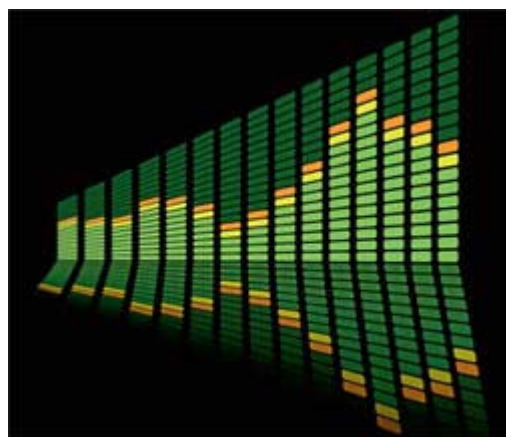
A Powerful Statement

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The ubiquitous hype that permeates the world of high-end audio can get quite nauseating. It is therefore a breath of fresh air to find a component that truly lives up to the manufacturer's claims.

I rarely come across such products so I was delighted to encounter the Perreux 250i class AB integrated amplifier.



One of the most irritating sounds to an audiophile's ear is produced when an amplifier runs out of power when trying to reproduce a musical passage that results in clipping, thus distorting the music reproduction.

To avoid clipping, many audiophiles gravitate to separate preamplifiers and power amplifiers, which tend to deliver more power than integrated amplifiers,

thereby diminishing the possibility of clipping.

The 250i is one of the most powerful integrated amplifiers in the world and packs such a wallop in terms of power; it would take extraordinarily inefficient speakers playing unusually loud music passages to get the 250i to run out of power.

I have not come across any other integrated amplifier that can deliver a genuine 360 watts RMS of power into an 8-ohm load and an amazing 530 watts into a 4-ohm load. This gives the 250i the ability to maintain good authority and control over even the most difficult to drive speakers. Give it a great source component and the 250i will allow your audio system to optimise its potential.

To match its power, the 250i offers a plethora of user functions that are managed by a sophisticated onboard microprocessor. It is also cleverly designed to minimise the various circuits inside the amplifier from interfering with each other by electrically isolating the audio paths to maintain signal purity.

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An advanced stepped volume control maintains a very clean signal path and a third generation stepped off-set balance control lets you balance the channels with little to no signal loss.

Unusual for an integrated amplifier, the 250i offers dual speaker binding posts and balanced inputs as well as a pass-through loop that makes it a breeze to make it part of a multi-channel home theatre system.

The 250i is built like a tank and its cosmetics are understated but impeccably elegant. There is no mistaking that this is one audio component that was designed with a no-compromise philosophy.


The huge power reserves were very evident during the audition, where the 250i delivered a sound that was unusually relaxed and strain-free, even at window rattling volume levels.

The 250i is one of the very few integrated amplifiers I've found that delivered such a fatigue free performance; I could listen to it for hours and still want more.

Perreux offers the option of having a built-in phono stage and a digital to analog converter built into the 250i. If you are into turntables and have a good CD transport, these are options well worth considering, as they offer performance levels that match the rest of the amplifier.

At its price point, the 250i is undoubtedly one of the very best values in high-end audio.

(If you have any queries on consumer electronics, contact Malcolm Gomes at .emailgomes@gmail.com)

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