



INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER OF THE YEAR, OVER £10,000
Accuphase E-650

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Accuphase is Japanese Audio Royalty, and its range of integrated amplifiers are among the most highly-prized models money can buy. The 30W Class A Accuphase E-650 might not seem at first to be the kind of product that would engender this kind of loyal following among integrated amp fans, but the company’s ‘to die for’ engineering, build and range of matching components all serve to make this amp the stuff of legend even before it arrived on the audio scene.

Legends can sometimes be based on myth, and the myth surrounding Accuphase is that it makes a ‘house’ sound that is ‘warm’ and ‘soft’. Something Steve Dickinson was keen to debunk in his review, “these are just reflections of the true sounds of the instruments, it’s not any kind of euphonic coloration. I think, rather, that it’s less of a ‘house’ sound, and more about the form of experience.” He continued, “there’s as much fine detail as you could wish for, including those vital ambience cues. It’s not a smooth, airbrushed presentation – any beauty is entirely down to the music. Unlike some more analytical amplifiers, detail isn’t pushed at you for its own sake; it is layered but not separated or highlighted, so the Accuphase seems to trigger the ‘music appreciation’ part of my brain more than the ‘music analytical’ part.” and concluded by saying, “There’s just you, and the music. It’s not so much transparent as invisible.” +

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