

The Pure Audio 'One' Integrated amplifier meets the Sibelius SG

How far would you travel to hear an amplifier, 100km, 350km or perhaps even 500km's?
How about 1300km's?

Many years ago, when I was still head down trying to get the quality of the Sibelius SG's to where I wanted them, Mark Fenlon (our driver designer) suggested that I get my hands on some Pure Audio amplification equipment. So I contacted their technical director, Gary Morrison and, although he was a great guy who had obviously developed an outstanding product; I was not ready to invest big numbers in amplification, already having a few classic amplifier combinations at my disposal. The problem was, he only had a pre-amp + monoblock combination which had a retail price of more than four times the price of a pair of Sibelius loudspeakers.

Move forward four years and I am travelling across Europe to Michael and Nicole's house in Heidenheim, Germany to listen to Gary's latest Pure Audio release, an integrated version of his previous set up but priced at a very realistic 9950EUR (incl. VAT). Ibex Audio is run by Nicole Hannig with Michael having the pleasant task of reviewing equipment and systems. Ibex heads up our distribution for Germany, Austria and Switzerland, so you can imagine that I was very intrigued when Michael told me that he had been experimenting with amplifier pairings and had stumbled across what he considered to be a perfect match for the Sibelius SG.

Oh, my God, (sorry for swearing folks) but what Gary has built is outstanding! Anyone will tell you that the Sibelius SG's are very detailed at the best of times but Gary's amplifier was delivering even more, not in an over emphasised, top end, kind of way but in incredibly detailed harmonics. Pianos just came alive, brass and acoustic guitars too. Cymbals were real and neither dull or over exaggerated.

Michael was right and Mark's intuition also. The dynamics, sound quality and realism that the Pure Audio amplifier was delivering was incredible. What's more it was punching out 100 Watts of pure 'class A' per channel, making it the best match for the Sibelius that I have heard to date.

I don't like to admit how many man hours I have spent trying to achieve true realism in the listening room; working on details such as when a bass guitar and bass drum are playing in perfect sync, that they always sound as two separate instruments. However, what was truly scary with the Pure Audio amplifier was that it added even more realism to the sound stage than I thought ever possible.

I slept well on Thursday night, feeling that finally my life's work is done – no need to worry any more. ;-)

I know that for many, the price tag of the Pure Audio 'One' at nearly ten thousand EUR will seem very expensive and can buy a lot of live concert tickets (taxis to and fro included), but looked at over a lifetime, I believe it will prove to be a real bargain. Especially if it is important for you to have your system sound almost exactly as if the musicians are playing directly in your living room?

More importantly though, looking at the economics, just like us at Pearl Acoustics, Gary at Pure Audio is ensuring that their products are designed to last 'forever'. Both our companies are extremely interested in sustainability; supplying solutions that do not need to be upgraded whenever a new gimmick or catch-phrase is announced. Our philosophy is to sell only once per household and to gratefully accept the thought of our customers owning our products several decades later, possibly even handing them down to the next generation (like many a Quad, or Sony 555EX CD owner might still do today).

Finally, I must conclude that it was a very worthwhile trip. Michael and Nicole are such lovely people to do business with that it makes the economic climate and difficult market conditions melt into a minor annoyance.

Thanks Michael and thanks Nicole, I am looking forward to returning Heidenheim one day – say 'hi' to your lovely and extremely well behaved children, I miss you all already!

And Gary, my hand goes out to you and your colleagues at Pure Audio. Congratulations! Hopefully we will meet up one day, who knows?

H.

The equipment used in our listening set up:



Pure Audio 'One' integrated amplifier, designed by Gary Morrison, sitting on a Solid Tech Hybrid rack



Michael and Nicole's listening room in Heidenheim. (Notice the APL HiFi DTR-MR SACD-Transport and the APL HiFi DSD-MR DAC with tube output stage on the rack above the Pure Audio 'One'. We also used an APL HiFi PSD power distributor and MasterBuilt cables throughout.



Nicole Hannig of Managing Director of IBEX Audio GmbH with a Sibelius SG on a natural Belgian bluestone, salt glazed, plinth.



APL HiFi DTR-MR SACD-Transport and the APL HiFi DSD-MR DAC with tube output stage on the rack above the Pure Audio 'One'. We also used an APL HiFi PSD power distributor and MasterBuilt cables throughout.

