

AUDIO Alchemy



REVIEWS 2015-2017

“These new products are a far cry from the Alchemy of yore, with much more advanced engineering, upscale casework, and a superb user interface. The DDP-1 and DPA-1 bring terrific sound and stunning value to the category. As a linestage, the DDP-1 is amazingly clean and transparent. Unlike most electronics of this price, the DDP-1 doesn’t add a patina of electronic hardness over instrumental timbres. Nor does it add opacity to the soundstage or compress dynamics. The DDP-1’s DAC section is simply sensational; this level of sound quality would be outstanding in a \$4000 stand-alone DAC. Clarity, openness, detail, and exceptional dynamics define the DAC’s performance.

The DPA-1 stereo amplifier and DPA-1M mono amplifiers are no less impressive. Their wide dynamics, terrific grip in the bass, and upbeat sonics made them a joy to listen to. Moreover, the amplifiers possess the same level of clarity and resolution as the DDP-1. Significantly, the amplifiers don’t exhibit the shortcomings I’ve heard in previous Class D designs. Even in the context of reference-quality sources and loudspeakers, it was easy to forget that I was listening to electronics that aren’t stratospherically priced.”

— Robert Harley, THEABSOLUTESOUND.com

“The DPA-1 is a stereo switching amplifier capable of 125Wpc into 8 ohms and 200Wpc into 4 ohms. The front panel offers more features than traditional power amplifiers, including selectable gain (a +6dB button), clipping indicators, a mute button, and soft-start warm-up. Both balanced and unbalanced inputs are provided. The DPA-1M is a monaural version of the same amplifier, delivering 325W into 8 ohms and 400W into 4 ohms. Both amplifiers feature a Class A input stage and a Class D output stage, based on Bruno Putzeys’ Hypex UcD module. (The DPA-1M monoblock simply bridges two of these modules for greater output power.) Sonically, both amplifiers have a lively, upbeat sound, powerful rhythmic drive, wide dynamic expression, and rock-solid visceral grip in the bottom end. Soundstaging and transparency are also excellent. A great value.”

— “ 2018 BUYERSGUIDE “ THEABSOLUTESOUND.com

“So the PPA-1 is in a system that’s way out of its price league but had I not known how much it cost, especially given the snazzy casework, I’d have figured probably double the price.”

— Michael Fremer, ANALOGPLANET.com

“In fact, had I been told that I was listening to a high-power class-AB amplifier—the kind that would require the help of a friend to lift it—I would have had no reason to doubt the truth of that statement.”

— Robert Deutsch, STEREOPHILE.COM

“Audio Alchemy as a company is back for some people and here for the first time for many of us. The company’s highly sought after engineering talents are on display in full force, this time under its own badge, with its DDP-1 Digital Decoding Preamp / DAC and matching PS-5 power supply. The DDP-1 and PS-5 combination is the perfect alignment of high quality components and astute engineering. The DDP-1 and PS-5 prove that given an equal playing field of parts, only brilliant engineers can produce a product that rises above the fray. In this crowded marketplace of DACs based on specs only and engineers following the application notes provided by chip makers, it’s great to see exceptional engineers with extensive experience build products that push the boundaries of what’s possible for a reasonable price. The Audio Alchemy DDP-1 and PS-5 sonically reproduced a great musical experience in my listening room. Recreating the delicacy of female vocals, the dirt of southern rock guitar, and delivering the emotion of my favorite heartfelt music, the DDP-1 and PS-5 ascended to the top of their respective product categories. From old school gritty blues rock to acoustic guitar to a full blown symphony, this Audio Alchemy combination supplied stellar sound in spades.”

— THECOMPUTERAUDIOFILE.COM



“...the DPA-1M monoblocks deliver music in a manner that’s both beautifully detailed and at the same time entirely ‘non-mechanical’— there’s an organic feel to the sound here that’s entirely at odds with a common misconception of Class D as being rather gritty and hard-edged.”

— **Andrew Everhard, Hi-Fi News and Record Review, magazine**

“We’ve all used clichés like ‘punches above its weight’ or ‘giant killer’ a lot in audio, but these terms are richly deserved here. This range is so exciting, so intrinsically ‘right’ sounding, and so much damn fun you can’t help but like it a lot.”

— **Alan Sircom, HIFIPLUS.com**

“De voorversterker, waarvoor ik me bij deze recensie vooral op het digitale deel heb geconcentreerd, is een snoepje, zeker in combinatie met de extra voeding die - een beetje in lijn met wat je hoort als je van de stereoversterker naar de mono's overschakelt - meer rust en ruimtelijkheid, power en dynamiek brengt. Tot slot wil ik graag nogmaals benadrukken dat de set vooral gewoon heel erg lekker klinkt. Als je ziet wat je er allemaal voor krijgt is de prijs/kwaliteit verhouding van de nieuwe Audio Alchemy, ondanks de toch wat hogere prijs van vandaag de dag, gewoon nog steeds super. Net als toen. Alleen zijn we inmiddels allebei een beetje volwassener geworden. En dat voelt goed.”

— **Max Delissen, MUSIC EMOTION Magazine/HIFI.nl**

“This phono EQ proves itself as delivering vivid and intense performance just like the original brand in its prime, having a highly ambitious concept of design.”

— **Tadashi Yamanouchi, ANALOG magazine (Japan)**

“The DDP-1 embodies a dream for next-generation high-end audio in a small-sized and high-quality casework... The DPA-1 is a beautiful small-sized device that distinguishes itself from many other heavy-duty high-end devices while it has a strikingly appealing sound beyond its class, and its massive output power is noteworthy.”

— **STEREO magazine (Japan)**

“If Audio Alchemy's design team was seeking that elusive 'analogue feel' for the sound of its DAC/preamp then it's certainly hit the mark ... tremendous value for listeners seeking fine audio on a sensible budget.”

— **John Bamford, Hi-Fi News and Record Review magazine**

“For me, the DDP-1 is the perfect solution for a system driving high-end active speakers. It's small, attractive, ergonomic and flexible. Most importantly, it delivers excellent sound quality with a tonal balance, depth of engagement and detail retrieval that places it firmly in the high end camp.”

— **Alistair McKeough, STERONET magazine (Australia)**

“The DPP-1 has real virtues in terms of sound fun, a great ability to make the message alive, present and materialized, and finally, a range of features rich enough to allow it to please a wide range of music lovers.”

— **Pierre Fontaine & Laurent Therin, VUMETRE**

“The DDP-1 is natural and expansive sound for listening to pop music, to classical music audiophile CD, all rise to the occasion, outstanding ... It really is indescribably good enough.”

— **Guoren, FEVERSOUND (Hong Kong)**

“The DDP-1 is the first DAC I've tried in a while whose sound has been my favorite, easily recognizable and preferred over others, each time I've compared: extraordinary, totally recommended.”

— **Josep Armengo HIFILIVE Magazine (Spain)**