



I purchased the Audolici A25M integrated amp at AXPONA, where I met the personable Harold Cooper. The amp was being demonstrated on Audio Note speakers, with a tweaked out, but very basic (like less than \$100) CD player.

I immediately enjoyed the sound in that room. The music just sounded "right". The tone was real, very fleshed-out with rich mids, smooth highs and punchy bass. There was nothing lean or strident about the sound. In addition, there was a beguiling transparency where small details in the music became clear as if a haze had been removed. This was all great, but I knew that the real test of this amp would only come after I installed it at home in my own room and with my own components. To that point, purchasing this amp at AXPONA was a bit of a leap of faith, because I wouldn't know how very good this amp was until it was in my own system.

I need not have worried. A week or so later, my amp arrived. It came in very secure packaging, with a nice detailed manual. Physically, the Audolici has a very nice faceplate in an attractive matte black finish (I believe a matte red finish and silver are also offered). The knobs and switches are a cut above average with firm feel and no looseness or play. The chassis itself is average - nothing bad, but nothing much better than what you'd find in your average medium-priced British integrated amp. I don't know much about circuitry, but it appears that most of the value of this amp was put into the inside componentry. It has a very nice layout with the EL34 output tubes and the input tubes mounted laterally on a circuit board.

Now to the important part - the sound!



In my system, which utilizes Alta Audio Lelantos speakers, a Cambridge Audio CD transport and a PS Audio Directstream Jr DAC, wired mainly with Acoustic Zen cable, and all components plugged into the outstanding Shunyata Denali power conditioner, the sound was really excellent. I had some concern about the Audolici adequately driving the Lelantos speakers, but at 91 db efficiency and utilizing a smallish 13' x 17' room, I need not have worried. Power was never an issue. Other than the smallest amount of oomph lacking in the very low bass region, I never would have guessed this amp only outputted some 30 watts per channel. In that respect, it reminded me of my first serious amp - a Naim Nait 2 with its 12 watts that was able to belt out beautiful music that defied its power output.

Much like in the AXPONA room, I got a beautiful, rich sound that reproduced music in an un-electronic manner, as if a haze had been removed. Clarity and details in the music poured out from the Alta Audio speakers unlike my previous solid-state amp. The soundstage took on a larger scale and the music was more immersive. Hard to believe from a small tube amp!

I got an even further improvement, mostly in the opening-up of the soundstage, when I removed the cover and feet of the amp, and placed it on Michael Green's wood audio tuning blocks per Harold's recommendation. The sound seemed even less confined to the speakers, and the soundstage expanded further.

recommended feet



## AUDOLICI A25M on MGA LTR Tuning Blocks

The output power might be small, but no aspect of the sound, other than the ability to power out the very lowest bass mentioned above, was in any way compromised. This amp can compete with excellent separates, which I have had in my system. Unlike some other integrated amps, it does not shrink the soundstage, it does not obscure details in the music, and it will not sound strident. The music sounds as real as I have ever experienced, bringing the listener one step closer to the performance! This amp deserves more acclaim, that's for sure. Who knew a world-class amp hails from Portugal? Now I know!



Tom Haleas

Associated Equipment:

AMG Giro turntable with AMG Teatro cartridge.

Shunyata Denali power conditioner.

Klipsch Cornwall III loudspeakers. I also have Alta Audio Lelantos speakers interchanged every few months.

Cambridge Audio transport.

PS Audio Directstream Jr DAC.

Whest Two.2 phono preamp.

Furutech Diffusorpanels.

Several Room Tune pieces in the corners.

Mostly Kubala Sosna and Acoustic Zen cables.