

VHA-75/HIB-75 100 STEREO-HYBRID AMPLIFIER (translation from review published in VECERNJI LIST daily newspaper, Sept., 2002)

That the "gold" in audio equipment coming from abroad - USA, Japan, England, France ... doesn't necessarily shine - I've already found out a lot of times. For Hi-Fi manufactured in these countries you often pay the price of which is worse only the bankruptcy. At the same time our designers, almost shy, are hiding under in their house workshops. It is therefore no surprise that their masterpieces are known only to the limited groups of audiophiles. Pity, because sometimes our designers' products are equal to those in terms of the sound reproduction quality.

The domestic company called »VDN Electronics" surprised us few years ago pleasantly, with its large and ultra-ambitious tube amplifiers. It was an esoteric design without output transformers, in which almost all the sound signal processing work was done by the tubes, themselves. This amplifier easy considerably cheaper than similar designs in the world, comes still very expensive and not very accessible to a wider range of local customers. I was wondering if and when the VDN's people would do something similar, but cheaper. And I was able to welcome the day when Ivo Vodanović of VDN called, and with almost timid voice, asked me if I was willing to audition their new design. From that day two months passed, and VDN's integrated amplifier Hib 75 kept seducing me and finally won my favor. This is love that lasts even today, and this hybrid integrated amplifier, without a doubt is one of those components that are reluctant to let out their listening.

In simple terms, Hib 75 is completely integrated line amplifier that has triode input section in which the voltage gain is accomplished in A class. The output section is done via MOSFETs in A / B class amplifier without gain and feedback to the input stage. To simplify even more, I "forced" the designer to describe their masterpiece even in simpler language to the not-so-technically educated audiophiles, so he told us that in this context the transistors in his construction actually play the role of the transformers, and the tubes form and amplify the sound. If this still does not tell you much, do not worry, because it is about what this device sounds like. Simply said, speaking of the sound the VDN-people once again earned a "clean A", and showed that they have a new horse to race in selected world league.

If you are tired of the transistor electronics sound, said with the chess players' language, Hib 75 could mate you in the first minute. If you have a general idea of how the tube electronics should sound like, this amplifier is exactly for you. But, VDN has gone with this design even further – this unit sounds much refined, and not like a cheap ordinary tube amplifier ! IF you expect that you will be hearing something that you've already heard, and that perhaps it will sound a bit better, you have reached a slippery terrain. It is, in fact, a quite a different sound, so you'll have all kinds of surprises going through your CD collection. Warm and soft, yes. so HIB-75 sounds. but this is just cursory description of his irresistible singing.

To the tired Hi-Fi ears, the Hib-75 will act as a glass of cold spring water on a lost traveler in the wilderness of great Sahara desert. Here, in fact, you're entering into the oasis of pure hedonism and tenderness. There's no cheap attractiveness, but only the magnetic attraction of a lot of very special sound. To some this amplifier may not be so attractive, because to the inexperienced listeners this will be a too big challenge – being used to stereotypical and over-exaggerated modern sound of the cheap transistor designs, it is difficult to those to accept the charm of VDN's integrated.

But those who give a chance to Hib-75, hardly will accept the criteria below HIB-75, after the listening session. Give this amp a try - maybe this is the one you have been searching for all its past good-sounding years.

Darko Duretek