



# THE SPEAKER SHACK

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## AVID HiFi ACCENT AMPLIFIER REVIEW

### CONCLUSION

I have had and listened to so many different amplifiers over the years varying in price from the outright ridiculous to what is totally reasonable and sensible pricing and the AVID HiFi is one of those special amplifiers that sits in the sub £5000 category but hits so much higher than its price tag suggests. It manages to perform to such a high level and no matter what the source equipment is it performs flawlessly but with vinyl this is easily one of the best I have heard at this price point thanks to the brilliant Pellar phonostage built into this Integrated design, with stunning build quality it all adds up to what has to be one of the best Integrated amplifiers I have had the pleasure of reviewing and is so much fun to listen to. The Speaker Shack awards the AVID HiFi Accent Integrated Amplifier with a coveted Editors Choice award as it is all of the above and more.

**Giancarlo Massironi**  
Editor-in-chief



## AVID HiFi Accent Amplifier Review

I have been enjoying great music with the AVID HiFi EVO Four speakers which have been in my possession for the last few months after I reviewed them here at The Speaker Shack. I love what they have done for my music obsession, so it would seem fitting that I review another one of their products and this time it is one of their amplifiers their entry level Integrated amplifier the Accent.

The Accent represents their starting point for an integrated design and entry into the world of AVID HiFi for us audio enthusiasts. When you look at their portfolio they have everything an audiophile could dream of, it is an impressive list from speakers to amplifiers, turntables, cables and even isolation products and everything is designed and built here in the UK. The only thing that they are missing from their portfolio is digital based products like DAC's or streaming devices but instead they are more focused on the analogue side and especially with their gorgeous turntables which they are renowned for and what started AVID HiFi.





### **Build Quality and Features**

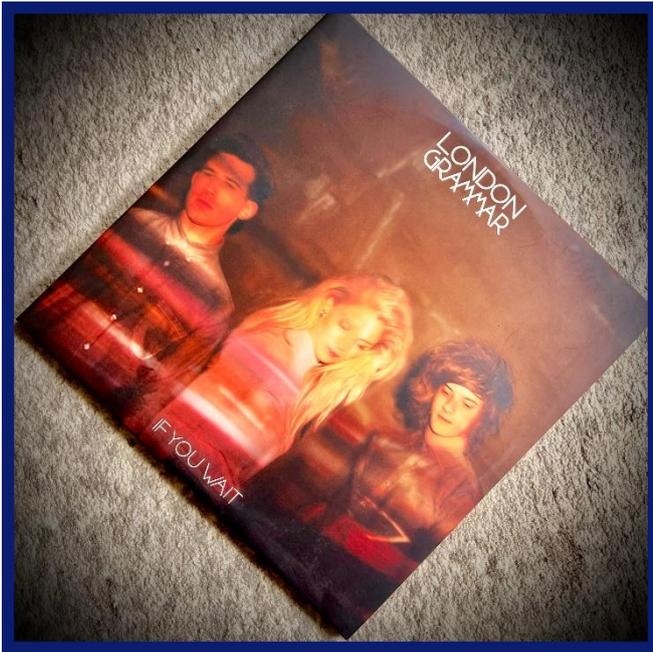
The Accent amplifier is a full width design and the build quality is simply outstanding, beautifully machined aluminium front panel and casing with a large A logo embossed on to the front of the unit in similar fashion to the Accent's bigger brothers the Sigsum and Integra amplifier which it shares so much in common with. On the front of the unit you have two dials one for the input selection and a ALPS controlled volume dial and in between a headphone socket with a mono button and mute button function, both of these buttons are finished in silver and clearly sets them apart from the rest of the black finish of the unit, the headphone amp built into the amplifier is of a very high quality so that you can enjoy great HeadFi listening if you so wish. The Accent comes with a beautifully finished solid metal remote with just the volume control and mute function, the simplicity of this remote is what I love about it and that it is not cluttered with buttons that you will never need or use, it just has one function and that is to enjoy the sounds coming out of the amplifier. The Accent has one of AVID's own MM/MC phono stages built into this amp, the Pellar which if bought on its own would set you back close to £1000 so it is of an extremely high quality and one of the key features to this amplifiers great sound when spinning vinyl. On the rear of the Accent it has a power connection, speaker binding posts and 4 line inputs and then a further input for your turntable with small dip switches for high and low gain settings for both MM and MC cartridges.

The weight of the Accent is significant thanks to the large 617VA transformer at the heart of the amplifier and with a massive 40,000uF of electrical storage it has plenty of current which belies its 70 watts into 8 ohms of power output and is able to deliver fast transient shifts and dynamics at will. The Accent has some nice aesthetic finer details like the shape of the feet and volume/Input dials which are all machined into the same shape to keep it uniform and with the Accent name which is detailed on the top of the amplifier and then with the AVID name written via ventilation holes on the top of the casing, it is this attention to detail that I love and gives it' its own unique look and the finishing touch to make it stand out as a premium looking product.



Setting up this amplifier is a breeze as it is simplicity in itself with everything where it needs to be, I am using Chord cables EpicX speaker cables to the AVID HiFi EVO Four speakers and using RCA connections to the Chord Electronics Hugo TT2 DAC and M Scaler and RCA cables/connections to my Denon DP400 turntable, for streaming I am using my Bluesound NODE and for CD playback I am using my Cyrus Audio CD8SE + PSXR CD player. Once everything was connected I went to switch the amplifier on but like always I brushed over the user manual but for about a minute I was stumped as I could not find the power switch, so referring to the manual I quickly found out that it is placed underneath the unit hidden away, I had to laugh but at the same time I like the fact that it is hidden away, so the lesson here is to always read the manual properly and don't make the same mistake I did !

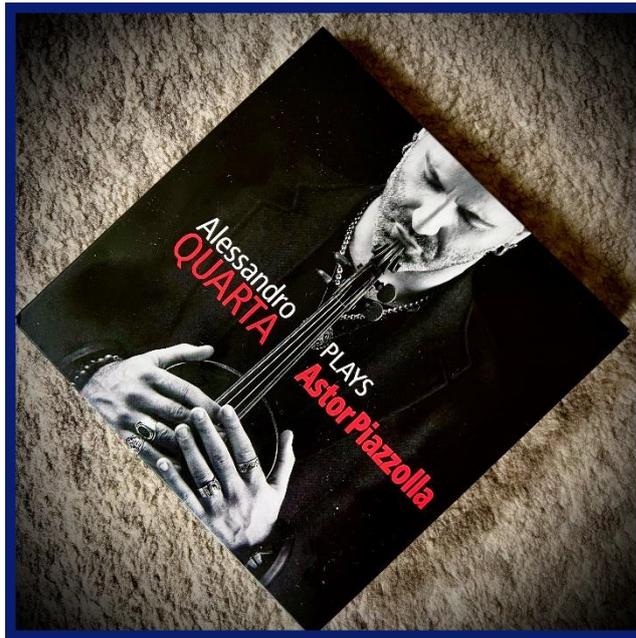




### Sound Quality and Performance

For my first album I am listening to the stunning album While You Wait on vinyl from London Grammar and this album has been given a new lease of life since I started listening to it with the Accent amplifier as it has one of the best phono stages I have heard from an integrated design at this price point hitting far higher than what I have listened to previously. On side A track 1 Hey Now is a classic track and has been remixed and played in clubs around the world for many years as it has the haunting vocals of Hanna Reid and bass to die for and the AVID allows it to be heard in all its glory. Hannah Reid's vocals are powerful and projected into the room with rich tones coming from the speakers while the guitar riff plays behind her, before the deep bass line kicks and boy does it kick in, I have not heard this album sound so good with the bass being generated out of the EVO Four speakers pulsating the lower frequencies and inducing such a visceral performance from them and find myself turning the pleasure dial up to silly levels and the amplifier just keeps going with even more power, the quoted 70 watts seems meaningless as my ears are giving out and so is the grin on my face before this amp ever will, the current that this amplifier has means it can power the Fours to stupid levels of loudness and I recently talked about how important synergy is with products and getting the sound you like and this is exactly what I was talking about as the synergy that the EVO Fours and Accent have together is perfection and makes the music so much more enjoyable. On side B track 1 Wasting My Younger Years is another beautiful sounding track and the rhythmic drive that this amplifier manages to give is just incredible with deep and powerful bass meanwhile projecting the perfect image of the music into my room with Hannah's vocals which sound so natural with all the harmonic details and richness intact and keeping complete control of the music with a vice like grip of the speakers.

For my next album I am listening to one that I heard recently at the London Audio Show 2024 and it is by legendary group Kraftwerk who's contribution to the electronic music scene has been huge over the last 40 odd years and inspired so many more artists, the album is The Man Machine which sounded incredible at the show and thankfully I have a high resolution version of this album well I have quite a few high resolution albums of Kraftwerk and this is just one of them and has the track The Man Machine as well as another favourite The Robots which I have not listened to for a while until now, released back in 1978 it sounds as good now as it ever has and cannot believe it is 46 years old !



Track 1 The Robots is a classic track with synthesised sounds that are so reminiscent of the mid 70's electronic music scene but with this remastered 2009 version sampled to 24bit 88kHz it has a very dynamic and crisp sound with the Accent amplifier allowing it to be heard with superb clarity and definition, I love the sound of the synthesised voices, such a simple tune with great sampling and the deep bass notes which when played resonate throughout the room with powerful pulsating notes that the Accent replicates perfectly. Track 2 Spacelab is another sampling delight with excellent harmonics from the synthesised sounds and bass notes that punch hard from the speakers. Track 6 The Man Machine is just a brilliant track and the one I heard at the recent show that I attended and title of the album which starts off with the electronic keyboard playing and synthesised drums while the robotic vocals pump out and the Accent manages to project a fantastic image of the soundstage in my room through the EVO Four speakers with the bass notes which have a crisp and powerful hard hitting beat to the track, this is a classic and always will be and sounds superb through the AVID HiFi Accent amplifier.

On to my final album and this is one that was sent through to me from IAN Records and am so pleased they did as it is a completely new artist to me from Italy and one that I have not heard before, Alessandro Quarta Plays Astor Piazzolla on CD. The recording of this CD is sublime and that is why I will always keep a CD player as it is still such a fantastic format with its ability to extract and recreate a musical performance to such a high level, this CD allows the musicality of the system to be heard fully and also the artists performance with stunning resolution.

Track 2 Fracanapa is a fast, relentless and musically satisfying piece of music with Alessandro's violin skills being shown and the Accent's ability to recreate such a vast 3D image of the soundstage which extends well past the speakers boundaries is quite special, when the drums and piano comes in, it is as fast with lightning quick transient shifts in tone and powerful dynamics that sound so satisfying, the Accents ability to keep complete control and composure with this music and at high levels is captivating, the amplifier conveys the music with real emotion and sheer musicality, piano notes sound crisp with each note struck and the drums have real snap and visceral power. Track 5 Jeanne Y Paul once again has an amazing soundstage and image of the music projected into my room with the piano lower notes having so much texture and detail to the notes being played, the violin that Alessandro plays sounds so beautiful and really quite mesmerising to listen to, shimmering cymbals and the impact of the drums is so much fun to hear and I love the way the Accent delivers this music with such energy and ease but so musically pleasing.

Track 9 Years of Solitude starts off slower but builds in pace to a crescendo, Alessandro's violin plays centre stage with the piano set behind him, the depth of the soundstage can really be visualised and a testament to how well the Accent manages to paint this sonic picture with all the musical nuances being picked out and defined so well. This is easily one of the most impressive CD's I have in my collection as it recorded and mastered to near perfection and I love the way the AVID Accent manages to bring this recording alive and into my room.

My time with this amplifier has been so much fun and have loved every second listening to what is a very special amplifier at conveying the musical message of the music being played.

### **Conclusions and Final Thoughts**

I have had and listened to so many different amplifiers over the years varying in price from the outright ridiculous to what is totally reasonable and sensible pricing and the AVID HiFi is one of those special amplifiers that sits in the sub £5000 category but hits so much higher than its price tag suggests. It manages to perform to such a high level and no matter what the source equipment is it performs flawlessly but with vinyl this is easily one of the best I have heard at this price point thanks to the brilliant Pellar phonostage built into this Integrated design, with stunning build quality it all adds up to what has to be one of the best Integrated amplifiers I have had the pleasure of reviewing and is so much fun to listen to.

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