

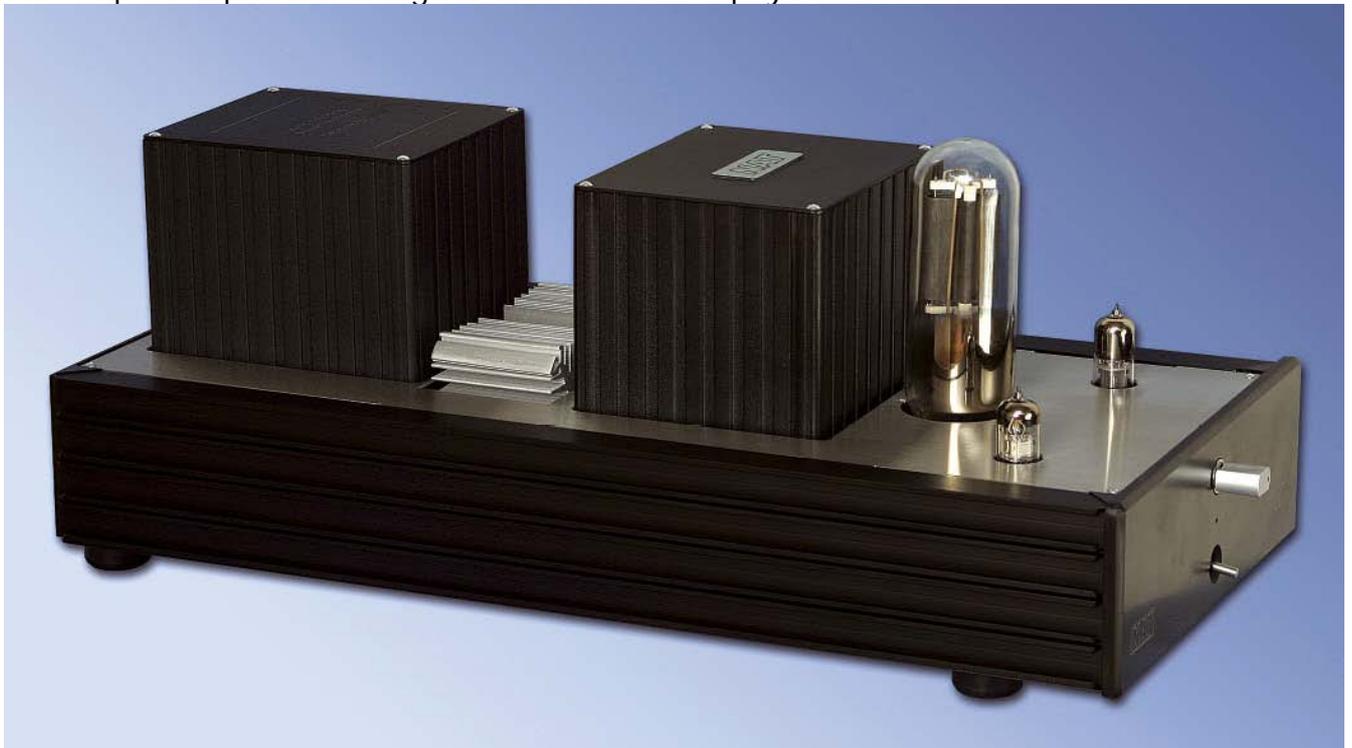


Yes, here comes wonder kid from ex-Yugoslavia again. After all, considering better tubes, read this: especially expensive tubes. This time we present a set which, in any case, can be bought. In the line of first-class components, NAT is representative whose older brother UTOPIA and SE3 enjoy recommendation, thus with couple of Siltech mono blocks. NAT is growing and SE1 is it's early fruit because SE1 is it's last improved version.





If people asked me which was the hardest component in a set, I would have to consider it very wisely. Loud speaker is ideal answer, but isn't it because of the space which conditions the type of loudspeaker. Spacious place requires big loudspeakers. Other wise, it is difficult to fulfill it .If the room is strongly muffled then it is convinient for high sounds. If the floor is thin and wooden one must try to adjust loudspeakers to find the precise low tones for good definition. Otherwise, you can release yourself from many problems. Massive concrete floor maintains good energy around the room so the low tones could become chaotic. CD player easily recognizes differences in quality but it's usually related with prices. The better the more expensive. A few project errors also may follow. Even Chinese could throw some ashes into a meal to save money on the market, as Esound did some time ago. But Holland Tentlabs knows something more about it. Reproduction is far ahead expected price. It is logical that one should pay more for better solutions.



Amplifiers have special role; They supply loudspeakers with enough energy so the loudspeaker can function adequately. Degree of output has a hard job and pre-amplifier delicate one.

As in a good marriage during the middle of the last century , phonograph is also a mix of mechanical , electrical, and acoustic qualities that can be controlled but also can be skillful job from past century.

If I could chose I would point to the pre-amplifier. Here things can go wrong. Tiny currents enter and they have to adjust and amplify themselves. Delicate cases often have fragile health and they can go wrong. I have been dealing with acquisition of fine pre-amplifiers for years and I had had a lot of the stuffs at home. Only few were good.

Quiet often there were the cases where input and output degree were impaired or potentiometer has had pace too big , so the sound was too low or too high. Among the whole list of popular Graaf, Cat, Lamm, NAT UTOPIA has won. Accompanied with SE2 they became the world famous set which had played incredibly well in any space. Now there is next generation NAT PLASMA with SE1.

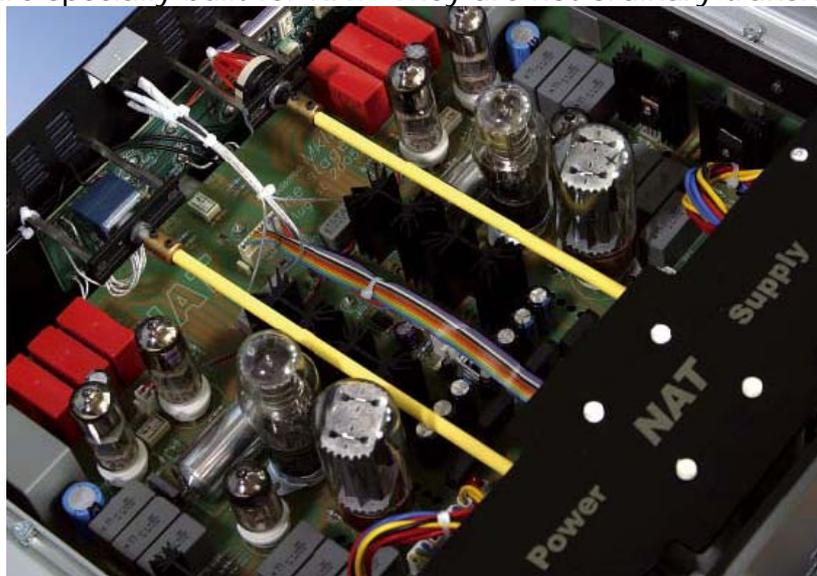
## NAT PLASMA

Plasma is the younger brother of UTOPIA and it has almost been under certain modification. The result of it is worth mentioning but I will tell you about it when listening test will be involved. First I want to tell you about a few characteristics of the amplifier that is necessary for requested high level. It is about a single box , instead of two , which reduces the final price. The box is more beautiful than UTOPIA.



Strong buttons, simply applied and of high quality. No shifting but stable unity. The box is compact and hard. Inside the box there are more tubes than I have expected to be. Interior components are certainly the special excitement, because each and every NAT components are built bit by bit and handmade. Plasma is about clearly emphasized double mono device. There are five tubes on each side, that's quite a lot. Aside from managing tube, there is also a corrector and it's very important.

On each side there are also two tubes built in to stabilize the supply. The supply is intense and transformers are specially built for NAT. They are not ordinary transformers.



Pre –amplifier is extremely wide because of the combination with transistors and tubes.

They request wide range from 0.25 Hz to 400 000 k.Hz. And it's not the common case. Output degree is pure triode all in A class. Everything is strengthened. Applied components are high-quality ones. Really expensive parts , as an example: Vishay. Supply is powerful when pre-amplifier is concerned and installation is more than correct. All together, it's very compact unity with high-quality tubes. The tubes are even better looking than ones in UTOPIA. Maybe that is the reason.

## SE1

To have the whole set, there is also a set of mono blocks with the single tube: the chimney of the purest flow with military specification since 1942. The tube is General Electric and it can give 35Watt of pure A class in full triodion. The perfect composition by it self. There is no feedback and all signals' ways are as short as possible. It may seem like an easy bit but it's definitely not. Transformers are handmade and they are probably one of the amplifiers' secrets. Here is also wide-regioned design and then the lowest limit becomes an illusion of mine.

9 Hz is quite good start for amplifiers. That is worth mentioning and the amplifiers have extremally low level of interference. The manufacturer must guarantee very clear signal(my personal opinion). All components are first-class. That is for tubes also. Further more the project is of wide range and noise signal is very low. That is a good combination because wide-ranged design makes place for a lot of pure micro-information that must not disappear into the noise.

## LISTENING

The big brother of his, UTOPIA, becomes pale a little in comparison with Callas pads and Plasma takes it's place. UTOPIA is a little nervous because Plasma is highly valued and it secretly hopes that something will go wrong, otherwise its end is coming. I think that is not groundless fear considering many good qualities that it has been aquired from its creator. According to it the normal course is: UTOPIA pre-amplifiers disappear and Plasma takes its place.

Cords are high-quality ones. Thus Ruby Mauntain power cords towards output degree and Ruby Hill towards other components. Siltech cords again this time are Compass Lake and The Emperor. First entry is on Wilson Watt Puppies over 47 Labs CD-s and later on one more modified E-sound. Only then comes the first important impression.

Judging by the sound, Plasma is very close to UTOPIA. The supply is less but Plasma does good job.

Utopia has three transformers and special housing .This is great result considering the price of this Plasma which is now 4900 eur.

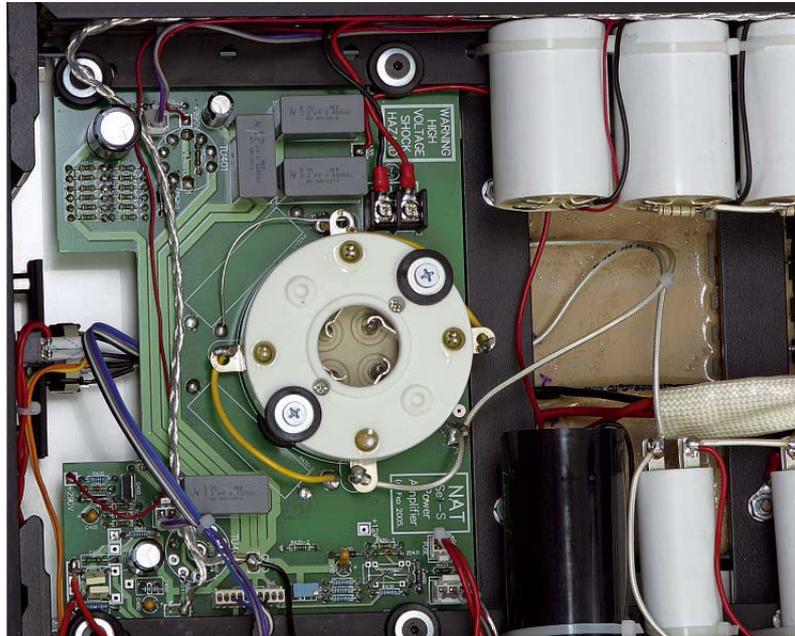
Width of space is extremely good. That is one of the recognazible qualities of NAT electronics, big transparent staff which is completely and sensably grounded. Differences are almost none.

Now it is time for next move. Expensive SE3 output stages are off and they are replaced by smaller blocks. That gives a little bit different result because SE1 blocks give some experiments.

User can choose between couple of options and first that means the possibility to play on 8 Ohm or on 40hm.80hm provides more power and that's the first option. In that case the full sound is low and is more difficult to work with. Example: Robert Robertson "Somewhere down the crazy river" easily present it.

So, there are no signs of distortion .And again a wide space and a signal that can be easily followed. VPI appears as a source and I was not used to it. Every time the sound gets too close to CD player I have to fix. Usually it means that I have to adjust air pressure on the branch once again and to control the height of the handle.

And, really the result is complete, pure and not intrusive reproduction...I just hope so. In front is still a switch which offers a bit correction and that, theoretically, gives more control to the loudspeaker. It revolves and at first moment it seems as if it disappears. Something's missing. But that opinion is subjective because the reproduction becomes more natural and purer. Even the blackness of space around the instruments is stronger and peaceful in reproduction. The mode button stays nicely in its place. Then comes the regular repertoire and I cannot find the mistake.



On contrary, because of this set, I have been sitting for hours adjusting filters with each movement more noticeable than the previous one. After some time the real enjoyment starts. I get the reproduction, real, calm and warm. Music is natural and animal associations begin to compete. This set is really something special.

## CONCLUSION

Join in, sit nicely, turn yourself off and plug in. The result is one special natural reproduction which can be easily represented to the listener.

If you do not see previously mentioned characteristics than something is wrong. Then the problem must be in wrong plug, bad current or cheap cables. This NAT is fantastic and it works damn good.

I have already been baptized and the best successor in this religion gives you the piece of heaven, right here on the ground and gives you home and space for listening.

Jo Mullers

Prices:

NAT SE1 4.900 EUR (mistake in original >> 7.900EUR correct)

NAT Plasma 7.900 EUR (mistake in original >> 4.900EUR correct)

Fox Audio

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[www.foxaudio.nl](http://www.foxaudio.nl)