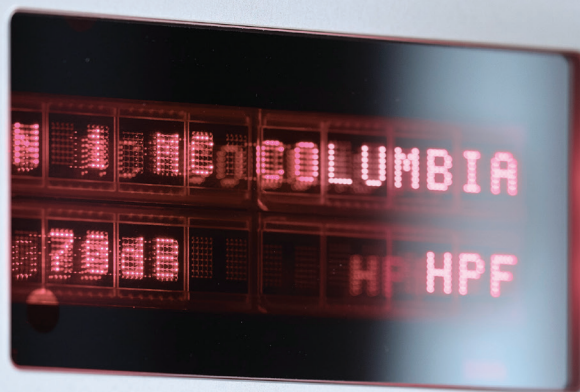


Product of the Year Awards



soulution 757

Overall Product of the Year

Soultion 757 De-Emphasis Preamplifier

\$85,000

It is not often in high-end audio that we come across a product that establishes a brand-new component category—and sounds spectacular doing so. The \$85k Soultion 757 De-Emphasis Preamplifier is such a one. Physically, it looks very much like the (superb) phonostage it replaces, the 750. But on closer look, you will see that its control layout is slightly different (e.g., it has a single knob for setting volume and menu-option browsing/selection, instead of the individual knobs previously used for each task). However, it is the 757's unprecedented functionality that sets it apart from its competitors—and puts it in a category of its own. The 757 is not just a world-class moving-coil/moving-magnet phonostage with superb RIAA equalization (and a host of other EQs for mono recordings made before 1954); it is also an optical phonostage/equalizer with a wideband transimpedance amplifier that handles the voltages of DS Audio cartridges at least as well as DS's own top offering (the fabulous \$45k Grand Master EQ unit) does; in addition, it is a head amp (with IEC and NAB equalization and a calibration network that allows for EQ compensations for tapehead misalignment or irregularity), which works with any tape deck that allows outboard equalization/amplification. To top all this off, the 757 is a functional analog preamplifier, using the same componentry found in JV's reference 727 linestage (parallel instrumentation amplifiers designed for wide bandwidth [2MHz], lowest noise [noise density <-170 dBV], and optimal common mode rejection [CMMR >100dB]). As far as I know, there has never been anything else like it—at least in the modern stereo era. Of course, this incredible versatility—which permits the true analog lover to bypass purchasing a linestage (and a set of expensive cables to connect it to his phonostage) and/or a Grand Master EQ (or other comparable optical EQ unit)—wouldn't amount to a hill of beans (in this world) if the thing didn't sound great. Guess what? It sounds great. And JV means *really* great. And it does so with *every* source connected to it. JV hasn't yet heard Cyrill Hammer's newest amplifier, the 717, but unless (or maybe, until) it proves to be a doozy, he can't think of another electronic product Cyrill has created that outdoes this one. It is, in short, an engineering masterpiece—and TAS's very worthy 2025 Overall Product of the Year. (Forthcoming)