

CHOICE of the Year 2007

sound and you can switch between the two all from the comfort of your armchair via the remote. What a way to go!

'Construction beyond criticism, sound approaching the legendary McIntosh MC275, facilities that never leave you wanting, all packed in a very substantial double carton, well written owner's manual, a suede chrome polishing cloth, a pair of white cotton gloves for handling the valves (no, I am not kidding), a two-year warranty and a bargain price of \$2,699. What are you waiting for? I might even go and buy one myself just to hand it down to the grandchildren to show them how it should be done.'

Having read through Robert's review before going to press, I knew I had to try it out in my system. My super-efficient (96dB) Ambience ribbons love a decent amplifier, especially a valve-based one and from the moment the soft start circuits clicked in I knew I had to have it. A couple of calls to Shane Lewis of Final Link Audio Pty Ltd (Cayin's Australian distributor) and the deal was done. The only other impulse buy I've ever made was a shiny, new fishing boat package, which landed me in scalding hot water with the wife. I thought I might be in trouble once more, but sat her down and popped on one of her favorites - Jeff Buckley's *Grace*. She was sold in an instant.

There are simply things that a good valve amplifier does with music that a solid-state transistor amp can't. In a word they are more musical and they don't come much more musical than this Cayin.

The valve amplifier isn't for every ear or system though and the same goes for the A-88T. It's powerful enough to drive speakers of average to high sensitivity and it will cope with impedance loads between 4 to 16 ohms, which makes it highly compatible, in this regard. The amp demands a good quality source and Cayin has another giant-price killer up its sleeve in the form of its CD-17A CD

player, which you can expect a review of in the not too distant future.

Partnered with the A-88T the combination makes a formidable music-making team.

This amplifier has already picked up a couple of awards from overseas

magazines, and now has a couple more to add to its tally. It thoroughly deserves them and the word is getting out that Cayin and its products are a force from China to be reckoned with.

AVL CONSUMER BUYING GUIDE 2007

Nic Tatham - Editor

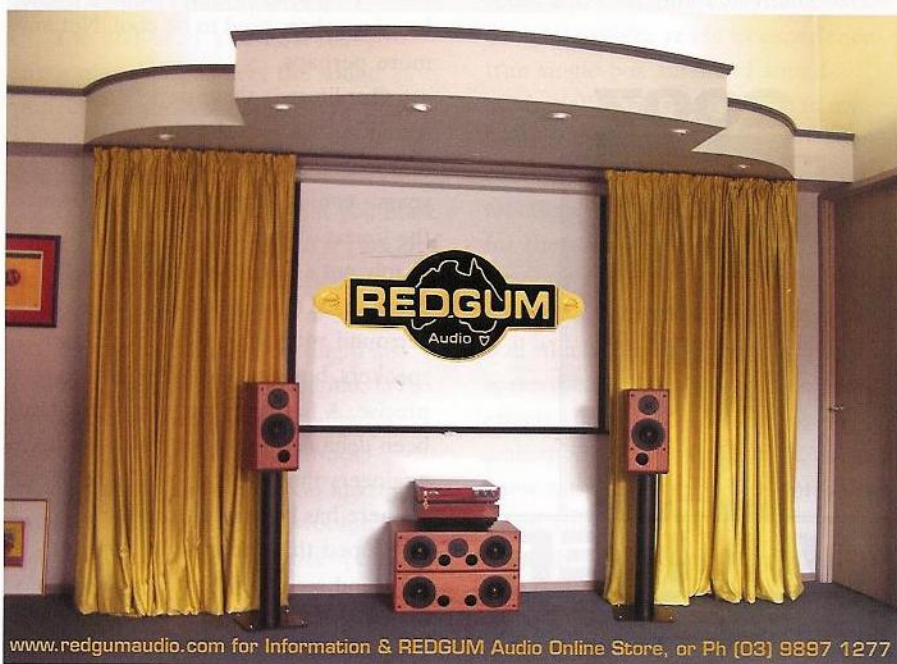
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