AUDIO FILE

Integrated amplifier with DAC. Rated at 200W/8ohm
Made by: International Audio Group, China
Supplied by: IAG Ltd, Cambs
Telephone: 01480 447700
Web: www.quad-hifi.co.uk; https://iaggroup.com
Price: £3499

hi-finews YEARBOOK 26 OUTSTANDING PRODUCT



Quad Platina Integrated

By giving you a claimed 200W/8ohm and more facilities than most people will ever use, the only notable omission from Quad's Platina Integrated is built-in streaming, which is instead delegated to a dedicated network player in the series, alongside a CD transport. Other than that, this amp feels thoroughly modern in its combination of digital and analogue inputs (including adjustable MM/MC phono), a headphone amplifier, and full-colour IPS display.

This screen, in conjunction with three small buttons and the Platina Integrated's large multifunction rotary, handles source selection, menu navigation and volume control – the amplifier can also be comfortably driven from Quad's Platina system remote.

> 'This half-track tape from 1959 is the equal of any audiophile LP'

Considering its far from extravagant £3499 price tag, this amplifier is a substantial beast. It weighs just over 17kg, thanks mainly to its 630VA PSU transformer and solid alloy casework, and occupies 445x135x348mm (whd).

The wide range of connections includes S/PDIF inputs and outputs, HDMI ARC, and, usefully considering the lack of streaming, a USB-C socket for connection from a PC. Balanced (XLR) and single-ended (RCA) line outs are provided should you wish to use just the preamp section. Speaker outputs are muted in this mode – an obvious requirement but one overlooked in many integrated amps. Balanced XLR and unbalanced RCA ins join the MM/MC phono connection, resulting in a model able to service up to four analogue and six digital sources.

The USB-C input is compatible with files up to 768kHz and DSD512. Quad has, quite sensibly, selected just five of the inbuilt digital filters of its chosen ESS DAC chip, and there's a default 'upsampling' mode, to 352.8kHz and 384kHz, by way of bypass. Back in the world of analogue, the phono stage provides +46dB, +52dB and +60dB gain and 50kohm (MM) and 360ohm (MC) impedance settings.

TO BOLDLY GO...

Paired with Wilson Audio's The WATT/Puppy [*HFN* Sep '24], the Platina Integrated delivered a scaled-up impression of the old Quad 405 [*HFN* Apr '76] and the new-generation, and more affordable, Quad 3 integrated [*HFN* Sep '25]. The sheer boldness and bottom-end heft here will appeal to those who value mass and force and are not averse to cranking up Led Zeppelin or Van Halen. In fact, we used both during our listening – the former's 'Good Times Bad Times' [Atlantic] giving powerhouse drums, the latter's cover of 'Oh, Pretty Woman' showing breathtaking speed on Eddie's guitar leads while reproducing all the nuances of David Lee Roth's vocals.

The Heavy Heavy's 2024 album *One Of A Kind* [ATO Records] owes more to the power pop of the 1970s/'80s than rock or metal. The Platina coped well with its jangly chords and snappy percussion, and rendered the echo effects of the title track with astounding front-to-back depth. Better still, given the all-solid-state nature of this Quad amplifier, the sound still proved fatigue-free as the band's raw energy came across in spades.

With Linda Ronstadt's *Prisoner In Disguise* [Mobile Fidelity] we hoped for – and received – a sibilance-free depiction of her vocals. Yet there was also the same purposeful impact to the drumming, even on tracks like 'Love Is A Rose' which is inherently gentle, allied to a warmth and three-dimensionality reminiscent of Quad valves.

A contemporary of the original Quad II [Vintage Review, *HFN* Mar '14] is Martin Denny's *Quiet Village* [Liberty 7122]. Unusual, exotic percussion and image height that defies the laws of physics – this 1959 half-track tape is the equal of any audiophile LP you can name. The Platina amp presented it with a realism that would have blown Quad founder Peter Walker's mind.

ABOVE: The elegant-looking Platina is 'driven' via its rotary and 110mm full colour IPS LCD. The latter hosts comprehensive setup and facilities menus while, around the back, 4mm speaker binding posts and fixed/variable preamp outs, on RCAs and XLRs, are joined by MM/MC and three line ins. Digital ins include two optical, two coaxial (and opt/coax out), USB-C and HDMI (ARC)

VERDICT

Quality DAC and phono stages, power that is seemingly limitless, fuss-free operation and smart looks – Quad's integrated is a bargain.

HI-FI NEWS SPECIFICATIONS

Power output (<1% THD, 8/4ohm)	222W / 345W
Dynamic power (<1% THD, 8/4/2/1ohm)	288W / 540W / 661W / 405W
Output imp. (20Hz–20kHz, Pre/Amp)	55ohm / 0.015-0.04ohm
Freq. resp. (20Hz–20kHz/100kHz)	+0.0dB to –0.12dB/–1.0dB
Digital jitter (48kHz / 96kHz)	140psec / 115psec
A-wtd S/N ratio (DAC/Amp)	114.4dB / 92.8dB
Distortion (DAC, 0dBFs/Amp, 10W)	0.00007-0.0008%/0.0002-0.001%
Power consumption (Idle/rated o/p)	90W / 680W (1W standby)
Dimensions (WHD) / **Weight**	445x135x348mm / 17kg