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Copland's arresting performance

VALVE AMPLIFIER
COPLAND CTA 405



£ 2998

FOR

A wonderfully even sounding performer; natural presentation works with all kind of music; well made

AGAINST

Unforced sonic balance means this is an amplifier that has more appeal in the long term rather than a short demo

VERDICT

The Copland CTA 405 has huge depths of sonic talent and is built to last. It's worthy of serious consideration



TYPE
Integrated amplifier
LINE LEVEL INPUTS
4 x RCA
PHONO STAGE Yes
TAPE LOOPS 1
PREAMP OUTPUT
No
HEADPHONE OUTPUT No
REMOTE CONTROL
Yes
POWER OUTPUT
50W per channel
DIMENSIONS
19 x 43 x 39cm
WEIGHT 25kg



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Don't be deceived by its minimalist looks – the CTA 405 is an intricately crafted amplifier from Danish manufacturer Copland. If you've got the cash, it's well worth an audition

COPLAND IS A master of understatement. As with all the brand's products there's little else to see other than clean, simple lines. No fuss, no clutter. Behind the minimalism there's real engineering substance, from the beautifully machined front panel to the exceptionally precise controls. Look inside this valve integrated and you'll find neat circuit layouts and quality components. The CTA 405's feature count isn't too high. You get four line level inputs, a phono stage and remote. As restrictive as this sounds it's plenty for most two-channel systems.

System matching requires a certain amount of care. Despite its hefty dimensions, the CTA 405 is no powerhouse, although by valve integrated standards an output of 50W per channel is good going. It means very high volume levels are out in the largest of rooms, unless you have speakers with a sensitivity rating above 90dB. That said, in most medium to small rooms this integrated will do just fine with average sensitivity speakers: we got great results with affordable options like EB Acoustics' EB 1s, all the way to our reference ATC SCM 50s. This isn't a very characterful sounding product, and that's a good thing. It leaves the listener with a clear understanding of what the recording should sound like rather than the hi-fi's interpretation.

"It gives the listener an understanding of what the recording should sound like, rather than the hi-fi's interpretation"



In absolute terms the amplifier lacks that final degree of punch and could do with just a little extra grip on the lowest bass notes, but unless you use it with ultra-revealing speakers like the ATCs – costing upwards of eight grand – you're unlikely to come across these (minor) shortcomings. Instead, you'll hear a wonderfully even presentation. In the midrange, voices are natural and subtle, sounding magically life-like with PJ Harvey's *White Chalk*. Yet, play Eminem's *Toy Soldiers* and all his attitude floods through. The Copland has great resolution

too, making Eminem's rapid delivery easy to follow. The treble is just the right mix of refinement, finesse and speed, and much the same could be said about that bass, provided the amplifier is sympathetically partnered. **Lows are surprisingly taut – most valve designs usually sound a little fat in the bass – and the Copland has no trouble keeping up with fast-moving basslines.**

That in-built phono stage is decent too, though at this price level we would still suggest serious vinyl fans should go for a decent outboard unit. We like the CTA 405 a lot. It's a great all-rounder, and plays all types of music well. If you're looking for an amplifier at this price level make sure you audition this integrated alongside class leaders such as Plinius's 9200 and Leema's Tucana. **★**

Take a close look at the CTA 405 and it becomes clear that Copland's engineers are sticklers for detail

