

## D'Agostino MxV Integrated - The Way of the Music

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The **D'Agostino MxV Integrated** is a harmonious fusion of luxury and pragmatism. Drawing inspiration from the Momentum HD preamplifier and the MxV amplifier, this cutting-edge creation boasts a modular design and a dedicated control app.

Recently, my son Pedro Henriques and I had the privilege of experiencing its sonic prowess during a visit to Imacustica-Lisbon.

Despite its hefty price tag of around €90,000, with the phono MM/MC and digital (streamer/DAC) modules pushing it to €100,000, I did not pay a dime to listen to it at Imacustica, nor will you, so the price is a mere detail that can only be of interest for potential buyers.

Only a few may possess the financial means, personal motivation, and audiophile background to afford the indomitable temptation of buying it. So, I'll focus instead on its exquisite craftsmanship and engineering, that unmistakably reflect D'Agostino's design ethos.

At Imacustica, we listened to the more 'mundane' version, i.e. in line-level base form, which

included a remote control, feeding a pair of Magico A5 speakers. The source chain included an EAT Phono deck and a Rossini Apex dCS streamer/DAC. Although the EAT turntable was not yet perfectly set up, we indulged in listening to a few tracks from an LP. Later, we switched to streaming on Tidal for practical reasons and spent hours immersed in music.



### **The warmth of metal**

But first, let me try to succinctly describe this work of art by the D'Agostino team, although in this case, photos do more justice than words.

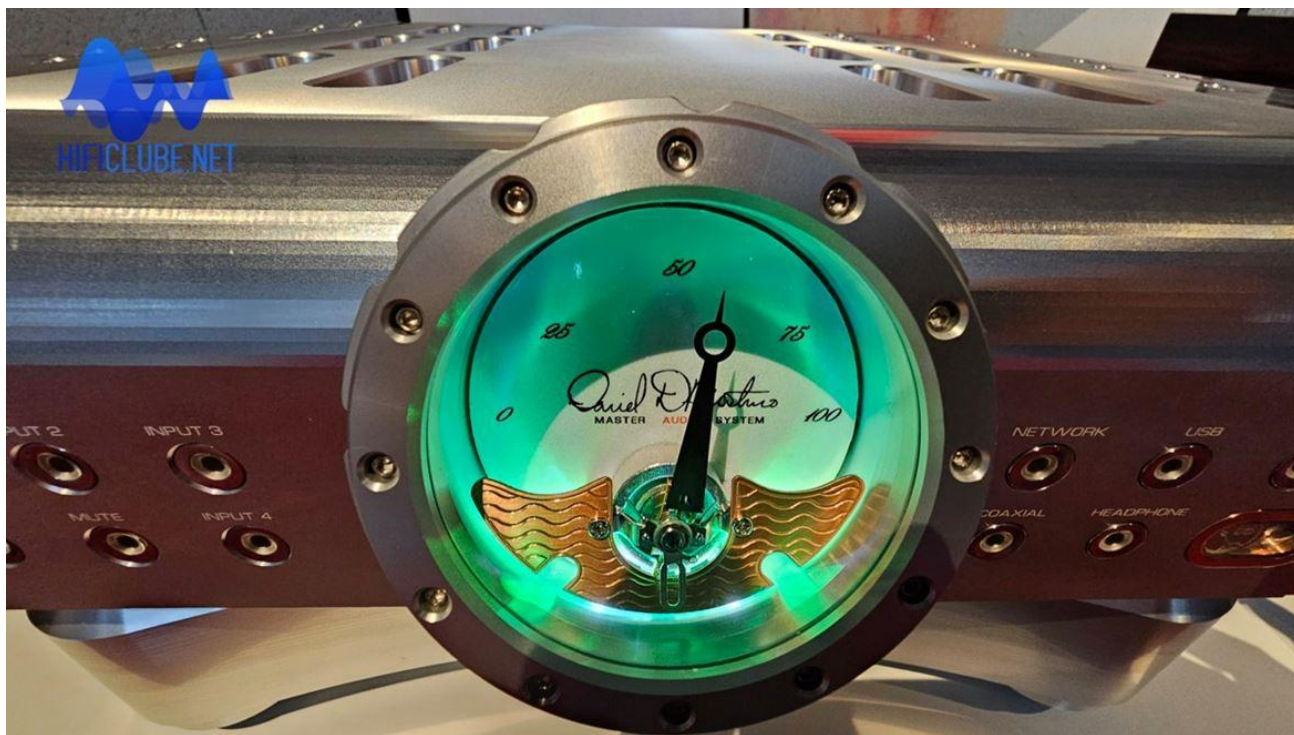
The MxV defies the coldness often associated with metal. Its machined aluminium case, adorned with copper inlays, exudes warmth and is smooth to the touch. The tactile volume control ring feels almost sensual as your eyes dip into the turquoise sea of the dial. The almost imperceptible movement of the VU needle further reinforces the notion that quality is more important than quantity, although it is rated at 250W/8ohm and 500W/4ohm, boasting an output stage with 28 transistors sourced from the Relentless Epic 1600 monoblock.

The MxV is supported by an elegant aluminium base that contains independent power supplies for the logic circuits, and digital and preamp stages, while the balanced amplifier is powered by a huge 2000VA transformer taken from the Momentum M400 MxV amplifier and a 60,000uF capacitor bank.

The MxV turns into a unique and beautiful unit that weighs 51kg when it sits on the plinth, which connects electrically via a 30-pin plug hidden in one of its feet. But you don't have to carry it around, which is fortunate.

As this was the line-level only version, it wasn't possible to try out the DAC module, which allows streaming, external connection via USB and connection to the network via Wi-Fi (the control app is

only iOS compatible, nor the Phono module, which allows settings of 50, 100, 200, 400, 1K and 47K via internal DIP switches.



Dan D'Agostino is widely recognised for his distinct approach to amplifier technology, which is the primary reason why someone might consider purchasing the MxV. As a result, I am confident that the dCS Rossini Apex met the high standards set by its partner, although nothing beats one-brand compatibility.



I've reviewed several of Dan D'Agostino's models for Hificlube and Hi-Fi News ([1](#)) ([2](#)). From my experience, I can venture to define the sound in just two words: democratic power. As opposed to

the autocratic power of, say, the Krells of yonder, perhaps except for the classic fan-cooled KSA 50 and 100, which were powerful yet inherently amiable.

## The way of the music

Dan's Momentum Series represents a departure from the traditional philosophy associated with Krell, which focused on "*The music my way*". Instead, the Momentum Series embraces a more modern and inclusive approach where the emphasis is on "*The way of the music*".

This new philosophy allows the MxV to adapt to all situations consistently and coherently without imposing its character, unlike many amplifiers (and politicians) who try to manipulate reality to serve their own interests.

The MxV followed the music flow with ease, and we happily sailed along.

The MxV transitioned from Lou Reed's intense rock sound in "*Sweet Jane*," complete with raw guitar distortion and the energy of a live performance, to the gentle lyricism of Reb Fountain's in "*Don't You Know Who I Am*," which happens to be one of Pedro Henriques' favourite songs.

The MxV followed the music flow with ease, and we happily sailed along, never feeling that it was biased towards any particular genre. As Alison Krauss, accompanied by the soft strumming of acoustic guitars, would say, "*It Doesn't Matter*."



The MxV performed flawlessly and responded perfectly to every genre of music we played. Regardless of the volume, it remained steady, self-assured, and once again seamless in the transition between the fluidity and urgency of the La Voce Instrumentale violins, with Dmitri Sinkovsky in Concerto No. 1 of the Four Seasons, and the imposing and dramatic cello of Jean-

Guihen Queyras in Bach's Suite for Cello BWV 1007: I. Prelude. The MxV is a true virtuoso, just like the musicians performing the music.



Both male and female voices sound authentic and expressive, enabling us to follow the lyrics, tone, and rhythm. This quality is what sets great performers apart, such as Eric Clapton in his song "Man Of The World," as well as lesser-known singers like Aurora, whom I was introduced to by PH, in *Murder Song*, a haunting track of love and crime.

I chose both of these songs for the soundtrack of a video I'm sharing with you as a preview of MxV's capabilities.

*Nota: The two samples were recorded live at Imacustica directly from the Magico A5 speakers, with a Nagra SD portable recorder, courtesy of Nagra/Ajasom.*

Don't just take my word for it, visit Imacustica and hear the Dan D'Agostino MxV INT for yourself. But hurry - it won't be available much longer, despite the price.

