

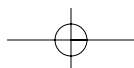
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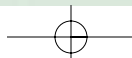
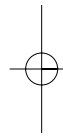
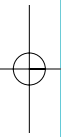
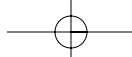
*»Listening to music with the Soulution
710 just makes you addicted.«*



The super amplifier from Switzerland:

Soulution 710 power amp





What, for heaven's sake, can I write about this power amp? Actually, I'm still spellbound. The only thing I really want to do is listen to music through it. Only through the Soulution and nothing else, for ever more. Which is why I'm also pretty annoyed with Wilfried Kress because he asked me to write this of all reviews. I don't like having my audiophile inner life stirred so deeply. Especially not after I had already reached my nirvana as I deemed. Now, as every audiophile knows, the search for the holy grail will never really lead you to an end. This is just typical of the grail. But one keeps getting nearer and nearer all the time. And it happens very, very rarely that we firmly believe to have discovered it. Right now, I find myself in just this state. Not for the first time, that's true. But I've never been so close to it before. Of that I am sure. Actually, it's marvellous. For the first time, one believes to hear everything – really everything – as it is supposed to be. That's all very fine. Just how can I write down a reasonably down-to-earth article? Impossible.

However, I had to endure serious pains at first. By this I mean heaving around tremendous 75 kilogrammes of sheer amplifier mass. Even with two people, this cannot happen without a certain logistic involvement. Have you ever lifted a totally smooth-faced block weighing as much as a full-grown man out of a tight-fitting cardboard box? If you're toying with the idea of buying the Soulution, you should absolutely urge your dealer to place that thing right where you want it to stand in your listening room. And you'd bet-

Review: Soulution 710 power amp

Something quite spectacular must take place before our authors throw in the towel and leave. Now, what has happened?

ter think twice if this is to be the final position for the amp. Because you won't convince your dealer a second time to break his back for you, particularly since he believes that he has earned his profit margin already by the sweat of his brow.

Be it as it may, now let's get started. Plug in your favourite mains cable (HMS), the two balanced or unbalanced connection cables (Sun Audio) and the speaker cables (AudiAZ) into the amp sockets, flip the mains switch on the rear and press the standby button on the front – and off we go, right into the realm of audiophile bliss. The brand-new "Muellerin" featuring exceptional baritone Thomas Quasthoff and Justus Zeyen on piano is ready in the CD player. What's this? Has this CD mutated into an SACD overnight? Not a trace of PCM harshness or thinned-out piano sound any more. Still more impressive comes the realization that voice and piano can be discerned as two completely independent, fixed sound sources on stage with naturally different sizes. On this recording I was used to hear how Justus Zeyen's grand piano scatters commenting spots of colour into the baritone's Schubert performance, whirling around him vacillatingly, spreading its rolling bass now before, now behind the singer and then again stabbing poor Thomas Quasthoff treacherously in his back. And now this. A veritable singer and a grand piano that's standing behind him in realistic dimensions, emphasizing the eery and desperate moments in the Schubert songs with the slightly metallic shine of its lower octaves.

The Soulution delivers an ultra top-notch performance. And the wonderful thing about this first

Feels like heaven

Soulution-Schubert encounter is that it's the rule rather than the exception. Any recording – no matter from which source, whether digital or analogue – receives another new dimension, a kind of transcendence, so to speak. No, strangely enough this doesn't become a habit in the long run, but always remains a very special experience. My explanation is: one can hardly get any closer to the live situation than with this superb exceptional amplifier which I've linked to my highly esteemed Mark Levinson 320S preamp – and which obviously seems to take as much pleasure in driving it as I enjoy listening. A preamp is also to follow soon from the makers of this power amp. Right now, I don't even dare to think how much more this duo might be able to move.

Where are these amps from? They come from Switzerland, more precisely from Dulliken near Aarau in the beautiful Aargau. But so far I've only known that pretty good red and white wines are grown there. I didn't know that a power amp named Soulution 710 thrives here, too. Well, it hasn't been

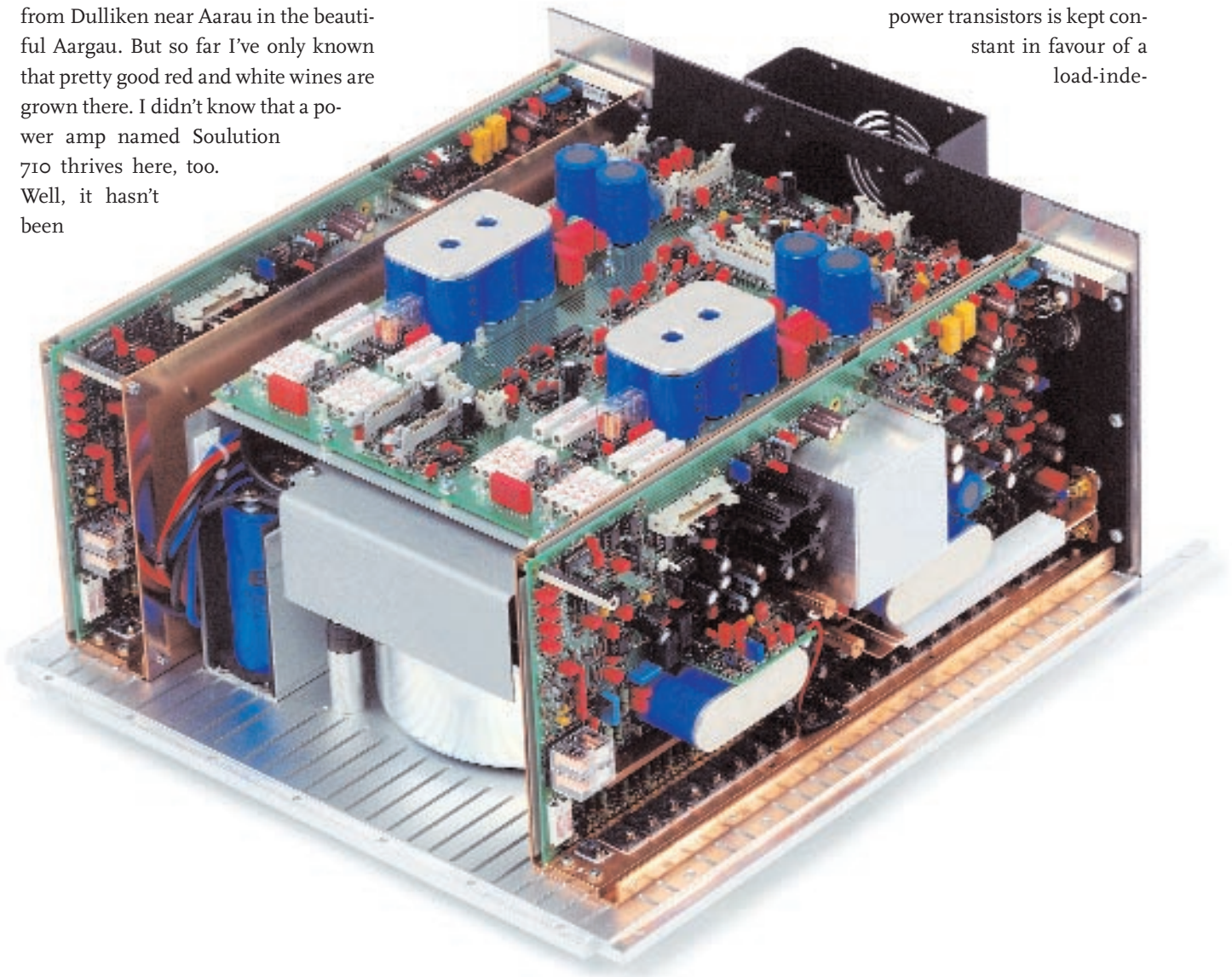
cultivated for too long, either. Of course, its home isn't a wine cellar. On the other hand, one wouldn't exactly regard a production plant for electric motors as the natural environment for raising highend gems. However, it's true and this is due to the two audiophile managing directors of the electric motor company, Cyrill Hammer and Roland Manz who were able to win ex-Audiolabor technician Christoph Schürmann for their project. This triumvirat of Soulution – a made-up word combining soul and solution – has defined highest quality as their primary goal, irrespective of the cost involved. Only those who are in the lucky po-

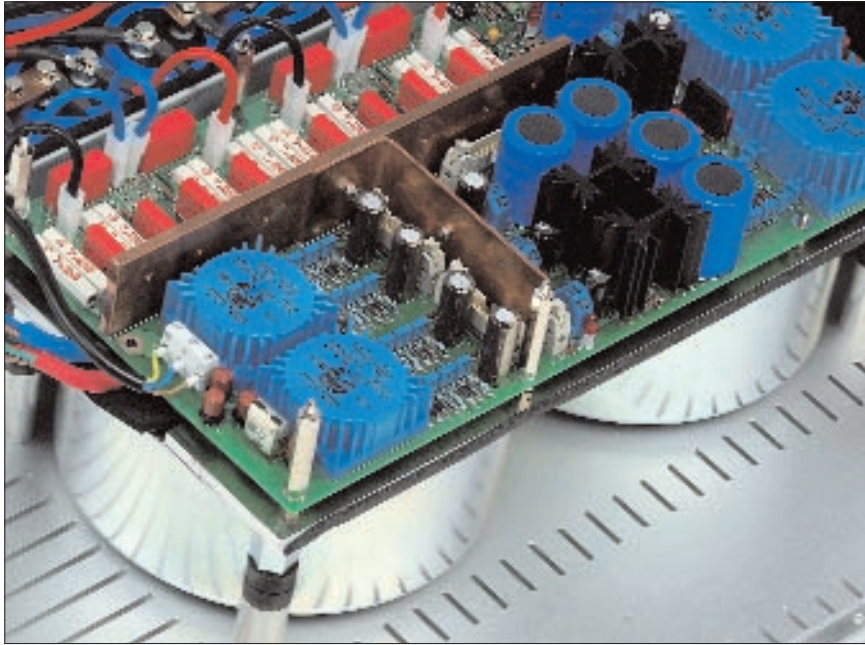
Majestic elemental force: The Soulution 710 is packed with hightech electronics. No wonder it tips the scales at 75 kg.

sition of running a healthy main business like the production of electric motors for the automotive industry can postulate such an aim and realize it brilliantly, as can be seen in Soulution's first work, the power amp 710.

In somewhat more sober words: the design guidelines were to develop an amplifier that would function correctly both in the level and time domains. A low negative feedback, moderate gain factors and an unshakeable power supply were to be the means to reach this goal. Bipolar transistors selected for linearity and a high limit frequency work in three gain stages. The 14 power transistors per channel are operated in such a way that charge carriers are sucked off extremely fast at the alternation between the conducting and the non-conducting state which is critical with these transistors.

Furthermore, the temperature of the power transistors is kept constant in favour of a load-inde-





Decoupled powerhouses: The shielded toroidal transformers are mounted on damping elements.

pendent closed circuit current. For identical thermal conditions, the transistors are mounted on a common massive copper rail. Cooling is provided by the aluminium base plate of 1 cm (0.4") thickness and a fan that works inaudibly in the background. Massive copper rails are also used to transport the currents from the power transistors to the speaker terminals. The power supply section with a storage capacitance of a quarter Farad (!) is lavishly regulated for a fast response.

The enormous weight of the Souolution 710 is largely due to its case. Not only the base plate, but also the sidewalls, front panel and top lid are so massive that microphony which could affect the circuit should be locked out completely. The 710 doesn't necessarily look sexy – it's simply too large and above all too high. It's a colossus, no doubt, but one whose craftsmanship is simply so exemplary that you'll pardon it for its bulky appearance which has nothing to do whatsoever with the listening experience it brings.

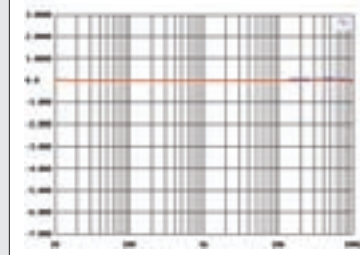
Yes, I just can't stop talking about the sound of the Souolution. Have I already

said that CDs suddenly sound like SACDs? Alright, so I have. But I still need to mention that music from a not very highend-like DVB receiver (beefed up through my dcs upsampler/converter tandem) now also plays slightly below SACD level. And there is still another point which seems important to me. I don't know any other power amp, not even among those umpteen times stronger, which can push the bass of the Revel F 32 in such a sovereign way. One gets the impression that these loudspeakers have got a sub-low octave. A few minutes ago I was still indecisive about complementing the F 32 with a Revel subwoofer. No more. I'd rather put away money for the Souolution 710. One can almost see the F 32s' pride that they can finally deliver their full bass potential. And not only do their tweeters sound not like the metal they are made of – now they are able to elicit a very unique, silky shimmer from this cold material, provided they are decently driven. They seem to follow the Souolution's baton without the slightest effort.

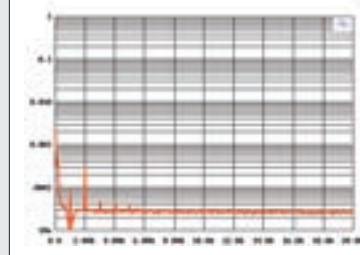
This strainless sound generation which must be attributed fully to the 710 reminds me of the gait of an electrostatic speaker such as the Quad ESL 988. Except that with the Souolution, the Revel

Lab-Report

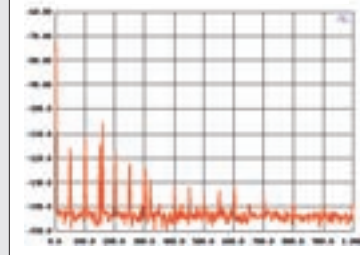
Frequency response: Souolution 710 dbr/Hz



Harmonic Distortion: Souolution 710 %/Hz



Noise: Souolution 710 dbr/Hz



Souolution 710 power amplifier

Rated cont. output 8Ω	136 W
Rated cont. output 4Ω	236 W
Gain factor	26 dB
Sensitivity (for full modulation 4Ω)	1,55 V
Distortion (THD+N, 4Ω)	0,00134 %
IM distortion (SMPTE, 4Ω)	0,005 %
IM distortion (CCIF, 4Ω)	0,00057 %
S/N ratio (unweighted)	-87,7 dB
S/N ratio (A-weighted)	-103,2 dB
Rise time (4Ω)	0,33 μs
Channel deviation	0,01 dB
DC output offset	1,2 mV
Open circuit power consumption	~310 VA
Oscillation tendency (capacitive load)	very high
Curvature deformation (capacitive load)	very high

Judging from its specifications, the Souolution ranks among the best on the market – close to perfection. The power amp has an ultra-large bandwidth and is extremely fast. Which results in its only handicap: it has no liking for capacitive loads. But even with critical speaker cables no problems occurred during the test. ■

AMPLIFIERS



displays a noble relaxedness, indeed a special aura – as if they were made for each other – which I've never heard from the Quads. Maybe I should put it to the test and connect the Souolution to my 988. An altitude difference of two floors plus the Souolution's sheer mass currently prevent me from checking out this certainly interesting experiment. For the time being, please be lenient with me.



Backstage: A low-noise fan, WBT speaker terminals plus RCA and XLR inputs.

Please be lenient in general, because I'm going to close my laptop now and devote myself to my new audiophile happiness again. I ask Wilfried Kress for his forbearance that I don't want to write any more amplifier reviews in the near future. And I ask the gentlemen from Dulliken to get their preamp finished and deliver it as soon as possible. Should this one play in the same league as the power amp, I'll report back for one more amp review, though. Meanwhile I'd like to thank the Lord for letting me have this experience.

Souolution 710

WxHxD	48 x 28 x 53,5 cm
Warranty	5 years
	17.900 Euro
Distributor	Spemot AG
	Industriestraße 70
	CH-4657 Dulliken
Phone	0041 62 - 2 85 30-40

Résumé

The Souolution 710 is really too good for a test. Listening to music through it just makes you addicted. It's good that not all addictive substances are state-forbidden or burdened with taxes. Anyway, the author reports absent until further notice because of acute Souolution addiction.

Reinhold Martin ■

souolution

nature of sound

Highend Audio Equipment



precise	to reproduce the finest details
fast	to follow the music with calmness
stable	to preserve the harmony of the music
strong	for big musical happenings

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