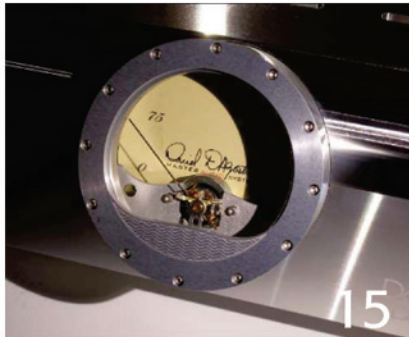


## Industry Update

High-end audio news, including the dealer-sponsored events taking place in November and December - the reappearance of Dan D'Agostino



### ITALY: MILANO Ken Kessler

It takes a lot to stop Italians dead in their tracks: they're used to gorgeous designs. But at the premiere of Dan D'Agostino's Momentum monoblock power amplifier in mid-September, at the Top Audio Video Show in Milan, the crowds went nuts. It was an act of affirmation: DD was back.

D'Agostino's return, with an outrageous new product, took place a year to the day that he parted from Krell, the brand he cofounded 30 years ago and for which he was chief engineer. Working feverishly over the 12 months since, D'Agostino developed a compact yet powerful monoblock, to be manufactured by the newly formed Dan D'Agostino Inc. The result heralds a new audio contender in the luxury sector.

While addressing audiophile concerns, with power to spare and a promised sound quality to die for, the Momentum is also aimed at people who cherish the finer things in life. During the time I met with Dan and Petra, his wife and business partner, they referred often to iconic purveyors of luxury items. Dan cited watchmaker Breguet, whose hour and minute hands inspired the shape of the needle in the Momentum's power meter. Goyard luggage, Cohiba cigars, Romanée-Conti wine—it's the D'Agostinos' intention to establish a rapport with clients who are comfortable with "the best."

What such individuals will appreciate are dimensions much smaller than those that have long identified monolithic high-end amplifiers: the Momentum measures only 12.5" wide by 4" high by 18" deep. Yet thanks to a chassis machined from a solid aluminum billet, and massive side-panel heatsinks

machined from solid copper, each Momentum weighs 90 lbs. Dan's party trick was to ask visitors to try to lift one.

The first active demos should take place at the Consumer Electronics Show (January 6–9). But there was no getting away from the fact that, in the silent display at Top Audio, the Momentum's looks alone were enough to generate the kind of excitement rarely seen these days in hi-fi. The fit'n'finish of even the first, hand-built, preproduction sample recalled those Breguet watches, exuding a visual elegance sometimes found in loudspeakers but rarely in electronics.

The Momentum's specifications are still being refined, but the amp already has some unique selling points. D'Agostino used copper heatsinks because the metal's thermal conductivity is 91% greater than that of aluminum, which made possible smaller heatsinks, than the typical, bulky fins. The sinks' conductivity is enhanced by the use of venturis; the upper aperture of each venturi measures 0.75" wide, narrowing to 0.5" in the middle. The provisional output power is specified as 300W into 8 ohms, 600W into 4 ohms, and 1200W into 2 ohms.

The active devices are 28 output transistors that "run at a blistering 69MHz" for "incredible bandwidth," says

D'Agostino. Each transistor is mounted with two stainless-steel fasteners, for maximum thermal transfer to the heatsinks. A capacitor-resistor network connected to the base of each transistor ensures stability, even at high frequencies and/or with low-impedance speakers. The printed circuit boards feature through-hole construction to provide greater reliability and longevity than surface mounting. All resistors are 1% metal-film types, and there are no capacitors in the signal path. The Momentum is DC-coupled throughout. Its vault-like casework—no screws are visible—is nonresonant, and claimed to provide excellent shielding from RFI and EMI.

Each Momentum will be hand-built in the US, and is due to ship before Christmas, at \$42,000/pair.

For full details, visit [www.dagostinoinc.com](http://www.dagostinoinc.com).

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Dan D'Agostino's Momentum monoblock.

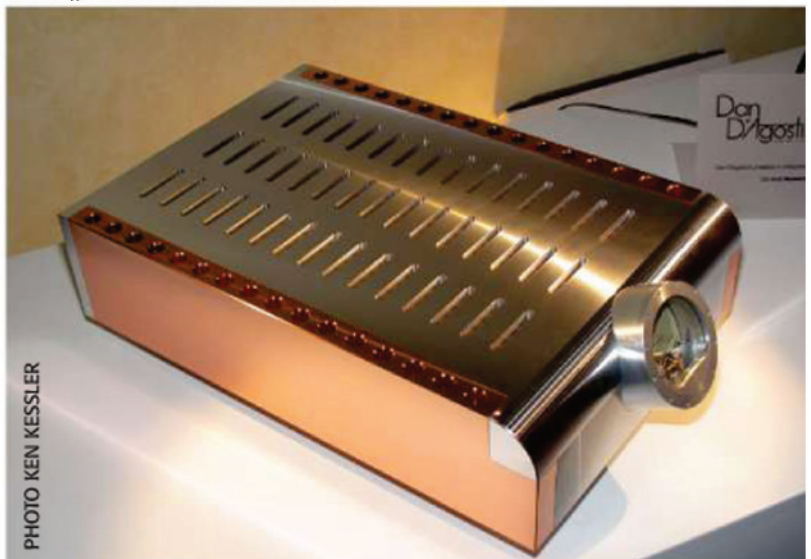


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