

Tube Power Amplifier of the Year

McIntosh MC451

\$28,000/pr.

McIntosh's new MC451 is something new—a stereo tube amplifier and a stereo solid-state amplifier in one chassis. The MC451 is designed for bi-amping—a tube amp for the midrange and highs and a solid-state amplifier for the lows and lower midrange. The idea is to get the best of tube sound while also exploiting the best of solid-state. Most past efforts to get the best out of both tube and transistor technology used a high-level input to drive a tube preamp that then drove a solid-state power amplifier or a separate crossover connected to two separate amplifiers. The MC451 uses a single input and tube gain stage to drive a crossover to a separate 150-watt tube power amp for the midrange and treble and to a 300-watt solid-state amp for the bass and lower midrange—both on the same chassis. AHC has heard enough systems and recordings to know that the midrange and treble nuances provided by the MC451 will improve the musicality of a substantial number of high-end rigs and suit the personal taste of a wide range of audiophiles. (341)



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