



POWER AMPLIFIER OF THE YEAR

Chord Étude | Reviewed in Issue 168



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Chord Electronics Étude power amplifier is based on a paper by Dr Malcolm J Hawksford, and the resultant design was developed by Bob Cordell of Bell Labs. Cordell put forward a design which had an unprecedented 0.001 per cent total harmonic distortion at 20kHz. Chord Electronics looked at Cordell’s work from the 1980s and developed an initial design that incorporated his topology as well as John Franks’ own, which with nested feed-forward and global feedback, intelligently adjusts and compensates the individual linearity of two banks of four of Chord Electronics’ custom-designed dual silicon die MOSFET output transistors to perform uniquely well. The result is a power amplifier that can deliver 150W per channel in a small chassis without having to resort to Class D operation.

The new amplifier manages to successfully combine elements of Chord Electronics’ classic amplifier designs with a personality all of its own, and the two blend perfectly together. The Étude has Chord Electronics’ signature precision and accuracy of tone, dynamics, and detail that set the brand’s amps apart from the outset. Couple that with great speed, and the Étude makes the perfect power amplifier partner for the company’s epic DAVE digital converter.