



BEST HEADPHONE AMPLIFIER



ICON AUDIO HP 205D

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A valve headphone amplifier with analogue input and digital Bluetooth receiver – unique. The onion shaped valves are modern day replicas of a 1924 design. Icon Audio's HP 205D, price £2999, looks like a museum piece but is modern under the skin, delivering hi-res digital from Bluetooth 5.1.

Reviewer Noel Keywood said: "the HP 205D struck me by its speed, solidity of images and cosmic stereo positioning. Fine percussive details like a maraca in Holly Cole's Train Song, were coming from outside the immediate sound stage, from a space beyond. It had a pushy midband, forward and 'in my ears', with extraordinary revelation of timbral richness – to the bouzouki and plucked bass at the start of Loreena McKennitt's Gates of Istanbul for example. For air and space there was little I have heard to compare".

The HP 205D we thought was glorious in both appearance and sound – a worthy Award Winner for 2021.