

While our impression of Aavik Acoustics was still based on the 300 and 150 series, the manufacturer had already released the new 180/280/580 series. These 3 series all have integrated amplifiers, D/A converters, phono stages, and network streamers. These 3 series all follow a new external design, which is very different compared to the design of the 300 and 150 series. Compared to the 300 and 150 series, the new 180/280/580 series share a more compact design. The width of the cabinet is 38cm. The 300/150 series is 44cm. The multifunctional knob follows the more common placement of being on the right. It is worth emphasizing that the new Aavik Acoustics logo is printed on the cabinet as well.

While reviewing the I-280 integrated amplifier, we noticed that the 180/280/580 series has a design of a pole on each 4 corners for all of its products. This design is the exact same on the D/A converter, phono stage, and network streamer.

Good Sound due to the Attention to Detail on Every Design

Aavik Acoustics I-280

Integrated Amplifier



There-fore, the equipment does not need to be placed on a Hi-Fi shelf and can easily be stacked on top of each other instead. Stacking the equipment may also be quite stable. This design appears in a lot of traditional amplifiers, a strength being that this set of equipment looks very put-together and professional. The manufacturer allows for the user to save space, and makes it more convenient when upgrading.

Specifications

Line:	Gain (line 1 - 4: 5-15dB; maximum input 4.5V RMS) Gain (line 5: 1-11dB; maximum input 6.5V RMS) Input impedance 10K ohm
Pre-amp. Output:	1 pair of RCA Max output: 7.5Vrms Distortion, line stage: <0,005% (THD at 1kHz, 1V input) Output impedance: 50 ohms
Volume control:	76 1dB steps
Output:	2 x 300W (8 ohm), 2 x 600W (4 ohm) Distortion (THD+N): <0.006% (1-100W, 1kHz, 8 ohm) IMD: <0.002% (1-100W, 4 ohm) TIM: <0.008% (1-100W, 4 ohm)
Aavik Noise Reduction	Active Tesla Coils: 72 Active Square Tesla Coils: 144 Dither circuitry: 8 Anti Aerial Resonance Coils: 4
Power consumption:	Standby: <0.5W Idle: <50W
Dimensions:	102 x 384 x 400mm
Weight:	9.0 kg

Regarding design, the 180/280/580 series is quite unconventional. Many manufacturers tend to be considerate of younger audiophiles and users with small spaces, thus they tend to create a unit including many functions. However, the 180/280/580 series separates the amplifier, network streamer, phono stage, and D/A converter into a different unit. This meets the audiophile, individual unit, or budget standards. If you wish to have all of these functions, the unit of the 180/280/580 series can be stacked together. This compact design will not be de-nied by audiophiles. For example, when playing a vinyl, users could purchase just the integrated amplifier and phono stage within the 180/280/580 series. If a CAS or digital transport is used, users could purchase just the integrated amplifier and D/A converter within the 180/280/580 series. If a streaming network is used, users could add just the streamer within the streaming system, which enhances its perfection. It could be said that this type of combined design and kind of purchase could appeal to audiophiles, and avoids some functions of integrated unit from being wasted due to not being used.



On the Aavik Acoustics website, the 180/280/580 series has 4 types of products. Under the 180 series includes the I-180 integrated amplifier, R-180 phono stage, D-180 D/A converter, and S-180 network streamer. The 280 series, which is a level above, has 4 types of products as well, including the I-280 integrated amplifier, R-280 phono stage, D-280 D/A converter, and S-280 network streamer. The 580 series, which is the highest level, has 4 types of products, including the I-580 integrated amplifier, R-580 phono stage, D-580 D/A converter, and S-580 network streamer.

I-280 Integrated Amplifier

Despite my introduction, you may still remain unfamiliar regarding this Danish brand, Aavik Acoustics. The founder of this brand is actually the well-known Michael Borresen. To us, he is considered an old friend. Other than Aavik Acoustics, he also founded an accessory brand, Ansuz Acoustics, and his self-titled Borresen Acoustics for loudspeakers. Now, Michael is able to integrate a complete system with his own brand and products. Even though he carries multiple brands, he is responsible for designing his own products.



For example, the 180/280/580 series integrated amplifier uses a transistor design and the precious technology of the 150/300 series. These new designs could effectively enhance the performance of the integrated amplifier. When creating the new amplifier, the best module is used, it employs a lot of effective noise canceling technologies and has better mechanical design. Comparably, its products within the audiophile community are considered to have Hi-End and creative designs. The Aavik Acoustics design of stacking up unit aims to achieve a mechanical grounding effect. They also suggest for the integrated amplifier to be placed the highest in the stack to achieve the best cooling effect.

The cabinet of the 180/280/580 integrated amplifier tries to minimize the use of aluminum, decreasing dullness



of sound. Aavik Acoustics uses a new and natural-based composite material to replace aluminum. That type of composite material has various fibers, including wooden fiber. In addition, the inspiration of the shaping comes from the design and construction of musical instruments. As previously mentioned, there is an ability to stack unit. Evidently, the manufacturer has created a cabinet that can be used for different equipment, which saves money. However, the materials inside the cabinet are different for different series. This includes power supply technology and cabinet resonance-controlled design, and is similar to the products of Ansuz Acoustics. The higher level the product is, the higher quality components are used. Therefore, as for the integrated amplifier cabinet, I-280

consists of better materials compared to I-180. Although the manufacturer uses the most materials in the highest level 580 series, the cabinet appears to look the same. Actually, copper is used inside the 580 series cabinet. In fact, it also has titanium resonance control support frame. These various materials enhance the performance and appearance of a flag-ship equipment.

I read about the specifications for all three 180/280/580 integrated amplifiers. Other than their weight, this three equipment share the same specifications. This includes the same power output, output voltage, gain and distortion. The differences between these three series are focused on the amount of Aavik Noise Reduction component used.

For example, in the I-280 integrated amplifier, the Aavik Noise Reduction component consists of 72 Active Tesla Coils, 168 Active Square Tesla Coils, 8 Dither circuitry, and 4 Anti Aerial Resonance Coils. If compared with the I-580 integrated amplifier, I-580 consists of 108 Active Tesla Coils, 240 Active Square Tesla Coils, 11 Dither circuitry, and 4 Anti Aerial Resonance Coils. Through this comparison, it is expected that the I-580 has a better sound. The I-280 is in the middle within the 3 series, with the better performance/pricing ratio.

The back of the I-280 has 5 pairs of RCA Line input and 1 pair of RCA Pre-amp output. The function of the Pre-amp output allows you to connect a higher power amplifier. The speaker cable terminal is on both left and right sides. This type of set-up is easily used.

Detailed, Focused, and Natural Sound

While listening to the vocals of "Fields of Gold" the background of the I-280 integrated amplifier is heard to be very quiet. The sound is natural, resolution is

high, and focus is accurate. The loudspeakers used are Raidho Acoustics X2, which are placed far apart. Vocals are quite focused and detailed. The positioning is very accurate. Perhaps, there are some who may believe that the cabinet of this integrated amplifier isn't that big. However, its power output is incredible. The newest Class D design is used, and when the loading impedance is 8 ohm, the power output is 300W x 2.



When the loading impedance is 4 ohm, the power output is 600W x 2. Therefore, the dynamic performance of I-280 is very good, as well as the micro dynamic performance. While listening to the great dynamic percussion and bass drum, its dynamic and impact are well-performed.

While listening to "Jazz at the Pawnshop", the I-280 integrated amplifier demonstrates a quiet and dark background. Every piano note sounds sharp instead

of exaggerated, demonstrating a good ratio and body. The accompaniment of the piano in the back maintains a good distance from the piano, achieving an excellent layering effect and performance. The unforgettable thing about jazz is its sense of presence. Once tuned, the writer noticed that the dynamic was better and more detailed within this jazz music, making its stage sound more realistic. There was a very lively feel to it.

While the I-280 integrated amplifier plays the "The Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto", the sound of the strings are sharp and clear, but not uncomfortably penetrating. This overthrows the bad musicality of the Class D amplifier. The sound is warm, clear and natural. The I-280 won't sacrifice clarity, detail, spaciness, and micro dynamics to produce a rich sound. The overall performance is clear, natural, and swift without



straying towards a highly warm tone.

The I-280 integrated amplifier does not have a big cabinet. However, while playing the "Audiophile Chinese Percussion" Fung Hang Record, it demonstrates ample power supplies. In parts of climax, big dynamic drumming produces a great sense of surrounding.



is filled with dynamics, and has a very good three-dimensional feel. When the volume is slightly turned up, the power of the bass becomes apparent and filled with energy, shaking the ground, and producing an astonishing effect.



Aavik Acoustics wishes to achieve the best performance with the 180/280/580 series in hopes to give audiophiles a better sound. The I-280 that we've listened to is in the middle within these three series. There is a reasonable ratio of the price and performance. Of course, the manufacturer suggests for a product to be paired within the same series. If we hope to find a better performance of details and a quiet background, the I-580 would be worth listening to next time.

The sound of the drumsticks is quite clear within a big sound stage, the bass