



MULTICHANNEL AMP
Pathos Cinema X
£4750



STEREO SPEAKERS
Acoustic Energy
Reference AE3 MkII
£5750 Page 102



PRE/POWER AMPS
Cairn Nitro/K1As
£10,995 Page 103



Temptations

THE WORLD'S MOST DESIRABLE KIT UNCOVERED

Hear the real X factor

Fed up with surround sound amps that look like ugly silver slabs and boast features you'll never use? The stunning new **Pathos Cinema X** may be just the music and movie solution for you

MULTICHANNEL VALVE AMPLIFIER
PATHOS CINEMA X
★★★★★
£4750

↑ FOR

Stunning sound with music and film – it's a multichannel version of its stereo sibling; beauty of which a supermodel would be jealous

↓ AGAINST

No surround sound processing included

→ VERDICT

If you can justify the price tag, and you're not worried about internal surround processing, we can't recommend this highly enough

EVERY NOW AND again we're privileged enough to encounter a piece of kit that has the ability to bring a grown man to his knees, bawling like the day he left the womb. The Pathos Cinema X is one of those products – for both looks and performance.

Collective gasps fill the room as the Pathos is exhumed from its container. "It's so beautiful, I might have to divorce my wife so I can get one in my house" is a typically strong reaction. It looks as if God has taken a holiday to spend an entire week carving the Cinema X from a solid block of metal – and He didn't rest until He got it absolutely right.

It even has a remote. True, there are only four buttons, but all the Pathos' features can be accessed using various simple combinations. The set-up is amazingly simple – five minutes and you're away, no muss, no fuss. Yet the best part of this multichannel amp is its sound.

No-compromise engineering

Pathos seems to have approached the multichannel market in a different way from most rivals: the Cinema X has no surround sound processing or decoding of any kind. Instead of creating a multichannel amp first, and a stereo design as a second thought, the company has instead attempted to create a no-compromise sonic solution in one box.

As a result, the valve-based Cinema X gives 110 watts into five channels, or 450 watts into two channels, and just as importantly, it boasts quite extraordinary sonic ability. Both in multichannel and in stereo, the Pathos oozes confidence. The mid-range is expressive and well separated, allowing loads of room for vocals to breathe, while at the same time, instruments sound full-bodied and rich.

The treble has bags of headroom, and never sounds forced or hard. With some surround-sound equipment, stereo dynamics are often stunted, but not so here: it's just another polished facet to the Cinema X's gleaming, jewel-like sonic performance.

Watch it, or you'll get your fingers burned

When a movie soundtrack switches from vast expanses of open air to small rooms, the Pathos has no trouble conveying that shift, a challenge some more expensive, less-subtle kit struggles with. The soundfield is solid and engaging, never allowing any impression of a hole in the sound. However, make sure it has ample room to breathe, otherwise you'll be able to cook your breakfast on it after a couple of hours use.

Since the Pathos has no cinema decoding or processing of its own, the sonic results you get are also dependent on the quality of the DVD player you use. The Cinema X scores highly because no processing interferes with the signal path – it's just signal in and sound

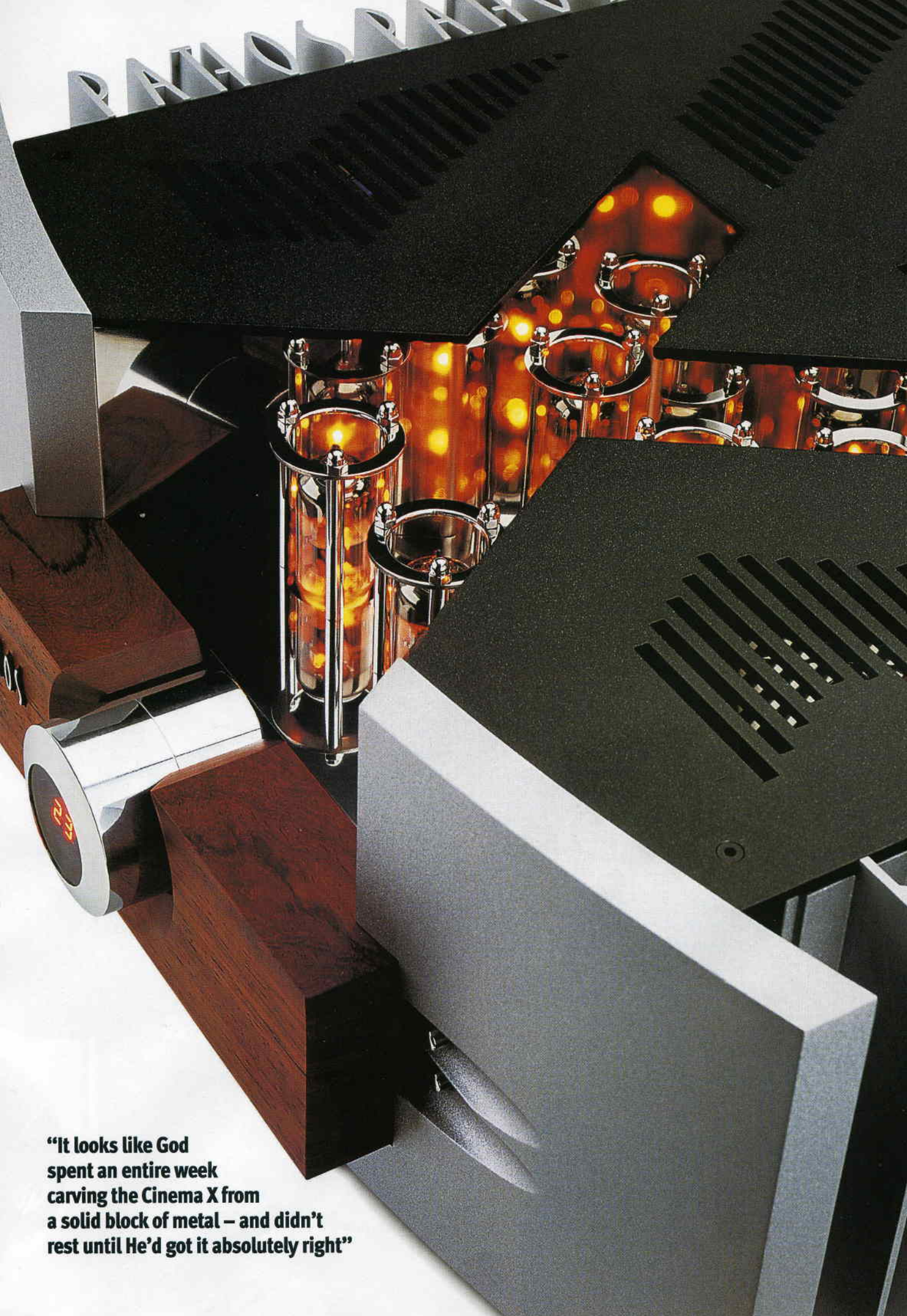
out – but by the same token, if the incoming signal is of low quality, you'll hear it. We used Denon's mighty £2500 DVD-A1XV; a Meridian G91DAB (£3895), with its analogue and digital audio inputs to support additional sources, would work well, too.

It says Pathos through and through

The Pathos Cinema X will astound you with its no-compromise approach to sound reproduction. If you're seeking exceptional stereo performance as well as stellar surround sound from one box, this is the amp for you. If you need more convincing, those heat-sinks say Pathos all the way...



PATHOS CINEMA X
STEREO INPUTS 4
MULTICHANNEL INPUTS 3
POWER
110 watts into five channels; 450 watts into two channels
SPEAKER TERMINALS
Five sets
SUBWOOFER PREOUT
Yes
PROCESSING
None
DIGITAL INPUTS/OUTPUTS None
REMOTE CONTROL
Yes
WEIGHT 30kg



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