

Integrated Amplifier

[stereonet.co.uk/reviews/review-yba-genesis-ia3a-integrated-amplifier](https://www.stereonet.co.uk/reviews/review-yba-genesis-ia3a-integrated-amplifier)



We have been working our way through selected components of YBA's Genesis range. We have covered the excellent [PH-1 battery-powered phono stage](#) and the [CD4 CD player](#), and now we take a closer look at the Genesis IA3A integrated amplifier.

If you have been following our progress through the YBA Genesis range, you will already be familiar with the black acrylic and brushed aluminium design. Again, here the acrylic section houses the display that clearly shows you the selected Source on the left and the Volume on the right.



The only other things of note on the IA3A's fascia are the four toggle switches which are used to raise/lower the output volume on the right-hand bank and to select the source input using the left bank.



stereonet

Along the top of the 2 x 105 watts @ 8 Ohms, IA3A integrated amplifier is a row of cut-outs in the 4mm-thick aluminium casement for cooling. At first glance, we were not convinced that this would be enough. However, at no point over the time we had the YBA integrated did it ever feel like it was going to overheat.



stereonet

Around the rear of the unit, the ins and outs include one S/PDIF coaxial digital input plus a USB port (24/192KHz). Digital inputs automatically adjust to any of the standard digital audio data rates from 16/44.1KHz to 24/192KHz. To use the USB input with a

computer, Windows users will have to install a driver. Analogue-wise, a two RCA and one balanced pair add to the available inputs. Also, the video input features a bypass option. The DAC is the familiar Cirrus Logic CS4398.

The pre-out provides for the addition of a separate power amplifier, an active subwoofer or perhaps a pair of active speakers. There is also a digital coaxial output.

Proving its up-to-date chops, there is Bluetooth connectivity supporting the latest aptX transfer protocol for smart device streaming.

Finally, the entire digital section can be turned off with a switch at the back, allowing you to listen to your analogue sources without any digital disturbance.

The only thing really missing from this rather comprehensive connectivity compilation is a headphone jack - not a deal-breaker, just something that would have been the proverbial cherry on top of an already delectable offering.

The fit and finish are, how we have now come to expect, faultless; even where the acrylic butts up against the aluminium - no ragged edges, no uneven seams, just excellent engineering.

As standard for YBA components, the 12kg amplifier stands on three feet with the single central one upfront located immediately below the power transformer and so, in a fashion, supports the unit's centre of gravity.

Feeding the YBA Genesis IA3A is the line's [CD4 CD player](#) and a [VPI Prime](#) by way of the [YBA Genesis PH-1 phono stage](#). Everything is being sent out to a pair of Marten Duke 2 speakers connected to the amp via Jorma Design cables and sat upon [SolidSteel](#) stands.

YBA Genesis IA3 Sound Quality

We have been living with the Genesis IA3A integrated for a while now, occasionally swapping it out for something such as the Musical Fidelity M6si or another integrated we currently have for review just to cleanse our aural palate. Every time we return to the Genesis amp, it proves itself to be an incredibly friendly and articulate performer.



Starting our listening session was **Stravinski's** *The Rite of Spring* performed by **Junge Deutsche Philharmonie** and conducted by **Péter Eötvös**, and even at its height, the strings have drive and energy with without the top-end being aggressive or, at the other end of the scale, thin. The same goes for the brass section, which has a lush depth without the harsh edge that some amps might present. The bassoon is the star of the show here which also displays how good the amp handles the mids and low mids too. Moreover, *Rite* not being exactly a straightforward orchestral piece, the amp needs to be able to display precision as well as power, which the IA3 does well above its pay grade.

Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* is a favourite at SNUK HQ and the plaintive piano moving to full ensemble shows the YBA's excellent transparency and, again, clarity. Furthermore, the nuances and subtleties of **Andre Previn's** performance are picked out exquisitely with rich harmonics from the piano.

Prince's *Sign o' The Times* album might look to be an odd choice here, but the production is spot on in our opinion. The dry, clean tracks are held together by those unmistakable vocals and that trademark guitar sound - it is purest **Prince**. Then, throw in the brass sections, sound effects, backing vocals, and flamboyant soloing it is just class. However, for that seemingly simple recipe, the system being used needs to remain uncoloured, giving the music a blank canvas to paint on. Here, the IA3 excels. The restrained funk of *The Ballad of Dorothy Parker* works well with the harmonised vocals over funky bass and sparse drums, whereas *Housequake* sees **Prince** in full-on party mode. The reversed snare in *Starfish and Coffee* almost has us hypnotised as it pans through the speakers.



Nils Lofgren's live rendition of *Keith Don't Go* is one of those 'mouths wide open' moments. As soon as his distinctive guitar work starts, he is in the room with you. However, the high level of expression in his vocals is what makes our jaw drop. The acoustic guitar is rich with a sharp and edgy attack preceding a natural harmonic decay. On the subject of harmonics the middle-eight at around 3:30 rings through the Duke 2s with wonderfully natural clarity.

Squirting **Billie Eilish's** latest through to the amp using aptX Bluetooth adds another string to the amp's already well-spec'd bow. The low-end from tracks such as *Bad Guy* and *Bury a Friend* is well-maintained and allows the Marten standmounts a chance to show off their bass-handling skills. As mentioned with **Prince**, the effects and samples such as finger snaps and claps in *Bad Guy*, come through crystal clear and pin-sharp.

Finally, **Pink Floyd's** *One of These Days* from *Meddle* wrapped everything up. The IA3's sense of rhythm and dynamics pushes it above most of the similarly-priced offerings from elsewhere.

Conclusion

The Genesis IA3 integrated amplifier may only be on YBA's second-tier, but this goes to hint at what further delights are in store higher up the French firm's ladder.

The IA3 has a gorgeous transparency about it. Additionally, the tonality and deft handling of dynamics raise this integrated amplifier above most we have experienced within this price bracket.

The Genesis amp isn't as cold and clinical as some solid-state amps can be and there is a degree of realism to the amp's performance that impresses. It is sure-footed and fluid. We were drawn into the music thanks to the YBA Genesis integrated's perfect balance of tone, colour and detail.

We tested the amp with the Revel speakers we also had in for review at the same time and, where the sound was still impressive, the component truly shone with the Martens which leads us to believe that the mid-range YBA could easily hold its own with even higher-tiered loudspeakers.

If YBA just added one or two more pairs of RCAs and, perhaps, a headphone out, the Genesis IA3 would be perfect. As it is, the integrated amplifier is highly recommended by us here at **StereoNET UK** and we are certain that this amp will quickly show most other integrations at this price point a clean pair of heels.

For more information, go to [YBA](#).

Tech Spec

- Audio Outputs - 1 pair of speaker outputs, 1 pre-out (RCA)
- Power Outputs - 105W @ 8 Ohms per channel, 150W @ 4 Ohms per channel
- Gain - +6dB
- SNR - >95dB
- Frequency Response - 20Hz – 20kHz (-0.5dB)
- THD+N - (20Hz – 20kHz) // <0.03%
- Inputs - Coaxial, USB, Bluetooth, 2 RCA analogue signal inputs, 1 Balanced analogue signal input
- DAC - Cirrus Logic CS4398
- Power Supply - Linear power supply with high-performance UICore transformer 300VA
- Dimensions (w x d x h) - 430 x 404 x 115 mm
- Weight - 12kg

Distributor