

## **LEBEN CS-300 AWARDED DIAPASON GOLD MEDAL IN AMPLIFIER CATEGORY 2006**



### **TRANSLATION - REVIEW OF DIAPASON MAGAZINE FRANCE 2006**

Nostalgia, when we see this little LEBEN !, we remember Leak and Fisher from the 1960's, the golden age of the tube.

The exterior, voluntarily retro cultivates this nostalgia, but the inside too with it's point to point wiring like in the good old days, and it's push pull EL84 – a fashionable pentode from the 1960's.

The output power of 12 wpc is what we can reasonably attain from these tubes. This rather low power calls for loudspeakers of highish sensitivity 92dB +, if we follow this recommendation we obtain immediately from this model a sound of what a tube amplifier can bring when well designed. Atmosphere, air around the musicians, space and layering. The soundstage delivered by this model offers a depth that transistor amplifiers can rarely achieve or achieve in a less convincing fashion.

Other evident qualities are – the vivacity, the fluidity and expressiveness. The vivacity is remarkable when we see it is achieved without any aggressiveness or hardness, even with fortissimo's the sounds are projected with the absence of harshness. The presentation rests astonishingly balanced, harmonious and relaxed. The fluidity is one of the strengths the most remarkable of the CS-300. The complex links that unify the sounds one to another are excellent resulting in no confusion when listening. In fact the polyphonic portrayal is excellent, a natural, never giving the impression of unreal sounds. The acoustic is always present, and never being dry.

The expressivity pours trueness into accents and rhythms, the slightest nuances and dynamics are there with excellent attack and decay of notes.

The medium is particularly beautiful, this amplifier brings out music with flexibility with a very lifelike presentation.

Of course to preserve these qualities of extreme freshness, freedom and life in the soundstage, the choice of loudspeakers is important. With old tannoy gold series models the results were excellent. With modern loudspeakers we must look for those with a fairly high sensitivity and a capability of producing realistic volume. The overall tone of this amplifier is very slightly bright, so we can associate loudspeakers with a good bass character. Be careful also of the choice of impedance setting for best listening results.

## LEBEN **CS-300** - DIAPASON D'OR 2006 !

