

# hi-fi news

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UK £5.99 US \$14.99 Aus \$13.99  
9 771472 256943 30

AUDIO FILE

Media hub/Integrated amplifier. Rated at 150W/8ohm  
 Made by: Audis Micromega, Boissy-Saint-Léger, France  
 Supplied by: Micromega, France  
 Telephone: +33 (0) 14382 6129  
 Web: www.micromega.com  
 Price: £5390-£6190



# Micromega M-150

**H**ow has Micromega managed to cram standard Class A/B power stages, rated at 150W/8ohm, into an enclosure for its M-150 standing less than 6cm tall complete with its spiked feet? Well, a lot of it is down to clever heat-management, with a central heatpipe for convection cooling aided by a small, silent fan under thermostatic control.

Hidden away under the rear overhang of the casework, which tidies all the messy wiring away from sight, you find an extended range of both analogue and digital inputs. The £5390 M-150 has both RCA and balanced XLR connections, an MM/MC phono stage and balanced/RCA preouts and a mono subwoofer output. Digital provision

*'Micromega's M-150 is as fast as it is clean, and as weighty as it is agile'*

starts with coax and optical S/PDIF and AES/EBU plus USBs – Type A ports for storage media and asynchronous Type B for a computer connection. There's also a pair of HDMI sockets wired to accommodate the I<sup>2</sup>S format (designed 'to handle future extensions' says the company).

A LAN port facilitates control via a dedicated app and supports UPnP/DLNA streaming while its wireless connection handles Bluetooth 4.0 with aptX. The M-150 can handle formats up to 768kHz/32-bit and DSD up to DSD256/11.2MHz.

There's also a novel headphone output complete with processing to create a binaural effect from conventional music sources, and built-in room-correction/equalisation, for which a plug-in measuring mic is provided. Micromega says the system 'detects the sound irregularities of your room, and attenuates them for a balanced and accurate response'.

The anodised aluminium casework comes in either silver-grey or black, or at a £600/£800 premium in any colour you prefer.

**SPRINGING TO LIFE**  
 Once the M-150 has made its room-correction measurements, you can begin listening. Whether with vinyl or other sources connected via analogue or the battery of digital inputs, the amp demonstrates both generous detail and a solid grip on the speakers, making a wide range of music spring to life in a highly impressive manner.

Playing a recent Vivaldi 'Four Seasons', with Rachel Podger and Brecon Baroque, in DSD [Channel Classics/ NativeDSD Music], the M-150 relished a recording as sparkling as the performances, its tight and beautifully integrated presentation delivering a sound as fast as it is clean, and as weighty as it is agile and dynamic.

This is an amplifier to please those who seek to hear every detail in a recording, but just as relevant to listeners wanting no more than to immerse themselves in a performance and appreciate

**ABOVE:** Available in a huge variety of colours, the M-150 is driven via the few buttons on its top, and via remote and/or app. There's an optional wall-mounting bracket, priced at £89

the artistry. Play a set with plenty of taut bass and superbly recorded instruments, such as Béla Fleck and The Flecktones' *Live Art* [Warner], and the M-150 is as convincing in the way it conjures up the live atmosphere as it is when delineating the snap and slap of Victor Wooten's bass strings on his extraordinary solo improvisation segueing into 'Amazing Grace'.

And with Fleck's masterly medley of 'Early Reflection', a little Bach and 'The Ballad Of Jed Clampett' (yes, really!) the Micromega M-150 is able to show just how nimbly it can handle lightning picking and deliver it to fine effect.

So this is an amplifier with real all-round ability. Load up ZZ Top's 4CD *Chrome, Smoke & B-B-Q* [Warner] and it's as adept with the stripped-down blues of some of the earlier tracks as it is chugging out the Texas boogie of 'Cheap Sunglasses' or 'I'm Bad, I'm Nationwide'. What's more, this slimline amp will play as hard as you want without losing its composure.

Switch swiftly to Martin Helmchen's masterly reading of Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations* [Alpha], and his wonderfully light touch on a Steinway is all too apparent, as is the sense of the pianoforte standing in a real space.

**VERDICT**  
 Its styling and provenance may suggest comparisons with that other French amplifier range, but the M-150 is very much *une autre paire de manches*, thanks to its distinct technology and facilities. It's remarkably capable, flexible and well-sorted, the room correction is convincing, and the performance similarly impressive. ⤴

## HI-FI NEWS SPECIFICATIONS

Continuous power (<1% THD, 8/4/2ohm)	167W / 315W
Dynamic power (<1% THD, 8/4/2/1ohm)	175W / 335W / 565W / 690W
Output impedance (20Hz-20kHz)	0.043-0.095ohm (315ohm, pre)
Freq. resp. (20Hz-20kHz/40kHz)	+0.0 to -0.55dB/-2.0dB (Analogue)
Distortion (20Hz-20kHz, 0dBFS/0dBW)	0.0002-0.002%/0.0006-0.017%
A-wtd S/N ratio (re. 0dBFS/0dBW)	107.1dB (Dig) / 83.1dB (Analogue)
Digital jitter (48kHz/96kHz)	40psec / 25psec
Power consumption (idle/rated o/p)	40W / 480W (3W, standby)
Dimensions (WHD / Weight)	430x56x350mm / 9.3kg