

Rotel RSX-1067

Rotel RSX-1067 AV receiver. \$3999

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After a fair bit of saving and then a considerable amount of shoulder rubs, hair-brushing, breakfasts in bed and months of good behaviour, I was finally allowed to buy a new receiver. I chose the Denon 3805 as it had every conceivable feature, sounded great with movies plus music, and was about the cut off mark before the law of diminishing returns kicked in. After a month with Rotel's big RSX-1067, I've moved that mark up another \$1000.

Once you see the Rotel it will be obvious as to why I am starting with its appearance. Inconspicuous is something it is not. It is the same width as other components and only a little taller than my 3805 but looking at it in isolation it appears gargantuan. The receiver is black with a silver fascia. There is a small screen about 25mm high which stretches the width of face. It provides

all the information required and leaves you wondering why other receivers need bigger displays. The rest of the fascia is dotted with 24 labeled buttons allowing simple setting changes. Flanking the face

are large heat sinks which look quite Plinius-esque. Very cool and super tough looking.

I've always considered manufacturer's stats of power outputs to be a guideline rather than gospel truth and the Rotel proves why you should too. It is only rated at 100 Watts into each of its seven channels, but if you were to use another manufacturer's ratings it would probably be double that. The size of Rotel's power supply is evidenced by looking through the vents on the receiver's top. It reminds me of those green powers transformers that lurk on your street corner, except its black and looks big enough to supply a small subdivision!

Sounds even better than it looks

Michael, the Editor told me this receiver is often sold by luring potential



buyers in with its CD performance and then blowing them away with DVDs. With this in mind, I have spent a lot of time listening to CDs and had my eyes opened somewhat. It may look like a brute but it displays subtleties and warmth that are certainly new to me. Lisa Germano's voice when chiming into *Fall at Your Feet* at the 7 *Worlds Collide* concert was more enchanting than I remembered. It certainly makes Golden Horse's Kirsten Morell's unique voice more memorable than with my Denon 3805.

However, it's not just with the delicate stuff that the Rotel excels, local band Bonjahbango's laid back funky beats are really brought to life, demonstrating excellent control over the bass and cool use of the harmonica. The Rotel offers detail and extension with music that none of the other receivers I've auditioned have managed previously.

Movie performance is equally impressive. It's gentle and subtle, but thunderously brutal and precise when its huge reserves of power are called into action. The opening few minutes of *Saving Private Ryan* provide an insane amount of different multi channel and low frequency effects and this the reason I use it to test every receiver I'm entrusted with. The Rotel seemed to take my test in its stride; it easily surpassed my reference receiver, giving the most intense performance yet. Those first few scenes of *Saving Private Ryan* using the Rotel would make the perfect advertisement for pacifists.

The other scene that stood out in my mind was in the movie *Swordfish*. A hostage strapped with C-4 and ball bearings explodes, tearing apart the surrounding buildings, cars and policemen. The picture panes around so you

can view the explosion in a complete 360 degree circle. I'd never noticed before how the surround sound accompanies the pictures - WOW!

What were they thinking?

While it looks great and sounds fantastic, there is one let-down: the remote. While it may be a learning remote, it looks cheap and feels even cheaper. This would be an embarrassment for a \$1000 receiver, so for one retailing at \$3,999 it is an absolute disgrace. If you buy this amp, budget for the cost of a new remote!

Man mountain

Do you know a Strongman competitor? Why, you ask. Well, if you like the sound of what you've read above, there is another consideration you must do before you buy. Nothing short of that man-mountain on the Mitre 10 Mega adverts or a block and tackle will be able to lift the immense double-boxed 30kg behemoth from your car boot.

But if you manage to get it into your lounge, the reward will be well worth the effort—*Jamie Gemming*

This receiver is often sold by luring potential buyers in with its CD performance and then blowing them away with DVDs