

PRESS RELEASE
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Icon Audio to preview flagship limited edition MB81 monoblocks at National Audio Show



A very special edition: a pair of the prototype Icon Audio MB81 monoblock amplifiers.

Has Icon Audio founder David Shaw designed the ultimate push-pull triode amplifier? Proudly created to fulfil a long-held personal goal, these gargantuan amplifiers will be sold in limited numbers as a very special edition.

For much of the last year, Icon Audio founder David Shaw has, in his own words, been building his own birthday present. After discovering a quantity of 'new old stock' Russian GU81 transmitter valves, Shaw began to work on a prototype amplifier that would achieve a long-held personal goal: to effectively drive any modern low-efficiency high-end speaker to realistic levels.

Shaw has long been a fan of triode operation, being the purest form of valve circuit. But triodes have a downside: limited power output. After many months of designing

and listening, Shaw has produced what is, in essence, the final pre-production prototype of the Icon Audio MB81: a triode monoblock which can deliver an astonishing 200 watts RMS into even the most demanding of loads.

At 260mm tall, 100mm in diameter and weighing 1kg each, the GU81 is a truly majestic valve. Although the GU81 still in production, Shaw has used 'new old stock' valves in the MB81, hand-chosen for their combination of fine resolution, enthralling musicality and immense power. Always keen to break boundaries and set trends, Icon Audio believe the MB81 to be the world's first ever push-pull GU81 amplifier.

These massive amps are around 50% bigger than the current Icon flagship MB845MkII and weigh around 100kg per pair. The specification is incredible: 200W RMS continuous output into an 8 ohm load. Complex quaternary output transformers minimize distortion while allowing unbeatable bass power and authority.

While the MB81 was developed as a personal gift for Shaw himself, he plans to produce a limited number for sale, with an estimated price of £12,500 per pair.

The MB81 will be demonstrated at this week's National Audio Show at Whittlebury Hall. Visitors will be the first to witness the life-like scale of the stunning new prototypes from Leicester-based valve gurus Icon Audio.

Icon Audio MB81 key features

- Pure Class A triode front end.
- Triode GU81 push-pull output stage.
- The four GU81s can be user-calibrated using Icon Audio's built-in 'Easy Bias' meter.
- All hand wired with silver plated pure copper PTFE audio cable to optimise sound and reliability.
- Low distortion quaternary wound output transformers, potted to reduce noise.

Pricing & availability

- Icon Audio MB81 projected price (inc. VAT): £ 12,500 per pair
- Available autumn/winter 2014, launch date to be confirmed.

About Icon Audio

The Icon Audio philosophy is to create audiophile products that sound good, look good, are easily affordable and will last a lifetime.

Each Icon Audio amplifier is designed in Leicester, UK, by the company's founder, David Shaw. The amplifier chassis are then manufactured in China, with production and quality control being closely managed by Shaw himself who regularly travels to China to ensure that the performance and quality on which Icon Audio have built their

reputation are fully maintained. Final product assembly, custom modifications and extensive testing then take place in Icon's premises in Leicester, UK.

Everything in an Icon Audio amplifier is serviceable and replaceable, from the valves themselves to substantial components such as the transformers. All Icon Audio products are available for demonstration by appointment in Leicester and also via a selected dealer network.

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