

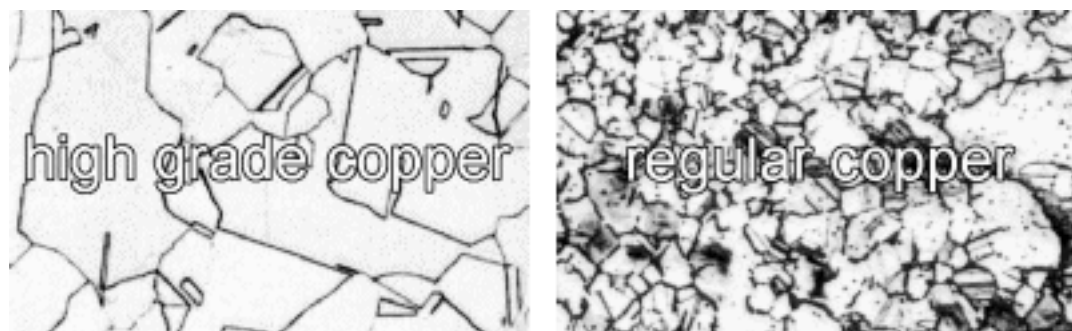
## A.J. van den Hul proudly presents: The Integration Hybrid

Original text by Marco Kolks  
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(Translation from German)



Van den Hul's new Integration Hybrid is supplied in a gold-brown jacket and is very flexible, thus can be easily installed, even in difficult spaces. To say nothing of the sound. *(above)*

In searching for high-grade materials for Van den Hul no effort is too much. Under the microscope crystalline structures of various qualities can easily be distinguished between. *(below)*



A.J. van den Hul is without any doubt one of the most important "grey Eminences" in our scene. The Dutch developer is considered world-wide as one of the leading manufacturers of high-grade phono cartridges. But just as successful he frolics about in the accessories field of cables. With the "The integration Hybrid" interconnect, an amalgamation of three metals, now the first cable of a new series is presented.

The naming "Hybrid" was not chosen coincidentally. The grand master wants to achieve an intimate coalescence of pure copper, silver and zinc. Under high temperature in a vacuum oven from these materials a thin wire is won, which then again is exposed to highest temperatures to finally achieve the perfect fusion of the metals. The following, only a few milliseconds lasting, extremely strong cooling leads to a glassy structure of the final cable, which is the accurate result of numerous calculations by van den Hul. The processing happens with a relatively low speed in order to prevent material defects as much as possible.

The cable is composed from four strands of the hybrid material that was won in such a way. All strands are arranged around a non conducting core and each is coated with an additional carbon layer. "The Integration Hybrid" is available as RCA or XLR version and therefore universally applicable. A.J. van den Hul sees the benefits of hybrid alloys above all in the fact that the conductivity of the metals remains and does not reduce in the course of time, which

would inevitably lead to a change of the sound character.

Kurt Jansen the German distributor recommends a burn-in time of at least 10 hours. But already in virgin condition the Integration Hybrid shows with which qualities one will soon have to count. The cable with its gold-brown jacket feels supple and can easily be bent, even around difficult corners and edges. For listening I have both balanced and single-ended versions at my disposal. That is important to me, because then I can interconnect an entire chain with one and the same cable. Product qualities can only be determined accurately in this manner since here you don't always have to compensate for or take into account the errors or characteristic properties of other competitors.

Shortly before the family will be visiting us at home, I have used the time to replace the present cables with the Integration Hybrid. No sooner said than done. Light music should play in the background to not disturb the coming sociable conversations, therefore, "The Royal Falcon" by Parrish & Toppano goes into the CD player (white records, 260226217). The light pop songs have been recorded so moderately as one can only superficially do and, considering that, are a neat and perfect example of "Sunday morning good mood getting up music". Now a quick check to see if everything works ... And how it works! What is happening here? Suddenly music comes out where before only completely indifferent noise babbled from the loudspeakers. The thin sound gains in richness and plasticity. Now there is something like a well-rounded reproduction and an incomparably higher fun factor. Hand on heart. In such moments you would preferably stante pede show the guests the door again because the high fidelity fever strikes. Barely has the last coat been handed and the door been closed or I sit again in front of the system. The first phase of the burn-in time has elapsed relaxedly and to all appearances the new cable has still gained something in all disciplines.

Jackie Leven (Fairy Tales, cooking vinyl, cd 115) fits best to my mood at the moment. His voice, with the proper amount of reverberation put underneath, steps far to the foreground and appears natural and as large as life ("Desolation Blues"). The bells in the background slowly die away and give the impression of infinite spatial depth. The guitar is crystal-clear and its shortly struck strings vibrate also only briefly and precisely. A peaceful leisure time atmosphere spreads around, which also my wife feels attracted to. She seats herself on the sofa, listens and enjoys. That doesn't often happen with us. The stately melodies of "old west African song" float through the living room and give the impression of the endless expanse of savannas floodlit by sunset. The music now touches the heart, although in fact it is a rather sad song.

No matter which CD I put on now or also later on, the new cables of van den Hul breathe emotions into the playback. And that to an extent like I am otherwise only used to when interchanging components. Which again confirms my opinion that the choice of suitable wiring is just as important as that of electronic components. I will now try to get to the heart of the characteristics in a highly non audiophile manner, since I believe that such an evaluation comes closest to the

qualities of this interconnect: more soul, more emotions, more enjoyment.

**Character:** I've already often talked with A.J. van den Hul and learned very much. The core of his personal philosophy is the harmonic, perfect structure, which not only has an effect on the development of products but also on many aspects of daily life. And exactly that is what this cable is able to achieve. It renders the music as a well-rounded entity — as a unified whole. It spreads genuine musical flair, thereby writes speed and seemingly effortlessly brings out the finest nuances, which, however, do not loosely whirl around the room, but are unbreakably integrated into the soundstage. In short: it simply plays beautiful!

**Conclusion:** I consider the Integration Hybrid with its four internal conductors and triple screen to be an extremely good cable. It will fit well in many signal chains and will make sure that the new owner doesn't waste thoughts on alternatives. What especially makes it interesting is the price, which lies in a still affordable range. The performance shown doesn't need to hide for comparison with what you are used to of a great many more expensive interconnects. In this respect I enthusiastically sit among the audience and liberally clap my hands when A.J. van den Hul opens the curtain to the soundstage and proudly presents: The Integration Hybrid!

**MK**

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