The wheels of commerce have crumbled to sub-prime fairy dust beneath the weight of a failed global economy, our prospects for hope and happiness bundled and sold for certain uncertainty, and all we can do is dumbly watch the carnage in hi-def with the heat turned down. As paper wealth evaporates, otherwise rational minds descend into paranoid thoughts of a New Age of Impending Doom, foreclosed to live out the rest of our miserable days in surplus FEMA trailers until succumbing in our sleep to carbon monoxide poisoning from a cheap FEMA space heater.

But wait a minute... gasoline is under three bucks a gallon! Well rock the casbah, and may your withering carbon footprint lead to a Super Walmart stocked with two dollar cheese balls, Asti Spumanti, and last year’s Twisted Christmas album for $1.98. Verily in these perilous times, blathering on about how you might fix, amend or elevate your precious tone may seem frivolous and inconsequential at best. But we can also embrace a calmer and eloquently more optimistic view...

“To tune the spirit when someone is trampling on you is called control.”
–Carlos Castaneda

www.tonequest.com
that yes, world gone crazy, but as Derek said, “Got to get better in a little while,” and the refuge we find in friends, family, music and the guitar has never been more precious. You think Barle Ives was happy every time he sang “Holly Jolly Christmas?” Hell, no! Singing it made him happy. So sing ‘chillun, and may your cares melt away in song this holiday season with best wishes from your pals at TQR.

Jensen’s long history is well known, and if you have ever owned a vintage amp with original, unreconed Jensens, you’re familiar with their exceptionally bright and musical voice. Old Jensens can also very dynamic, enabling extraordinary touch-sensitivity with a great amp. For many players, the ‘feel’ factor is as important as tone when choosing speakers. Most of us want to experience and exploit the tactile relationship between the guitar and amp – an open and responsive sound rather than one that is tight, compressed, constrained and distant. Aside from being virtually the only speaker available in American-made guitar amps for decades, Jensen speakers excelled in producing these qualities – the downside was, as César Diaz so often said, “You just look at them and they blow.” And they often did. Unfortunately, recons today are a black hole. Unless you can find a reconer with a stash of old cones, you’ll get a generic speaker back that will not sound nearly as good as an original. Like pickups and tubes, the cones made today just don’t seem to be the same.

Jensen speakers are built today by the SICA company in Italy, and they continue to aggressively expand beyond the familiar Alnico ‘P’ and ceramic ‘C’ Series vintage reissue 10s and 12s. The knock on the Jensen vintage reissues has been their typically bright, sometimes even harsh treble tones and apparent lack of cuddly warmth. We have often tried to embrace many of these ‘vintage’ speakers ourselves with mixed results, however, the ‘Q’ series Alnico and ceramic Jensen speakers seem to sound less brittle and are among our favorites for use in moderately powered amps like the tweed Deluxe, blackface Vibrolux Reverb and blackface Deluxe. Our reviews of Jensen speakers in this issue focus on new designs, with some very worthy surprises...
Neo 12

The 100 watt Neo is a very versatile speaker with solid bass response, midrange that is neither dominant or aggressive, and high frequencies that are strong, clear and musical. The Neo is one of the most well-balanced speakers we evaluated – rich and full, with excellent clarity and harmonic detail. The Neo would be a good choice for anyone seeking a brighter speaker that isn’t fatiguing or brittle. And don’t be swayed by the 100 watt rating... We loved it in our ‘64 Deluxe, and given its 7 ounce magnet, the Neo would be a fantastic choice for a 2x12 rig as well. Recommended.

Alnico Jet Blackbird 12

The black-clad, 100 watt Alnico Jet is designed with the robust look of cast iron, and like the Neo, it is endowed with plenty of bass response, moderate midrange that doesn’t overwhelm, and treble that is crisp enough to perhaps prompt you to lower the usual treble setting on your amp. We hope you are not one of those who thinks there is something ‘wrong’ with changing the tone controls on your amp? But I had to set the treble on 4!!! Listen, don’t look. Harmonic content in the Blackbird is absolutely vivid, with typical, ultra-smooth and dynamic Alnico compression. It is extraordinarily easy to feel and respond to what the Jet is giving you in the style of the Celestion blue, but the additional power makes a bolder statement, and the mids are less focused. The Blackbird seems equally well-suited for 1x12 and 2x12 cabs, or combined with a heavier sounding Vintage 30, Eminence Man O’ War or Governor.

Jet Tornado 12

A Neodymium version of the Jet, the Tornado shines best (in a Fender amp) with humbucking pickups, adding a nice trebly bite in both positions. It was bright to extremes with our P90 Firebird and stock Nash Tele in our Deluxe – so much so that we ordered a set of Fralin P90s for comparison (reviewed in this issue). Speaker or pickup? It is easy to find yourself pondering these murky questions... The Tornado just seems to require the heavier voice of our Les Paul to avoid sounding too notched in the treble frequencies while lacking bass and mids. However, the spunky character might suit a naturally darker amp like an Ampeg or Gibson if you are struggling to find more sparkle and clarity. Recommending a 100 watt speaker for a small combo seems counter-intuitive, but these lightweight neodymium speakers fly in the face of conventional wisdom, and even the 100 watters seem to wake up in a low-powered amp. Like the Neo, the Tornado is very dynamic, percussive and punchy, but don’t count on fat midrange and bass. It just isn’t there.

Jet Electric Lightning 12

The new 70 watt ceramic version of the Jet is a loud, powerful, bright and chimey speaker with strong, slightly gritty midrange emphasis. Treble presence is musical and bold, and we noticed that the Jet particularly emphasized changes in tone as we moved the location of our pick attack from just behind the neck pickup to the front of the bridge. The voice of the Lightning overall is very musical – an interesting mix of strong mids and proud treble usually not found together in the same speaker. A good choice for a 1x12 where heavy bass response is not needed, or mixed with a warmer speaker in a 2x12.

MOD 35, 50 & 70

As a group, we liked the MOD speakers – Jensen’s effort to create a British-flavored, slightly pissed off speaker that can compete with Celestion. We would pass right over the MOD 35 in favor of the 50, however. The 50 impressed us as the best of the MODS – balanced, strong and rich with excellent treble character and solid bass. The MOD 50 would be a very good choice for 1x12 combos, both new and vintage, or combine it in a 2x12 to contrast with a brighter speaker. Its comparatively light weight is also a big plus.

The MOD 70 is well-balanced, strong and thick, and endowed with far more treble response than speakers of similar girth and authority. However, the midrange focus of the 70 also produces an intense, nearly rabid growl that won’t please everyone. Metalheads, however, will swoon.

www.jensenvintage.com, -continued-
Located in Eminence, KY, this family-run business is the largest speaker manufacturer in the world. Founded in 1966 by the late Bob Gault (see TQR, July 2001) and managed by his son Rob, Eminence has worked closely with nearly every major manufacturer of guitar and bass amplifiers in the world for decades creating and manufacturing OEM speaker designs. In 2003, Eminence set out to develop an extended line of new guitar speakers in what would be called the Patriot and Redcoat series. Combined with the earlier, excellent Legend series, Eminence now builds no less than 33 different replacement speakers for guitar amplifiers, while continuing to manufacture original equipment for major manufacturers and custom amp builders like Carr and Two Rock.

We’ve referenced various Eminence models frequently in the past, including the excellent Legend 10s, 12s and the Legend 15 – arguably the best sounding 15 made today based on our extensive evaluations with vintage Supro, Gibson and Fender 1x15 amps. During our reviews, we pulled the original, reconed 1959 Jensen P15N from our Gibson GA77 and installed a new Eminence Legend 15. It isn’t coming out.

The Redcoat Private Jack 12 and Wizard 12 are both outstanding alternatives to the Greenback and G12H30, and the Red Fang approaches the voice of the Celestion Alnico blue. We have also recommended the Legend Alnico and ceramic 10s for years, as well as the extraordinarily beefy Ramrod 10. In this edition, we focused primarily on various Eminence models not reviewed in the past...

Cannabis Rex 12

The 50 watt Cannabis Rex is built with a hemp cone, which typically adds depth and audibly enhanced second order harmonics. The sound of the Rex is very full, thick and rich, with a fat treble character that will not please treble freaks or the hearing impaired, and yes, hemp cone speakers have been criticized by some guitarist as being inherently too dark. Of course, the definition of ‘bright’ versus ‘dark’ is entirely subjective. We wouldn’t describe the Cannabis Rex as dark – we’ve heard the term ‘smoky’ aptly used, but the bottom line is that hemp imparts a unique, almost mysterious character that some players love, while others just don’t get it.

Personally, we believe hemp speakers perform best in an amp that can properly light them up – the 50 watt Rex in a 40 watt amp, for example. Hemp speakers can also work magic on a Telecaster or other bright, single coil guitar.

Red Fang 12

Every time this speaker is mentioned we suffer an adolescent flashback to the bass player in Paul Revere and the Raiders – Phil ‘Fang’ Volk, who was known for flipping his white Vox bass over to reveal his nick name in black tape on the back. Billy Gibbons does this, too, but his says, ‘Beer.’ Everybody has a style... The Red Fang is the Eminence version of the Alnico G12 first found in the Vox AC30. You can expect classic tight, focused compression and tremendous horniness in the upper mid frequencies. Push it with single note leads and vowel sounds properly jump off the cone. This is neither a particularly bassy or trebly speaker... just chimey, bouncing, animated upper mids that sound great when that’s what you’re going for. The Red Fang also matches up well with speakers that produce a more balanced, heavier sound, like the Eminence Wizard, Private Jack, Celestion G12H30, or the Jensen Mod 50 or Neo. Recommended.

Red Fang 10

The 50 watt Red Fang 10 transformed Jeff Bakos’ blackface Princeton into a gloriously gutsy and toneful AC15, only better, with a deeper voice welling up from the old RCA 6V6s. No, it isn’t a classic Fender sound, but an incredibly tasty and inspiring hybrid tone that just works. Nice mids, chimey treble, harmonics in spades, and enough low end to anchor your favorite 6-string chords. Mike Campbell would love it in a Princeton. You will too.

-continued-
Legend 1058 10

The ceramic 75 watt Legend 1058 has been a mainstay in the Eminence line for years, and for good reason. Bright and spunky, the 1058 balances treble presence with solid midrange and bass response, outstanding single note clarity and definition in chords, and fine harmonic detail with no smearing or distortion. Loud, proud and toneful, this speaker is perfect for 1x10 combos, yer Vibrolux or Super Reverb. Slightly warmer than another one of our favorite Eminence 10s – the Ramrod.

‘Lil Texas 12

This is a great choice for small, moderately powered amps, new or vintage. Like the Jensen Neo, this neodymium speaker from Eminence is nicely balanced, being neither midrange heavy or bassy, with nice treble tones that avoid sounding thin, and excellent compression.

Man ‘O War 12

This is a fantastic speaker for warming up a ‘cold,’ brittle amp without spilling into a sound that is too dark and brooding. The 120 watt Man ‘O War possesses tremendous depth and girth with a rich, bold voice that doesn’t eclipse treble tones. The treble frequencies are clear and exceptionally musical, and this speaker is absolutely loaded with harmonic complexity. Outstanding in 1x12 and 2x12 configurations, solo or combined with a brighter speaker.

Tonespotter 12

The Tonespotter behaves much in the style of the Man ‘O War, but brighter, with less assertive bass and mids, and it impressed us as being a little ‘vanilla.’ We didn’t care for its tone alone, but it would match up nicely in a 2x12 with the Man ‘O War.

Screamin’ Eagle 12

The 50 watt Screamin’ Eagle is a thoroughly agreeable speaker, deftly balanced to give all frequencies equal space. The Eagle doesn’t growl with overbearing midrange, and the top end isn’t rolled off or diminished. It is bold and powerful without being strident or fatiguing. It excels at both clean tones at low volume levels and remains willing, smooth and musical at high volume, very well-suited for moderately powered 1x12 combos like our Deluxe, 2x12 or 4x12 cabinets. The Screaming Eagle was our favorite for use as a single 1x12 among all the Eminence speakers reviewed here. "Scream forth..."

www.eminence.com
www.thetonechamber.com
www.loudspeakersplus.com

Anyone who has been reading TQR for long will be familiar with our extensive past reviews of Celestion speakers, including the Heritage G12H and M Greenbacks, Heritage G12-65, Alnico Gold 12 and G12H 70th Anniversary. Lots of solid choices, all subtly different, but we can tell you this... When we acquire a 1x12 amp that will benefit from a new speaker, we often install a G12H-30 70th Anniversary, aged and re-labeled by Avatar speakers and sold as the Hellatone. The 30 watt 70th Anniversary just seems to work extremely well with a wide range of new and old amps – from our 16 watt ’59 Gibson GA40, to the brown Vibrolux and blackface ’64 Deluxe. The G12H-30 is voiced in the midrange frequencies where the guitar really lives, enabling you to claim your space in the mix or with a band without sacrificing essential bass and treble response. And it does have that trademark Celestion attitude – just backed off enough to cover a lot of musical styles without being overwhelmed by dominant ‘British crunch.’ Every tone has its place. By comparison, Celestion speakers like the Heritage Greenbacks, Vintage 30 and Heritage G12-65 seem to possess a more assertive and aggressive midrange notch that doesn’t always work for us, and we have never really liked the Alnico blue in Fender 1x12 amps. That’s our take, and yes, yours may be different, but the G12H 70th Anniversary has been a rock-steady, go-to
choice for us, as you will soon be reminded again a few pages down the line in this issue. We are also anxious to hear two new Celestion 10" speakers that were unavailable for this issue – the Greenback 10 and Alnico Gold. When we get them, you’ll know.

Celestion Vintage 30 (Hellatone 60)

This is another outstanding Celestion speaker with a long history among rock guitarists. The voice of the 60 watt Vintage 30 is robust with aggressive but musical midrange emphasis, solid low end and exceptionally smooth treble tones that do not evaporate too quickly within complex chords. Harmonic depth and detail are vibrant and clear. Excellent alone with a Telecaster, bright single coils and PAFs – middy but not dark. The Vintage 30 is voiced with a slightly heavier emphasis in the upper midrange frequencies than the 70th Anniversary, and both speakers mix extremely well in a 2x12. Along with his Dumble and Matchless amps, the Vintage 30 has been an essential ingredient in Sonny Landreth’s signature tone.

Warehouse Guitar Speakers

Warehouse assembles speakers in the USA, sells direct via their web site, and their line mirrors many of the most popular Celestion speaker models. We acquired several Warehouse samples for review, and the results were impressive... We also asked David Young at Warehouse to describe the origins of the company...

“The speakers from WGS are built in Paducah, KY. Many of the people involved with building our speakers have been doing so since the late 1960, and this is not the first time Paducah has been on the radar for speaker production. You may remember companies such as CTS, which was the largest U.S. speaker manufacturer during the ‘60s, Credence Speakers, which built an enormous amount of product for the automotive industry, or Voice Coil Communications, which produced coils & speakers during the ‘60s & ‘70s, and finally, Hawley Products, which is the oldest cone manufacturer in the world. All of those companies are or were located in the same geographic area as WGS, so needless to say, if you know where to look, there is speaker talent in this area.

Over the last decade, the speaker industry has swiftly moved to foreign soil for production. This change left many in our industry jobless and we quickly saw build quality decline. Our speaker factory is staffed with talented employees with decades of experience. We have been supplying OEM clients with guitar speakers for over ten years, and until now, our speakers were not branded by the factory. This is one of the things that explains our superb build quality for such a new company. WGS is new, but the people building our speakers have been doing this their entire life.

We have done our homework on the most popular vintage guitar speakers to understand what makes each of them special. WGS is not the first company to enter the guitar speaker market and make replacement speakers for already existing drivers, but we are very good at it. And finally, you have price. Especially in today’s economy, consumers must consider the value of their dollar. We keep prices low and quality high so customers who buy WGS will both sound good and feel good about their purchase.”

Black & Blue 12

True to its name, this Alnico 15 watt is a bruiser. Modeled after the Celestion Alnico blue, the Warehouse version creates brilliant compression, sustain and harmonic detail voiced with strong upper mids, singing, musical treble tones and surprisingly lush and warm low end. We mounted this speaker in our ’64 Deluxe, where it sounded absolutely phenomenal at home, but we wound up pushing it a little too hard with a band. A 2x12 cab would have been smokin...’ The Black & Blue is a truly great speaker – but it sounds best when its stated 15 watt power rating is not exceeded by the power of the amp being used. Highly recommended for low powered amps (under 15 watts) and in 2x12 configurations. You expect midrange from this speaker, but the low end and exceptionally smooth treble tones were a big surprise. Recommended.

Blackhawk 12

The 50 watt Alnico cousin to the Black & Blue, the Blackhawk impressed us as sounding very similar to the big Celestion Alnico gold – bright and cocky, but voiced more in the upper mids and treble frequencies without the full low end of the Black & Blue. This would be a good speaker to provide rich British texture and trebly chime combined in a 2x12 with perhaps a heavier driver like a Vintage 30, Eminence Man ‘O War or Screamin’ Eagle.
Green Beret 12

This is a very bright, chimey 25 watt speaker in the style of a Greenback with a big dose of sparkle and shimmer surrounding the notes, anchored by a very vocal midrange character. You won’t hear much heaviness in the low frequencies, but that’s not the intention of this speaker. Excellent with single coils or humbuckers in a 2x12 or 4x12 cabinet.

Veteran 30 12

Created in the style of the Celestion Vintage 30, the Veteran produces a distinct upper-midrange notch with sharp treble tones that quickly succumb to dominant mids in chords. The overall character is raw, aggressive and gritty – a good choice for metal, or any other style of music where you want to make a bold and unequivocal statement. This speaker has a ton of attitude, and it will rip you a new one in any cabinet configuration.

FANE

In the mid ‘60s Fane guitar speakers emerged as an alternative to Celestion for classic ‘British’ tone. If you’re unsure of the difference between what is commonly referenced to as ‘American’ versus ‘British’ tone in speakers, most people would agree that British speakers usually exhibit a more prominent midrange emphasis and focused compression. Alnico British speakers like the famous Celestion G12 are also often described as possessing a distinctive chime and jangly harmonic character in the upper frequencies, while some ceramic speakers designed in the ‘80s for high gain thrashing produce a very forward and aggressive, grinding growl in the mids. ‘American’ speakers like vintage Jensen and Oxfords are typically brighter and more balanced overall from top to bottom, with a less compressed, airier tone. Vintage JBLs occupy a separate space of their own – powerful, penetrating and clean, and players either love ‘em or hate ‘em.

Aside from their collectable value and appeal, vintage Fane speakers and Fane-equipped cabinets like those built by Hiwatt and WEM are prized for their unique, signature tone and superior power-handling. The Fane company gradually suffered a loss of marketshare as ownership changed hands throughout the ‘80s and ‘90s, and in 2007 long-time Fane employee and former managing director Arthur Barnes acquired the company in receivership. He has since begun to build speakers again to the original Fane specifications in a new factory using much of the original tooling and bringing back key former employees to what had formerly been a ‘family’ business for decades. We spoke with Arthur about his adventures, and our review follows.

TQR: How did you become involved with speaker manufacturing at Fane?

I took an apprenticeship in mechanical engineering – nothing to do with electronics at all. After finishing my apprenticeship, I actually applied to an advertisement for a press shop manager and the company was called Fane. At that time we were pressing speaker baskets for the commercial speakers – loudspeakers for radios and televisions in the UK market, and the company was also making hi-fi speakers. By 1968, Fane were also making speakers for guitar amplifiers, and we began pressing baskets for those speakers along with the metal work for the other speaker components. After four years I was promoted to production manager, then operations manager, and eventually I was named managing director. The name ‘Fane’ was originally derived from the names of the two founders who formed the company in 1958 – Dennis Newbold and Arthur Faulcus. When electric guitars arrived, everyone wanted speakers for the amplifiers, and Fane and Celestion were the main speaker companies. When we first started building guitar speakers, the market leaders were Hiwatt and Marshall, of course. Fane built speakers for Hiwatt, Selmer, Sound City and WEM, and we built speakers for Carlsbro and even Vox in the ‘70s.

During my tenure as Managing Director of Fane in the 1980s, we developed Fane into being arguably the leading loudspeaker manufacturer in Europe supported by unrivaled international distribution channels driving sales and growth. These are the principles that I have taken with me throughout my career in loudspeakers. Fane was eventually acquired by a conglomerate and the parent company began to experience some financial difficulties and decided to sell off the company. I tried to buy it in...
I then had a conversation with the founder of Eminence, Bob Gault, and created Eminence as a branded product for the first time. Before that, Eminence was the world’s number one OEM manufacturer, but without a brand presence or distribution line of its own. Consequently, it was the loudspeaker industry’s best-kept secret. So I created a product line for my catalogue, supported it with professional marketing, which was an exciting development at that time, and established international distribution in all markets outside North America. The international renown of the Eminence brand today is evidence of the success of this decision.

Wharfedale sold Fane to another company, it was sold in turn again, and in February 2007 I was able to buy the business. I had also acquired another company called Precision Devices, which makes very high-end PA speakers, so we already had a small manufacturing facility when we acquired Fane. The Fane factory was located in Leeds, and when we built a new facility, we were able to bring over all the old tooling and machinery, and amazingly, many of the original workers. One of the smartest moves I made was to find one of my old supervisors from Fane, Susan Goodyear, who had begun working there in 1978 and whom we hired to run production again.

Now, Arthur Faulcus was a very clever fellow, and he had invented the glass fiber voice coil in 1967, which was used in the guitar speakers – copper wire wound on a glass fiber former, which allowed us to double the power ratings. Prior to that time, when guitar players would play the amplifiers into clipping, the voice coils would heat up and quickly fail. The glass fiber former more than doubled the power handling, and it is the same former we use today. We also have a lady working with us who was a coil winder with Fane in 1972, and she is a coil winder for us today. In the early days, children would follow their mothers and fathers to work in the business, which was quite common.

**TQR:** To what extent do you feel that the materials used to manufacture speaker components have changed significantly from the old days?

Well, as you know, Alnico was exclusively used until it became so expensive in the mid ‘60s, and I’d be lying if I said it wasn’t challenging to acquire the same high-quality materials today. Fane began using Alnico again in the Axiom Series in the early ‘90s, and we have examples of the older original speakers to compare to. We have retained the same manufacturing techniques, the same voice coil, and we buy the cones from the same supplier we used in the ‘60s – the British manufacturer Kurt Mueller.

**TQR:** Is there an accepted variance in speaker manufacturing specifications?

I would say that a variance of plus or minus 5% in the resonance of the speaker is a fact of life, but each speaker is tested against the master specifications and the response curve must be within our tolerances.

**TQR:** What do you see as the future for Fane?

The relaunch of Fane is still in the very early stages and we have a huge number of exciting developments to the product line to unveil over the coming months. We will see a mixture of our popular favorites standing alongside a raft of new product releases which will strengthen and broaden the Fane line to an unparalleled extent, giving Fane clients the opportunity to use our drivers in every application in a way not available to them before. For information on Fane speakers in the USA, please reference Tonic Consulting, Inc. in Redwood City, CA., [www.tonicamps.com](http://www.tonicamps.com), and the Fane web site.

**FANE REVIEW**

We received a pair of Fane Axiom Alnico 12s and 10s for review – weighty 34 ounce, 100 watt steel blue Alnicos. Both speakers essentially share the same voice – interesting and unique, with stout compression and a very touch-sensitive dynamic character. The Fanes avoid sounding aggressive and gritty in the upper mids, retaining a strong midrange focus without sacrificing treble presence and sustain. Bass response is also strong, and the Fanes are exceptionally powerful and punchy. Their overall sound is full, bold and very British, definitely voiced with strong mids, but not at the expense of clarity. We’re probably just dreaming here, but they remind us a lot of a Hiwatt amp. Mounted as a single or in a 2x12 open back Avatar cabinet, the Fane created a fascinating blend of tones capturing both the full fidelity of a classic Fender amp with the richly focused and lush harmonic detail of a Vox when played through our Deluxe and vintage Tremolux amps. Since the frames of the Axiom speakers are tapped with only four mounting holes, we were unable to mount the 10 in the blackface Princeton, which still retains its original eight mounting screws. Keep this in mind when considering British speakers destined for older combos. We recommend the -continued-
speakers

Fanes for single 10 and 12 configurations (check the number of screws on your baffleboard and insure that the deep Alnico bell cover will fit), or any extension speaker configuration. Fane also offers ceramic models, and additional speakers under development.

www.fane-international.com

THE EVM12-L CLASSIC

Joe Bonamassa reminded us of the venerable EVM12-L Classic as we were discussing his ever-changing rig in the October ’08 issue of TQR. We contacted EV, and they graciously sent us a quad of these magnificent speakers to consider on your behalf. We also recalled a story told by Stevie Ray Vaughan’s former guitar tech, René Martinez, about Stevie switching over to EVs after they had become fed up with speakers blowing on the road. René and César Diaz spent days replacing the baffleboards in Stevie’s Fender amps and fitting them with heavy duty EVs. One of those EV15s was present in Stevie’s stolen Vibroverb featured in the August ’07 issue of TQR. Aside from the problem that blown speakers obviously posed on tour, Stevie was intently focused on achieving a loud and exceptionally clean tone on stage. The ElectroVoice speakers were perfectly suited to handle the percussive sound pressure created by Stevie’s .013-.060 strings, multiple amps, Fuzz Face, and his brutal string-popping ‘touch.’ We asked Josh Bartunek, Product Manager for Bosch Communications Systems to provide some historical background on the EV speakers, and we received the following description from an ElectroVoice engineer:

“The Electro-Voice EVM12 was originally released to production in 1973. The EVM12L Series II was released in 1978. There is no written history of development – only the final documentation and various people’s memories. A variety of engineers worked on various aspects of the design, so it would be unfair to single out any specific individuals as responsible for the EVM12L sound.

In the beginning, it was decided that the EVM12L would share the magnet structures and frames of the entire EVM product line, much of which would be used for sound reinforcement loudspeakers. Sound reinforcement loudspeakers must have high efficiency and high power handling to be able to provide sufficiently high sound pressure levels in large venues. To meet these requirements, large magnet structures were designed to create powerful electro-magnetic motors for high efficiency. Heavy-duty die-cast aluminum frames were designed to support the large magnet structures and to ensure that the frames wouldn’t flex during high-power operation. An additional benefit of the large magnet structures and heavy-duty aluminum frames is that they act as heat sinks to draw heat away from the voice coil, enabling higher power handling to be achieved. While these features are essential for sound reinforcement loudspeakers, they are not commonly found in most guitar speakers. Although these design decisions were not originally made specifically for the EVM12L, they did have an effect on the sonic characteristics and resulted in exceptional reliability.

The voice coil, cone, dust dome and spider were, however, specifically chosen for the EVM12L. Although there is no recorded history of the sonic target of the EVM12L, the intent was to make the speaker sound “musical.” The voice coil was designed to get the “right amount of distortion” when driven hard. The geometry of the paper cone and the dust dome and the details of the paper pulp were chosen to get “the right sound,” as was the choice for the cloth for the surround and the treatments applied. Nobody realized at the time the impact that the EVM12L would have on the future of guitar sound.

For most of its life, the EVM12L speaker was manufactured at the Electro-Voice facility in Newport, TN. That manufacturing facility was relocated to Morrilton, AR in 2002 – and that is where all Electro-Voice loudspeakers are manufactured today. There have been a variety of changes to the EVM12L over the years – some intentional and some unintentional. The intentional changes are the obvious cosmetic changes. The frames and magnet structures were redesigned to have a more rounded and sleek look to give the speaker a more modern appearance. These redesign revisions were made to change the appearance without affect on the performance. In addition, a plethora of labels have appeared on the EVM12L over the years.

The unintentional changes to the EVM12L were the result of changes in manufacturing processes and materials that
occurred over time that were outside the control of Electro-Voice. For example, some of the adhesives used in the original design ceased to be available. As environmental regulations were implemented, some of the chemicals used to manufacture paper pulp in the cone and dust dome were eliminated from the workplace as were some of the chemicals required to process the cloth for the surround. When any change became mandatory, substitutions were carefully chosen to maintain the sonic characteristics of the EVM12L.”

We mounted the EVs in our Avatar 4x12, and we can honestly say that we have never heard anything quite like the earth tremors that thundered through the house. Whatever your favorite rig may be, the EVs change the game, exploding with a tremendous wall of sound in which every frequency is just... bigger. Our 2x12 was equally impressive, with even the quietest passages revealing every nuanced touch of the guitar strings. As we’ve said before, as big as the EVs may be, you cannot hide behind their extraordinarily clear, clean sound. A single EV plugged into the Deluxe via the Two Rock 1x12 cab was equally mind-altering. For older combo amps, you need to consider the strength of your baffleboard when mounting 16 pound EVs, but if you’re craving huge tones, power, and clarity, the EV is clearly in a class by itself.

KITCHEN TEST NOTES
As noted, the cabinets we used included a Two Rock Signature 1x12, Avatar 2x12, 4x12 and 4x10, and we also mounted single speakers in various combo cabinets for comparison.


Guitars: Gretsch Anniversary LTV, Nash ToneQuest ’pawn shop gold’ Telecaster with Lollar Specials, Gibson non-reverse Firebird with P90s, Fender Relic Strat with Slider’s vintage ’57 pickups.

Cables: We’ve progressed to a point where your old 18-gauge lamp cord or push-back, cloth covered stranded speaker wire have been significantly upstaged by modern speaker cables. Granted, this new wire can be stiffer and a little less pliable, but you’ll gain audible improvements in clarity, transparency, and a sound that just seems less veiled – closer, in the same way you might experience digital versus analog recording. If this matters to you, we recommend Evidence Audio speaker cable, which can be made up with a right-angle jack for combo cabinets, or varying lengths to connect a head and cabinet.

The Art of Dreaming

“Things don’t change. You change your way of looking, that’s all.” – Don Juan

No one has ever succeeded in deciphering the infinite variations manifested by the human mind – how we inhabit the same world, yet perceive and react to every moment in our lives in such profoundly different ways. Society, education and culture provide filters intended to shape how we view the world, but each human being remains different and unique for reasons that remain a mystery. And so it goes with music and musicians... Why do some players find their voice in a Stratocaster, while others can’t imagine playing anything but a big-ass hollowbody? This is ‘me’, and that isn’t, but for someone else it is. Most of us hear target sounds in our head that drives our selection of instruments and gear – a sound that may change with each song, while a weekend blues player might simply wish to refine a single, signature tone in the style of Jimmie Vaughan or Albert or B.B.King. The point is, we often know where we want to go, but the shortest path to our destination isn’t always so clear. To make things more interesting, some players just want to be dropped off at the right address in the Quest for Tone, preferring to find something that works with no tweaks or modifications as quickly as possible, while others view the Quest as a journey with no defined beginning or end. To them, anything is possible until proven otherwise, they enjoy exploring new sounds, and their ‘failures’ are often as illuminating as success.

We learned this lesson once again with an amp that we had initially written off, only to discover four years later that it
could become one of the most extraordinary guitar amplifiers we have ever owned or reviewed. What changed? Well, with the lucid, unerring clarity of hindsight, we had to dream it first, thinking in terms of possibilities – what could be, rather than focusing solely on what was missing...

Fender ‘57 Twin

The 25 watt Twin originally debuted in 1952 as the first amp with separate bass and treble controls. By 1955, the model 5E8 Twin had been upgraded to 50 watts, featuring two 5U4G rectifiers – another Fender first in guitar amplification – dual 6L6s, bass, treble and Fender’s presence control, a new fixed bias power transformer, choke, an extra gain stage and second negative feedback loop, and the new ‘narrow panel’ cabinet with speakers mounted in each corner. In the next circuit revision (1956-57 model 5E8-A), a ground switch was added and the treble tone circuit was removed from the negative feedback loop. Leo Fender couldn’t play a lick on the guitar, but he obviously never stopped thinking about how to improve the sound and performance of his amplifiers, as evidenced by the nearly constant revisions and refinements of Fender circuits.

The mighty ‘high power’ 80 watt Twin model 5F8 appeared in 1958 with four 5881s, a short-lived 83 mercury-vapor rectifier that would be replaced by a single GZ34 rectifier (model 5F8-A), and a new ‘Middle’ control added to the normal and bright volume, bass, treble and presence controls. For many collectors and players who can afford them, the high powered Twin ranks with the 5F6-A Bassman as the most toneful, desirable, rare and costly Fender amps ever built.

With a deft nod to the company’s rich history, Fender introduced a faithfully conceived, hand-wired version of the ‘57 5E8-A Twin in 2004, wisely sidestepping the incredibly loud 5F8-A 80 watt version. Unless your name is Keith, where would you play it? Like many players and gear enthusiasts, we wasted no time grabbing a ‘57 Twin off the floor at Midtown Music, anxious to develop a review article soon after its introduction, but the ‘57 Twin left us utterly unimpressed and disappointed. We had anticipated a lush, rich, throaty, singing, exquisitely vocal tone from the Twin, and what we heard was a clangy, brittle, thin, and rather one-dimensional amplifier with an irritating voice. Granted, our high expectations may have contributed to the depth of our disappointment, but we have heard enough great Fender amps to know this was not one of them. Rather than wasting a page or two burning down the Twin in print, we decided to just return it and move on – there were plenty of great amps that remained to be explored and reviewed without ranting on about the Twin. Well, there are no mistakes.

Over the next year or so we received several calls from readers asking why we hadn’t reviewed the Twin as we had indicated in the ‘coming in future issues’ column on the back cover of TQR (discontinued when we realized certain other mags were watching our planned editorial calendar a bit too closely). Further discussion revealed that these same readers had already bought the ‘57 Twin, and they wanted to know how they might ‘warm up’ the sound of their amp. Really? We kicked around the idea of changing tubes, and that perhaps the speakers needed to break in, but that’s as far as it went. Aside from seeing Eric Clapton playing the reissue Twin every other year or so when he came through Atlanta, and at the final Cream show in New York, the Twin remained largely forgotten until August of 2008.

Perhaps we were inspired by Peter Frampton’s Fingerprint CD – much of it recorded with a tweed Twin, but for some reason we began thinking of the hand-wired ‘57 Twin again in late summer of 2008 – how disappointing it had been – but more importantly, how good might it be made to sound? An eBay search revealed that barely used Twins were selling for $1300-$1500. Within a few days we had found one that had been played but a few hours and put back in the box (that resonated with us), and we bought it for $1500 shipped.

The Twin arrived in mint condition in the original box with all documentation, and as we unpacked it we felt no little sympathy for the former owner, having bought our share of
disappointments in the past. A swing and a miss is far better than having never swung at all... We plugged into the Twin and everything we remembered about the first one filled the room as if it were yesterday. The amp sounded raw, tight, sharp, one dimensional and remarkably uninteresting. It didn’t breathe, and a rainbow of warm and essential frequencies seemed distant, muted and removed. If you can imagine a big, powerful amp still sounding small, this one did. The more we played it, the Twin’s boxy, shrill tone became, as it had the first time – irritating – so much so that it was actually a relief to shut it off. We had expected this, of course – that had been the whole point in buying the Twin in the first place, but this time we had a dream of something better to follow.

We first turned our attention to the most obvious areas for improvement – tubes and speakers. Fender had chosen Groove Tubes 12AX7s, 6L6GEs, and dual Electro-Harmonix 5U4GBs – solid, reliable choices for a production amp, tone perhaps being secondary to durability and price. You can’t fault Fender or any other amp builder for the sound of current production tubes, but were we to replace the tubes in the Twin today with new tubes, we’d use reissue Tung Sol 5881s and 12AX7s. We went all out, biasing the Twin for a matched pair of blackplate RCA 6L6s, with GE and RCA 12AX7s, and we tested both GE and RCA NOS 5U4s. Since new old stock RCA 6L6s cost as much as some small amps these days, we also tried a pair of NOS JAN Philips small-bottle 6L6WGBs, which are, as Mike Kropotkin reminded us, not true 5U4s at all. The RCAs were an improvement, sounding more fluid and airy, but we also liked the EH5U4s, which are, as Mike Kropotkin reminded us, not true 5U4s at all. The EHs just seemed to push the amp a little harder, where the RCAs were more subtle and reserved, as you would expect a tweed circuit to behave. Perhaps the best way to describe the difference is that the EHs introduced a slightly more forward and aggressive, punchy feel. It’s quite possible that you’ll be perfectly happy leaving them in the amp. You can also pull one of the 5U4s to achieve distortion faster, at lower volume.

With our new old tubes sorted out, we turned to the speakers – specially designed by Weber and built by Eminence in the image of the classic ‘50s Jensen Alnico ‘P’ series. Having played through many reconed vintage P12N and P15Ns, we had initially viewed these speakers with a little skepticism during our first tumble with the ‘57 Twin, so we had no qualms about pulling them. However, we also repeatedly re-installed them during our experiments with various tubes and replacement speakers to be absolutely sure... -continued-
where we were headed. In 1957, the 5E8-A Twin was originally equipped with Jensen P12Qs, and thanks to Greg Talley, we had access to two pairs of vintage, unreconed Jensen P12Qs dating to 1962 and 1964. In fairness to Fender, Weber and Eminence, the bright character of the original P12Qs probably wouldn't be the first choice of many players today. Yes, the old speakers were musical and richly detailed with incredibly clean, pure treble tones, but they also clearly lacked the warmth, bass response and balance of many popular speakers made today in the U.S. and England. We don’t fault Fender for their efforts in resurrecting a vintage Jensen speaker, but in our opinion, the diminished bass response, thin, strident treble tones, and muted voice just don’t meet our expectations in 2008. Like rusted bridge saddles on a new relic Tele or Stratocaster that can’t be adjusted, there can be a point of diminishing return in an effort to strictly duplicate ‘vintage’ tone or the visible effects of time.

Even with our NOS tubes installed, the bright channel in the Twin is bright, and the presence control sharpens the tone even further. This weighed heavily in the choice of the replacement speakers we considered. We also acquired a Hosa ‘Y’ patch cable that enables us to plug into both the normal and bright channels and mix to taste – recommended.

At 45 watts or so, the Twin is capable of reaching comparatively ‘high’ volume levels, but perceived volume and the associated pain-avoidance reflex many of us feel when thinking about powerful amps is deceptive. As Joe Bonamassa recently pointed out, dialing in the mids can mean the difference between a relatively tame amp sounding brutally hurtful, and a higher powered amp seeming much less so. This is also where your choice of speakers can play a significant role... If you’re craving maximum power, volume and distortion-free tone with all frequencies present and accounted for, EVs will do that, while admittedly adding an extra 20 pounds to the baffleboard. That’s not where we wanted to go, but we did mount one EV in the Twin with other speakers as our evaluations progressed, and the results were impressive if that’s the sound you’re chasing. SRV freaks should stop burning through overwound Strat pickups and just throw down the scratch for a couple of EV Classics. For our personal taste, we knew we wanted to fatten up the voice of the Twin with stronger bass and midrange – treble was not going to be a problem. At 45 watts, we also wanted to use speakers that would neither produce maximum volume, or the kind of faster speaker distortion you would get from two 25 watt speakers. The beauty of the Twin is that the notes retain a captivating clarity even as the amp spills into an overdriven tone at 5-6 on the volume control.

Experimenting with combinations that included the 70 watt Jensen Mod, Alnico Jet, Warehouse Veteran 30, Eminence Man ‘O War, Red Fang, Cannabis Rex and Screaming Eagle, we turned to a pair of Celestion G12H30s, followed by one G12H30 paired with a Celestion Vintage 30 (Hellatone 60). While we could easily recommend several excellent combinations of the various speakers referenced here, we ultimately settled on the Vintage 30 and G12H30 for their robust lows, rich midrange, and plenty of smooth and musical high end to complement the Twin’s bright channel, without sounding too sharp or dominant with a wide range of guitars and pickups. The ‘57 Twin now sounded exceptionally good – warm, full and bright, with a thick, trebly vocal quality that in our experience elegantly reflects the way vintage tweed amps of this era were voiced, as demonstrated by our ‘58 Tremolux. But our work would not be complete without considering the circuit and components...

Fender designers faithfully followed the original schematic and layout for the ‘57 Twin, turning to Mercury Magnetics for the all-important transformers and choke. Among custom builders, there are many ardent...
effects

company has their followers, and the same can be said for the capacitors used today in building amplifiers. In the booteek world, you’ll often see Sprague, F&T or Solen electrolytic caps. Fender chose to use Illinois electrolytics, in part, we assume, because their smaller size enables them to actually fit on the board as originally designed (leaving room for the added bias pot), while the big, blue Spragues used by many custom amp builders will not. Jeff Bakos agreed that it’s largely a moot point – he likes the Illinois caps and uses them frequently for repairs. You’ll find them in Sampson-era Matchless amps as well. Fender chose Xicon polypropylene coupling caps for the Twin, and when it comes to coupling capacitors, you’ll find lots of conflicting opinions. Some people love SBE Orange Drop polypropylene film caps – others prefer German F&Ts, or the foil and polyester film replica ‘mustard caps’ by Sozo. Jeff suggested that we replace the Xicons in the Twin with metalized polyester 150M ‘Mallory’ caps – a very popular replacement in Fender amps that many believe imparts a smoother, warmer tone than, say... Orange Drops. We agree. Whatever you choose, be prepared for delayed gratification. There is a break-in period with all signal-carrying components, and new coupling caps can require as much as 50-100 hours before they are effectively burned-in. We burned in the Twin for 48 hours after replacing the caps, and while the full effect may yet to be realized, we do hear a subtle smoothing effect from the Mallory 150s that is less grainy and metallic than the Xicons. What’s left in our optimization of the ‘57 Twin? Not much. We run ours with one rectifier more often than not, and it is undoubtedly one of the most toneful, character-laden and inspiring amps we have owned or reviewed in these pages. Warmer with more organic mids than a typical blackface, brighter than the brown-era amps, yet less aggressive, loud, trebly and in-your-face than a blonde Bassman, the Twin creates its own beautiful space played clean or cranked into singing sustain and round, woody distortion. Even pushed hard, the sound of the Twin remains uniquely clear and defined, and it is also a very pedal-friendly amp for fans of boost and overdrive effects.

As much as we disliked the Twin ‘out of the box,’ we now enthusiastically embraced it with the same conviction. With the exception of a tube clamp breaking and a somewhat flimsy leather handle for a 60-pound amp that we replaced, the workmanship and fine detail found in the Twin is clearly comparable to any booteek tweed, with an artfully applied, lacquered tweed covering, solid pine cabinet, stout plywood baffleboard and precisely hand-wired circuit. All the Twin really needs is... reverb. Well, here ya go...

As an amp tech, designer, and founder of Metaltronix in the early ‘80s, Lee Jackson was among the first custom amp builders who cleared a path for the booteek industry that would fully bloom in the ‘90s. Jackson initially learned his craft at Fender working with legends like Ed Jahns and Freddie Tavares, and for over 25 years he has continually developed and refined his amps, mods and effects, as well as having written a book titled, “Ultimate Bench Warrior – How To Design, Modify and Build Guitar and Bass Amplifiers.” due to be released this month (see Amazon.com).

Working in Austin, TX, Lee developed the Mr Springgy reverb pedal in 2007. Now in version 2, it has been enthusiastically embraced by guitarists as a remarkably transparent, realistic and tone-enhancing alternative to digital reverb or...
Spring reverb units. Here’s the story behind the development
of Mr Springgy, followed by our review.

“It all started when I was going to the L.A. Namm show in
2006. On the day of the show, I ran into an old friend that I
had worked with at Ampeg – Steve Winkler, who was now
working with Belton Industries, the manufacturer of reverb
pans. They had just developed a new reverb pan replacement
module, and he wanted me to hear it and offer my opinion
before they went into an important meeting that afternoon
with Fender, Marshall and Peavey. So, I listened to their
demo and said, “Great concept but it sounds like crap.” What
I didn’t know was the designer was present, and I was quick-
ly ushered out of the room. After the show, Steve contacted
me and asked if I would be their technical adviser and ears.
They had been crucified by the majors at their meeting, and
realized I was right. I began working with them on a weekly
basis – they would send samples, and I would listen and then
make notes and suggestions. The process was like pulling
teeth, but they got it.

While all this was going on, I was doing my own experiment-
ing with the modules, and I discovered I could tailor the mod-
ule to sound just like an old Fender table top reverb, and that’s
as far as I am going in explaining what I am doing with the
module. The stock modules from Belton sound great, but they
do not sound like the Mr Springgy’s and they will agree with
me on that. Let’s just say I mod the module before I use it.

Mr Springgy has gone through a couple of revisions since I
introduced it in November 2007. I designed Mr Springgy as a
lark to prove something to myself, then a couple of guitar
players happened to be around and heard Mr Springgy, and
they had to have one. Well, within weeks I started making Mr
Springgys night and day, seven days a week. The first fifty
or so had a trim pot on the inside which adjusted the level of
reverb in the mix. What I quickly found is there is never
enough reverb in the world, and no one ever turned down the trim,
so it was the first thing to go, which brought us to the most
recent version where I added the “Wet” only feature. I have always
listened to players, and I was getting a lot of e-mails asking for a
“Wet” only feature, so as soon as I could add that feature, I did. The
other thing I did was make a com-
mand decision on the Mr
Springgy colors, and I decided on
black only. On the earlier models I
had offered them in gold and pink,
but Texas weather has been so bad
this last year that it has been
impossible to paint the colors and have them dry in under a
week.

Mr Springgy is completely analog from input to output –
there are no modeling or analog-to-digital or digital-to-analog
converters. I also included one of my Crystal Clear Splitter
Circuits so you can run multiple amps, and now with the “Wet
only” feature you can have one amp wet and one amp dry for
a huge, spatial sound. Plus, with the wet only, you can use Mr
Springgy in the studio or live mixing board. Mr Springgy is
also quieter than the Fender Reverb unit it is recreating. It acts
just like the Fender unit, meaning it works in the front of the
amp for clean and with a little gain. If you use a lot of gain,
then it needs to be in the loop of the amp. They sound great
after distortion pedals, and should be the last effect in a chain
of effects. I think if you play Blues, it will work great in the
front of the amp. If you play metal, it would have to be in the
loop, unless you use distortion pedals.

Can I also have a word here about “true bypass?” I get a lot
of e-mail concerning this... OK, in the ’50s, ’60s and ’70s,
electronics – and especially solid state electronics, were a
new frontier. A lot of companies had no idea what they were
doing, and really didn’t care as long as whatever they built
was selling. So yes, many of those earlier effects suck all the
life out of your instrument if you leave it in line. But this is
2008, and as designers, we now know how to design circuits
that do not suck tone and actually enhance it. So, with that
said, I have only heard how playing through Mr Springgy has
improved the tone – On and Off. I have never built anything
that was so loved by such a wide spectrum of players. I guess
there is just never enough reverb in the world!”

SPECS:
Powered by one 9V battery, or 9-12 vdc power supply
100 ma + center tip ground, like any standard Boss effect.
Not true bypass, but if you want to change it, I have made it
easy to change. I will not offer true bypass because I hate
effects that pop when you turn them off and on.

MR SPRINGGY
REVIEW
We’ve been extolling the virtues of even the slight-
est drip of reverb for years in amps that aren’t so
equipped, so why stop now? A Vox or Marshall is
a beautiful thing supported by a little ‘verb, and we
have never heard a British amp with factory-equipped
reverb that wasn’t laugh-

-continued-
able, the absolute worst being a 50 watt Sound City head we once owned. Plenty of great vintage American amps were built without reverb as well – all the ’50s Gibsons (and when Gibson did add reverb, it was brilliantly cheesy), tweed, brown and blonde Fenders, and the usual assortment of Ampegs and Valcos. Gutsy, stripped-down vintage amps are often hugely improved with reverb, and the big ’57 Twin becomes two vintage amps in one – a tweedy tone monster dry, and one hell of a blackface amp wet, only better.

In the past, we’ve happily recommended the Electro-Harmonix Holy Grail and Holiest Grail reverb pedals as an alternative to moderately soulful reissue Fender reverb units and the pricier vintage boxes, which can be plagued with bad pans that need replacement and other quirky gremlins. The knock on the Grails has been less than robust roadworthiness, and in our experience, a tendency to just stop working until you disconnect and reconnect the power supply. We have also reviewed and recommended the $249.00 TC Electronics Nova digital reverb – a durable and versatile pedal with loads of features – perhaps more than you need. Lee Jackson has elevated the reverb wars with an outstanding $200 analog reverb pedal that simply does what you want with a supremely realistic sound and just one knob to deal with, plus a very cool wet/dry capability when using two amps. Mr Springgy sounds superb, with a big-pan reverb vibe that doesn’t sound boinky, hissy or difficult to dial in without slipping quickly into all or nothing heavy surf... Just smooth, liquid and lush analog 3-D reverb from a small box that won’t eat space in your gig bag or pedalboard. Great for acoustic instruments, keyboards, harp, fly gigs, and a most excellent stocking stuffer this holiday season. Spring forth... To

www.leejackson.com/

Vanilla Fudge

Lindy Fralin P90...

When taking the plunge on a new guitar isn’t an option, the right pick-up swap can effectively soothe that itch and transform an uninspiring guitar into one you can enjoy playing again. We’ve got a follow up to the April ’08 Spanish Castle issue in the works, but our recent experience with Lindy Fralin’s ‘stock’ soapbar P90 set

The Firebird is not only an unusual guitar from a design perspective – it also possesses a unique voice which we attribute to materials, design and construction. Unlike any other Gibson model, the non-reverse Firebird presents a relatively thin, elongated single slab of carved mahogany with a beefy mahogany set neck, rosewood fingerboard and tune-o-matic bridge and stop tailpiece. All that gorgeous mahogany might lead you to conclude that the Firebird produces a naturally deep and heavy tone with understated treble response, but in reality, quite the opposite is true. In the bridge position the Firebird gracefully leans into sharp, biting Telecaster tones, admittedly with round and middy overtones, but sharp, nonetheless, sounding less taut and tense than the goldtops and Juniors we’ve owned. We initially found the stock Gibson P90 too shrill, while the neck position was less objectionable, but perhaps still a little too woofy. We replaced the Gibsons with a Lollar ‘50s set, still not happy with the overall voice of the guitar, which remained linear, beamy and one dimensional. Hard to put into words, but something was missing that became more evident as we evaluated speakers for this issue with the Firebird, among other guitars. Motivated now to make a move – not for the purpose of writing a review – but because we, like you, merely wanted a better tone – we bought a set of Lindy Fralin ‘stock’ soapbar P90s which feature a 10% under-wound neck pickup for better clarity and definition. Fralin typically uses the same USA-
made Alnico IV magnets and 42 gauge enamel wire used in his humbucking pickups, which makes sense, since Gibson and Seth Lover used the same wire and magnets from the P90 to build PAFs. During a conversation with Lindy about his P90s, he mentioned that he likes to ‘soften’ the magnets by gently rubbing two together, alternating the orientation of both flat surfaces and each end to very slightly demagnetize them. He commented that many people seem to like the results, and he has had pro players request that pickups be sent with different Alnico II, IV and V magnets so they could choose which sound they liked the best. We’ll be featuring a broader discussion with Lindy on pickups soon, but for now we can tell you that his P90 set truly completed the sound of the Firebird for us. The bridge pickup seems to display more facets, as if looking through a prism rather than a flat piece of glass. There is a texture and depth to the sound that supports the dominant treble and upper midrange frequencies that also feels more responsive to pick attack.

In the neck position, the slightly underwound P90 better matches the bridge in volume when both pickups are combined, but the neck P90 alone remains clear and detailed at lower volumes, swelling to the fat and woody voice of a great old guitar turned up. And like the bridge, there just seems to be more content in the Fralins – an extra dimension in and around the notes played both clean and cranked. We’ll gladly give Lindy Fralin a nod for the best sounding P90s we’ve played to date – ‘vintage’ or new.

www.fralinpickups.com, 804-358-2699

something uniquely appealing whenever we receive an amp for review, and the U84 is no exception. However, we will admit to being pleasantly surprised by this amp in particular. Here’s why...

The U84 is DST’s entry into the low-power, dare we say ‘bedroom’ segment of the booteek amp world – a now crowded field driven by aging boomers, the family noise police, and neighbors in urban apartment buildings and condos where the effluvia of curry, garlic, monkfish and leaky children may not be viewed as an affront to the senses, but a screaming guitar will target the owner as an undesirable reprobate to be muzzled for the good of society. We get it – two watts may not leave you feeling as if you’ve just played an encore at Buddy Guy’s Legends club, but those two watts have their place. Here’s designer Bob Detorre’s pithy description of the amp...

The U84 was designed to be a miniature version of my larger designs – Class AB push/pull, dual EL84s, solid state rectifier, simplified tone stack and 12AX7 pre-amp and phase inverter (long tail variety). The power select is a simple passive power dump. This keeps the amp running at full power all the time so in the 2 watt mode it simply throws away 6 watts and sends 2 to the speakers. This allows the character of the amp to remain the same at lower power. The Output switch turns the negative feedback on and off for vintage tweed or more modern feel to the output tubes, while the Gain switch changes the gain at the first pre-amp stage. The pots are set up so the Gain pot controls pre-amp crunch and the Master controls output tube crunch. The idea here is to have a few features for the “tweakers” while still being simple and fun to play.

The operative phrase in Bob’s description is ‘fun to play.’ We’ve come a long way since the Pignose... It will take you about a minute to plumb the breadth and scope of the U84’s controls, which enable variable levels of volume, gain, clean and distorted tones, plus bass and treble EQ. We plugged in the Firebird, stepped on Mr Springgy, and thirty minutes of...
liberating fun passed before we began to even think about taking notes. Yeah, that’s significant. Now, we aren’t going to say that the U84 shines with sparkling clean tones at all volume levels – it doesn’t. You can coax some nice clean tones at low volume, but this isn’t the intention of this amp. What you can do is dial up moderately busted up to intense levels of overdriven tone that actually have a tone, and still allow the unique character of your guitars to shine through. The reason we were so fascinated with what we were hearing with the Firebird and the U84 was simple – it sounded great – from bluesy sustain to a crunchier tone that would be perfect for writing songs that call for such sounds at relaxed rather than fatiguing volume levels. The woodiness of the Firebird endured through the U84 circuit at all settings, and at certain settings on the neck pickup you would swear you were hearing a Strat through a Marshall stack. More importantly, that’s just one of many voices that can be pulled from this amp with a great guitar.

The 2 watt setting is whisper soft, but as Bob observed, the sound is exactly the same as the 8 watt setting – just quieter. You can easily mix or emphasize preamp and output tube distortion through the Master and Gain controls, with additional control over gain via the Hi/Lo inputs and toggled preamp and output boosts. Our review amp was loaded with a 25 watt Celestion Greenback, and the tone controls enabled us to shape the tone to taste. We would happily use the U84 for writing and low volume dealing, probably selecting the 8-pound head for maximum versatility with an 8 or 16 ohm cabinet. Either way, the U84 is exceptional, available with optional speakers and covering as a 1x12 combo with 3/4 inch pine cabinet ($1199) or head ($999).  

Fishman Aura technology is part of a fundamental perspective shift in getting an acoustic sound loud, and works by bottling various complex EQ characteristics of body sound (as previously sampled by a specific microphone or two) and transferring them into the electronic domain. Essentially, having led the field and established a sizeable business by developing all kinds of bugs, undersaddles, magnetics, microphones and their attendant preamps and mixers, Fishman are taking on board the many and frequent player comments that these pickups don’t reproduce an acoustic sound with an acceptable degree of accuracy. Functionally, the Aura offers us acousticians an opportunity to use electronics as a creative, additive tone tool alongside the defensive, subtractive devices we’ve employed in the past. Fishman’s declared intent is that the Aura should be used to match its pre-tailored “Sound Image” with a guitar as similar as possible to that from which the image is sampled, and using an undersaddle that’s as close as possible to the one that has been catered for in the production of the “Sound Images.” Fishman get into complicated arguments over the difference between modeling and “Sound Images” – the latter is a complex EQ algorithm with some phase information, derived by sampling the sounds of particular guitars, and therefore, in their opinion, less artificial than “modeling” in that it offers a complex EQ system that will interact with the input signal. You may care to read up on Roland’s COSM modeling, for example, to get a handle on the comparative angel-to-pinhead ratios involved. Having pointed out that a guitar with characteristics that differ significantly from the characteristics embedded in the Aura might not sound too good, Fishman say that in the event of instrument substitution, “In the best cases, an acoustically neutral sounding instrument can ‘put on’ some of the resonant characteristics of a dissimilar Sound Image, but we can’t guarantee your results.”

Whatever the seeming contradictions in Fishman’s presentation, the Aura is fascinating. I don’t like the sound of magnetics through it – they have too much local character, fingerboard or bridge, for the Aura’s internal electronics to override, but my Graph Tech piezo saddles certainly seem to benefit from it. Indeed, I have run tonally dull recorded Strat style piezo saddle-derived tracks through it from my Tascam, -continued-
and used the Aura to add quasi-acoustic textures on the way back in to another track – not so much re-amping as re-guitaring. They sound no less convincing for the afterthought treatment, and if this music gets released, I fully expect to be asked what acoustics I used for particular tunes. For us hoi polloi, the simpler (than the full size original) stomp box Aura comes in several flavors, each offering a range of EQs sampled from a particular type of guitar. The very keen can send their guitars in to be sampled and have the results burnt onto a CD which is then sent back to the user to be installed on the bigger Aura Imaging Blender, which has a MIDI interface to facilitate loading other guitar characters. Note, this personalized factory load facility costs a couple of hundred bucks, plus the costs of shipping your guitar to and from Fishman, which guitar must have an undersaddle pickup fitted so that its characteristics can be taken into account. I think this particular hajj is something you could wonder about after having an in-store bash at the stomp box versions, and, having tried the variations on each setting, consider how much value subtle individual acoustic instrument analysis adds in the blunderbuss reality of variable sound systems and venues.

Meanwhile, Greg Carnichael, who has been working successfully with Acoustic Alchemy in the USA for seventeen years now, and who regularly passes by Fishman’s Massachusetts home, has had his Matrix-equipped nylon strung guitar sampled and loaded into his big Aura. He describes the change from generic to specific sample as subtle and pleasing, and where he used to mix the generic processed sound in at a level of one out of six, he now mixes his sample in at two. He does caution that too much Aura sound in the mix can sound clanky. He powers his Aura and a couple of other pedals – echo and reverb amongst them – from a Dunlop DC Brick, and isn’t hearing any of the noise this kind of switching supply sometimes causes. It’s worth saying that this does not suddenly turn your whole system into a huge acoustic guitar; what comes out of the speakers is still a facsimile, but it is a very good facsimile of a well set up and EQ’d plugged in acoustic sound.

There are people working in electric bands who have to deal with acoustic scenes in their otherwise electric stage repertoire. Some of them have already gone for the live option of switching to piezo saddles added to their electric guitars for a couple of numbers rather than go through the hassle of changing over to a bugged-up acoustic that will be a big problem alongside a drumkit. For example – Gaz Coombes with Supergrass, and Adam Christian with The Pretenders. I have tried two Aura stomp boxes, one a Dreadnought, the other an Orchestra, plugging a set of quite neutral Graph Tech Strat saddles through them via an A/B switch. In the headphones (Sennheiser HD 650 and Sony MDR-7509), I hear the boomy low mids of the Dread and the more homely Orchestra as if they were mic’d real guitars. These sounds are not as perfect as a good engineer could get the real guitars in an expensive studio in a nice room with multiple mics, but as close as a good engineer could get amid the vagaries of live gigs.

A legitimate question really is, “How realistic do you actually want the simulated acoustic sound that is pumped out of a p.a.?” That may appear to have been the grail for as long as we’ve been taking this path, but, apart from the now absent breathy diffusion of a real acoustic instrument, odd things happen to sound at higher levels, and some of the acoustic’s EQ characteristics that are very attractive in a small setting can become fatiguing and unpleasant at a higher level from a directional speaker system, and Aura users working at higher levels often use proportionally less of the treated sound. The low mid boom of the Dreadnought Aura, for obvious instance, is just as much a problem as the boom from the original instrument, and even differently modeled acoustic sounds can need the body element reduced to avoid, say, an undamped fifth ringing on unnaturally. Feedback tendencies are still a liability even if the uneven EQ is generated electronically instead of physically. Luckily, the Aura stomp box is relatively easy to find and experience for yourself.
A Brown Soun The all-new Hemp E Cones, Bass 10’s, and 10’s for guitar are here! In addition to A Brown’s original hemp cones, John Harrison has created a new “E” cone that is a bit brighter than the original hemp cone. Killer tone for Fender amps, or in combination with the original Hemp Tone Tubby speaker. The bass 10’s have received rave reviews from none other than Tommy Shannon, and the 10’s for guitar will knock you out in your Princeton, Vibrolux, or Super. A Brown Soun was founded in San Rafael, California in 1974 by John Harrison – a working musician who refused to settle for the few reoccurring choices that existed when he first needed speakers repaired in the Bay Area. Since then, John has been recognized by artists such as Carlos Santana, Neil Young, Pearl Jam, Van Halen, and many others as California’s top speaker reconoisseur. In addition to its famed reconing services, A Brown Soun also custom builds speakers and cabinets for virtually every application. The renowned Tone Tubby speaker developer by A Brown Soun has received rave reviews from top professionals around the world. Brown’s recently released series of speakers for guitar and bass featuring hemp cones is setting a new benchmark for guitar and bass speaker performance, with dramatically improved clarity, note definition, frequency response, durability, and power handling. Whether you need new speakers, custom built cabinets, or vintage speakers rebuilt and sounding right, A Brown Soun is your professional resource. As the Tone Tubby logo says, “We’re committed to tone,” and that means yours.

Analogman TQR readers are invited to save $25 on the Sunface NKT with Sundial Fuzz, or receive free shipping on all handmade Analog Man brand pedals, Foxrox, Teese wals, and the PedalPower2t! Mike Piera is one of the premier guitar effects dealers and manufacturers serving professional players worldwide. Analogman is unique, since it manufactures, modifies, buys, sells, and repairs vintage and new guitar effects. Specializing in vintage and high-end effects, you won’t find cheap Taiwanese “happy meal” style, toy effects there. Analogman is dedicated to helping you successfully pursue your quest for tone, and every customer is treated as a prospective friend. Analogman can meet all your effects needs, including: Buying and selling vintage, new, and custom built effects, and modifying pedals to sound and function better. A Analogman refines all aspects of an instrument, from the original design through the final layout, and then introduces it to the public. Their goal is to provide customers with the best possible effect, and to do so in a manner that is both efficient and affordable.

Antique Electronic Supply Antique Electronic Supply carries the largest selection of parts for guitars, amplifiers, high-end audio, antique radios and amateur radio stations. Antique Electronic Supply has been in business since 1991 by Dave Noss and is known for selling well-built, high-value guitar and bass speaker cabinets with the best possible parts.

AllParts Top players and guitar builders rely on AllParts for the right guitar and bass parts they need, in stock and ready to ship. AllParts offers a complete range of finished and unfinished guitar bodies in a variety of premium tone woods, including alder and swamp ash, with optional highly figured maple tops. Finishes include all of the most popular vintage colors, including see-through blonde! Premium necks are also available with maple, rosewood, and ebony fingerboards in a variety of neck shape profiles, with or without binding. Custom design your next guitar with AllParts including tailpieces, tuning keys, bridges, nuts and saddles, pickups, pickguards (that really fit), knobs, hardware, and electronics for many popular models. Bass players and lefties can also find the parts they need at AllParts! You can also rely on AllParts for hard to find parts, along with vacuum tubes and amplifier hardware.

Avatar Speakers was founded in 1991 by Dave Noss and is known for selling well-built, high-value guitar and bass speaker cabinets with the best possible parts.
speakers in the world from Celestion and Eminence. We also offer the best prices on raw speakers from these fine companies.

Avatar recently introduced the new G2112H Premier cabs available in Red, Orange, Green, Brown, Black or Blonde toles, loaded with your choice of speakers. Features include 13 ply baltic Birch cabinets with superb dovetail corner joints and your choice of open, oval, or closed backs. Grill cloth colors include Wheat, Black, vintage Fender and Oxblood with white piping.

We also offer a Premier Vintage cab modeled after the '60s Bluebreaker. Avatar also markets their great sounding Hellatone line of 12” guitar speakers — aged Celestion G12H30’s and Vintage 30’s, both of which have received stellar reviews.


Callaham Vintage Guitars & Amps Bill Callaham is a builder of exceptional electric gui- tars that exceed the original quality, tone, and beauty of the vintage models that inspire his work. “Better than vintage” is an apt description for the Callaham “S” and “T” model electric guitars that feature premium lightweight ash and alder bodies, custom hand–shaped rock maple necks, and cryo- genically treated Lindy Fralin pickups especially wound to Callaham’s specifications for true vint- age tone. Bill also offers cryogenically treated, pre-wired pick guard kits for Strat style gui- tars, and his exclusive formula for cold–rolled steel alloy tremolo blocks continue to delight players around the world with improved resonance and sustain. Callaham vintage saddles also improve sustain while minimizing string fatigue and breaks. Additional Strat parts include stainless steel trem arm springs, ferrules, bridge plates and mounting screws, and string retainers. Attention Tele Players! Callaham now offers a complete line of custom Tele parts. Please visit their web site for information on pre-wired control plates with premium pots, capacitors, and cloth-covered wire, specially wound and cryogenically treated Fralin vintage Tele pickups, compensated brass bridge saddles, bridge plates, knobs, jacks, tuners, and string trees! The only thing better than Callaham parts is a Callaham guitar. We said that, and you can take it to the bank.

Callaham Guitars, Winchester, VA www.callahamguitars.com 540-678-4043

Carr Amplifiers Check out the ALL NEW Carr Mini-Mercury! The Mini-Merc is an extremely versatile combo with all tube Reverb, 3 position Boost switch, Treble cut switch, and a built-in attenuator yielding 8, 2, 1, or 1/10 watt output. 100% hand wired and every amp is rigorously test- ed before leaving our shop. The Mini-Merc offers tones and big amp ‘feel’ ranging from lush 60’s American reverb to modi- fied “brown” 70’s British crunch at almost any vol- ume. The cabinet measures a friendly 19.5” wide by 15” tall by 10” deep at the bottom sloping to 9” deep on the top. Our new Mini-Merc has the same electronics as the standard 1-12” Mercury differning only in its smaller cabinet and its warm and smoky 10 inch Eminence “Lil Buddy” hemp cone speaker.

Plug into any Carr amp and you’ll immediately understand why we said in our very first ToneQuest review, “Finally, somebody got it right.” Right, as in the perfect marriage of classic Fender balance, clarity, and head room, with innovative overdrive features that produce natural, sweet tube distortion, but never at the expense of the tone you’ve worked so hard to capture in your instru- ments. Lots of small-batch amp builders use premium components and labor-intensive, point-to-point construction, and Carr is no excep- tion. The Solen filter caps used in Carr amps alone cost more than the sum of the parts in many bou- tique circuits!

Carr amps are professional tools and works of art that will inspire you for a lifetime. Check out the many stellar reviews and dealer locations for Carr amps at their web site, and contact the boys at Carr for more information about which Carr model is best for you.

Carr Amplifiers, Pittsboro, NC www.carramps.com 919-545-0747

Celestion Ltd. Nobody knows more than Celestion about guitar loudspeaker design and manufacture. Think of your all-time favourite gui- tars and solos, chances are, they were played through Celestion guitar loudspeakers. For the last fifty years — since the birth of the Celestion Blue (the first ever purpose-built guitar loudspeaker) — our magical mix of metal paper and magnets has formed an essential part of the sound of guitar music.

Some of the greatest speakers available today are part of the Celestion Classic Series. Over the years, we’ve applied our design expertise to build a range of speakers that will give you classic Celestion tone, no matter what style you play. The Alnico Series and the Heritage Series, both hand-built in Ipswich, England, are the result of meticulous attention to detail, created for those who are absolutely dedicat- ed to the pursuit of true vintage tone.

For high-volume OEMs, Celestion Originals repre- sent outstanding value for money. We have the spe- cialist experience coupled with the most advanced, high-volume manufacturing techniques to deliver Celestion tone, quality and brand appeal at extremely competitive prices.

Celestion International Ltd www.celestion.com For OEM Enquiries, contact Andy Farrow at Celestion America, 732-683-2356 For retail and distribution enquiries, contact Group One Ltd 516-249-1399 www.g1limited.com

Collings Guitars Bill Collings’ story provides a classic example of what can be achieved with an engineer’s brain, a machinists’ hand and an experienced repairman’s eye. After dropping out of medical school in Ohio to work in a machine shop, Collings moved to Texas in the mid 1970’s where the experience he gained repairing and restoring guitars guided his design of the first Collings guitars. His understanding of the flaws and shortcomings found in production instru- ments was instructive, and he set out to elimi- nate those shortcomings with the very first Collings guitars

Today, Collings has 50 full-time employees working in a new, 22,000 square foot, state-of- the-art facility, and Bill Collings remains hands- on, building all the tools used throughout the shop and personally working on guitars at his bench whenever time permits. As the business has grown and processes refined, there is one thing that has not changed...Bill Collings’ com- mitted to building the finest handmade acoustic steel string instruments in the world.

Collings instruments have grown to include 32 different acoustic guitar models including the famed dreadnought and OM models, seven award-winning mandolin models in both lacquer and varnish finishes, three archtop guitars, and a new line of seven electric instruments crafted to inspire rock, blues, jazz, country, and your music, too.

Bill Collings work is respected by professional and amateur musicians alike...anyone on the quest for quality. Some of these include artists: Keith Richards, Lyle Lovett, Pete Townsend, Emmylou Harris, Andy Summers, David Crosby, Chris Hillman, Joni Mitchell, Don Felder, John Sebastian, Lou Reed, John Fogerty, Tim O’Brien, Pete Huftlinger, Kenny Smith, Brian May, Joan Baez, John Prine, Nigel Tufnel of Spinal Tap, and Steven Spielberg to name a few. We invite you to play a Collings today.

For more information on the complete line of Collings’ instruments and dealer locations, please visit our web site.

Collings Guitars, Austin Texas www.collingsguitars.com, 512-288-7776

Dave’s Guitar Shop offers Fender, PRS, National, Taylor, Gretsch, Guild, Hamer, Vinetto, Ernie Ball, Rickenbacker, Martin, Santa Cruz, and many other fine new and used instruments, plus new and used amplifiers such as Fender, Marshall, Line 6, Carr, Matchless, Victoria, Bad Cat, Dr.Z, Savage Audio, Ampeg, plus hundreds of guitar effects, aftermarket pickups from Joe Barden, Seymour Duncan, and more. Due to their inventory of over 1,000 guitars, amps, and accessories, Dave’s is an excellent resource for top of the line Custom Shop and Historic reissues, to intermediate new and used gear. Unlike some dealers’ offer of date stock lists on the web and in print, Dave’s inventory is updated daily. The selection of new and used instruments is truly exceptional, and you can often select among several models of the same make guitar to find that special instrument that was meant for you. Dave’s staff is friendly and extremely knowledgeable about the instruments and gear they sell, because they’re players, too. Please check the web site for current inventory, and you are welcome to call for more information or an accurate, in-hand description.

Dave’s Guitar Shop, LaCrosse, WI www.davesguitar.com 608-785-7704

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Doug’s Tubes Doug Preston founded Doug’s Tubes in 2002. It became an evolution originating from his passion for music, guitars, and tone. We are now serving thousands of satisfied guitar players and audiophiles internationally. It has been my intention from the beginning to seek out the most reliable and great sounding current production tubes, and to help influence manufacturers into reproducing many NOS tubes to keep our vintage amps going, such as the JI 7591. We offer the most common choice NOS, currently manufactured, and hand selected used tubes at a fair price. If you need help in selecting tubes for your particular application, call Doug at Doug’s Tubes, your one stop tube shop, taking music sound better, one amp at a time.

Doug’s Tubes, Levittown, NY 516-314-0357, www.dougstabex.com

Eastwood - Since 2001, Eastwood has been creating some of the most exciting Electric Guitars the world has ever seen. Our RADICAL VINTAGE REMAKE series feature a variety of models based on popular sixties designs - from the classic Mosrites to our top-selling AIRLINE - they capture the excitement and style of the originals. Each year the prices of the originals skyrocket - getting harder to find and harder to play! Eastwood’s focus is to make top quality replicas - that cost less and play better - so the average musician can experience the excitement of playing one of these beautiful vintage guitars as their every day player.

TONE & STYLE - All Eastwood Guitars are fitted with high-quality modern components that offer an optimal playing experience that far exceeds their 1960's original counterparts. It is hard to find a guitar these days that oozes more vintage style than an Eastwood! All Eastwood Guitars are setup professionally before shipping to our customers.

VALUE - All Eastwood Models are subjected to extensive research and development to continually raise the level of performance. At the same time, we are very careful to maintain an affordability level that our customers expect. These elements combine to deliver peak performance and higher quality than the originals at a much lower price.

SERVICE - A product is only as good as the people who stand behind it. Eastwood Guitars service is second to none in the industry because we simply treat customers the same way we would expect to be treated. All guitars come with a 3 Year limited Warranty. Guitars purchased directly from us receive a no-questions-asked return policy. Or, if you are located near an Eastwood Dealer, you can buy from them at the same direct price we offer online.

THE FUTURE - We continue to bring new models to the Eastwood line-up. Our goal is to introduce 3-5 new models each year, available in a wide variety of colors and of course, including left-hand versions. Please feel free to email us directly if you have some suggestions for models that we should consider developing in the future!

Eastwood Guitars, Toronto, Canada www.eastwoodguitars.com, 416-294-6165

Eminence - Eminence is proud to present the Patriot and Redcoat series of guitar speakers. Incorporating both British and American cone technology into speakers that we manufacture in the USA gives us the ability to provide you with virtually any tone you desire. Be it British or American, clean or dirty, big bass or screaming highs, we have a speaker that will allow you to “Pick Your Sound.” Choose from one of seventeen new models! Eminence has been building speakers to custom specifications for nearly every major manufacturer of guitar amplifier and sound reinforcement products since 1967. Their new Legend Series of guitar speakers captures the essence of the vintage American and British speaker designs that are held in such high regard today by so many discerning players. The Legend Series includes classic British and American designs for 6,” 8,” 10,” 12,” and 15” speakers utilizing ceramic and ALNICO magnets, American cones, and Kapton polyamide voice coils for superior heat dissipation and durability. Best of all, because Eminence has been successfully competing for years with other speaker manufacturers as an OEM supplier, the Legend Series speakers are priced far below those of many other popular manufacturers of “reissue” and custom speakers. The Eminence Legend Series delivers all of the tone and durability you need, at a lower price, with no compromises in quality. To locate genuine Eminence dealers in your area, please visit their web site or call Eminence Speakers.

Eminence Speaker LLC, Eminence, KY www.eminence.com 502-845-5622 Contact: Chris Rose

Evidence Audio was founded in 1997 by Tony Farinella to supply the MI and Studio community with performance–based cables at reasonable prices. The most well-known cable is the Lyric HG (High Gain) guitar cable. Readers of Guitar Player Magazine voted the Lyric HG as “Best Accessory of 2004” supporting the opinion drawn by editors of magazines from around the world.

In simple terms, cables from Evidence Audio are built different; as a result, they sound different. The Lyric HG features two solid core high grade IGL copper conductors and a braided shield that is grounded at the amp end only. This is the correct way to “drain” spurious noise. By using solid core conductors,strand interference is eliminated as well. Designed to be neutral and honest, the cables don’t actually “improve” your tone, they simply replace a cable in your signal path which was likely destroying it. What you hear is a tighter more muscular bottom end, a clearer more complex mid-range and a sweeter more detailed high end. Dynamics and harmonics are improved and sustain is no longer masked. Overall, the guitar becomes more three-dimensional sounding, cuts through clearer and at the same time takes up less space in the mix.

The Siren Speaker Cable and The Source AC Power Cable compliment the Lyric HG. They offer a solution to distortions cause by cables in other areas of the signal path and power supply. The effects of the speaker and power cable are consistent with that of the Lyric HG: you hear the guitar and amplifier, not the cables.

While not inexpensive, cables from Evidence Audio are still one of the most cost effective ways of improving your tone. It’s like changing pickups or a bridge – a small detail with big results. Please visit the Evidence Audio website to locate a dealer near you and demand a demo!


Fishman Widely recognized as the premier designer and manufacturer of acoustic amplification products, Fishman is committed to making acoustic musicians heard while faithfully maintaining their own natural tone, for the best possible sound. The Fishman product line began with the BP-100(tm) acoustic bass pickup, originally developed to meet founder and president Larry Fishman’s own jazz performance needs. With a track record of quality engineering, reliability, functional simplicity and - most importantly - the natural tone it enables, Fishman firmly established a reputation of excellence that consumers have come to expect from the brand.

For acoustic guitar, Fishman offers the flagship Acoustic Matrix(tm) Series active pickup system, the Rare Earth(tm) Series active magnetic pickup systems, and the Neo-D(tm) magnetic soundhole pickup, as well as passive undersaddle, classical, archtop, and resonophonic guitar pickups. Fishman’s new Ellipse(tm) series combines the Acoustic Matrix(tm) pickup with our industry leading preamp design. Designed to fit in the guitar’s soundhole, the Ellipse(tm) system provides volume and tone control at your fingertips and easily installs without any modification to your instrument.

Fishman pickups are also available for banjo, mandolin, harp/piano, violin, viola, cello and acoustic bass. In addition, the Concertmaster(tm) amplification system for violin and the Full Circle(tm) upright bass pickup offer two elegant and cutting-edge string amplification solutions.

Utilizing cutting-edge Acoustic Sound Imaging(tm) technology, Aura(tm) features the most innovative acoustic amplification technology available today. This stompbox-sized unit captures your instrument’s true acoustic sound with stunning, studio microphone quality. Anytime, anywhere. Aura(tm) eliminates the boundaries of conventional acoustic amplification and gives the most natural, realistic amplified acoustic instrument sound available - both on stage and in the studio.

Joining the award-winning Loudbox(tm) and Loudbox Pro(tm) acoustic instrument amplifiers, the new Loudbox Performer(tm) completes Fishman’s popular, highly-acclaimed family of acoustic amplifiers and offers the size, power and features that musicians demand. Setting a new standard in acoustic amplifiers, the Loudbox(tm) series feature a powerful tri-amped system that delivers sweet highs and undistorted lows-even at tremendous volumes. As Fishman celebrates its 25th year as the leader in acoustic amplification, the company continues to redefine the benchmark of acoustic sound. For more information, please visit www.fishman.com.

Fishman Transducers Inc. Wilmington, MA www.fishman.com 978-988-9199


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Gibson Gibson Repair & Restoration

Class World Repair of Stringed Instruments

Over the years, Gibson has received countless requests from players needing work on their guitars, mandolins, etc. These players all say the same thing: “I don’t trust anyone but Gibson to work on my instrument!” Until recently, these folks had to rely on whoever was available in their local area and hope they had the skills and experience to do the required work.

All that has changed now! Gibson has opened the doors of its in-house repair facility and is accepting stringed instruments of all types and all brands for repair or restoration. Offering a state of the art, temperature and humidity controlled environment, as well as a full staff of highly skilled and experienced luthiers, Gibson is fully equipped to perform any and all operations required in all phases of repair and restoration.

Among the services offered are:

- Pro Set-Up – Acoustic or Electric
- Freshness – Free Dress to Plane & Refret
- Custom Wiring/Pickup Installation
- Structural Repairs – Body Cracks, Bracing, Broken Headstocks
- Neck Resets
- Custom Paint/Finish Repair/Relics
- Total Restorations

So whether it’s an acoustic or electric guitar, mandolin, banjo, ukulele or oud, if it has strings and it needs attention, we can help. It doesn’t even have to be a Gibson – we’re an equal opportunity Repair Shop! Call, write or email. We’ll guide you through the process and we’ll help with shipping and insurance information so your instrument gets here and back quickly and safely. We’ll tell you upfront what your costs will be and no work is begun before what is to be done has been explained and approved by you.

Gibson Repair & Restoration
Nashville, TN
615-244-0252
www.gibson.com/products/PlacesRepair/
Juststrings.com offers the best prices on all of the major and specialty brands, promptly delivered to your door. Shop online at JustStrings.com, or place your order by fax at 603–889—7026 or telephone at 603—889—2664.

JustStrings.com, Nashua, NH
www.juststrings.com info@juststrings.com

Keeley Electronics — Check out the new Keeley Katana Preamp! ToneQuest subscribers receive 10% off on all pedal mods and the Keeley Comp, Java Boost and Time Machine boost! Keeley Electronics recently won a Guitar Player Reader’s Choice Award and Keeley is now the exclusive distributor for Framptone! Robert Keeley’s Time Machine Boost, Keeley Compressor, and his custom, state-of-the-art modifications for vintage pedals continue to receive rave reviews from guitarists around the world. Keeley pedals are used by Aerosmith, Abbey Road Studios, Steve Vai, legendary producer Bob Rock, George Lynch, Peter Frampton, James Burton, and many, many more guitarists and music pros around the world. The Time Machine Boost is a versatile 2 channel, 3 mode pre-amplifier designed to drive your amplifiers or overdrive or saturation. The two channels are labeled “Modern” and “Vintage” side inspired by rare germanium boosts like the Dallas Rangemaster. The “Modern” channel is a new +23dB gain, dual JFET transparent signal amplifier. The Keeley Compressor is a superb audiophile and studio grade compressor with true bypass switching and premium metal film resistors and capacitors for the cleanest Ross clone compressor ever available. Available with a standard Fennez/Boss style adapter jack and/or battery power, you can say goodbye to that old Red Dyna Comp!

Robert Keely pedal mods include 2 versions for TS9’s – the TS808 mod, and the “Baked TS9” for searing hot Tube Screamer tone. Keeley uses the original RC4558P chip that appeared in the early TS808’s, while increasing the bass response and overdrive range. The result is a perfectly voiced 808. The Keeley modified BD-2 is not a fuzz pedal but has the best characteristics of a fuzz pedal, and it’s much smoother and more realistic sounding. Other exclusive Keeley modifications include the Boss Blues Driver BD-2 Tube Mod, the PHAT Switch BD-2 Mod, Rat Mods, Boss DS–1 Seeing Eye Mod, Boss SD–1, and Boss Chorus CE–2. For detailed specs, user comments, dealer information, sound clips, and ordering information, please visit the Keeley Electronics website. Keeley Electronics, Edmund, OK 405–260–1385, www.robertkeeley.com

K&M Analog Designs — Two Rock
K&M Analog Designs, LLC, was formed in northern California in 1998 by Bill Krinard and Joe Mloganoski. The company brings a combined 65+ years of amplifier and guitar building experience. Loyal customers such as Carlos Santana helped launch the company to the forefront in its earliest days. Current K&M and Two–Rock devotees include John Mayer, Steve Kimock, Mitch Stein, Barney Doyle, Mark Karan, Michael Kang, and Volker Striffer, among others. The company launched its line of Two–Rock amp models in the summer of 1999. Past models include the Amethyst Special Indoor Storm Model, Emerald 50, Sapphire 100, Emerald Pro and Topaz. Current models include the Custom and Custom Reverber, Onyx, Opal and Ruby and LTD recording amplifiers. Recently Two–Rock introduced their Signature series of amplifiers, by far the most popular of any Two–Rock series to date. Future models will include a single channel clean amp in various power levels and a unique overdrive unit. The aforementioned have also been built for players seeking the ultimate personalized tone machine.

K&M Analog Designs, LLC
www.Two–Rock.com
707–584–TONE(8663)
In Japan: www.Two–Rock.jp.com

Koch Guitar Amplification was founded in 1988 by Dolf Koch in the Netherlands and are known worldwide as a manufacturer of high end boutique guitar amplifiers. They have many models for all styles of music from the new 20W Class “A” Studiotone combo to the 120W Powertone II head.

All amps are channel switching with two or three extremely versatile channels recognized for having both sparkling clean channels and wide ranging drive/gain channels. They were the first to utilize trim pots on their heavy duty circuit boards enabling anyone to adjust bias with only a screwdriver and with extreme Speaker damping variations which when toggled from high to low alt the tone to a more scooped sound. Rhythm volume switch on the footswitch (included) which when engaged drops the level to a pre-determined “Rhythm” level. It’s the opposite of a boost and does not alter the lead tone as a result. It so useful guitar players tell us that they’re surprised that no has done this before. All amps have Accutronics reverbs and Koch designed speakers that have a sweeter more extended high end. These speakers also handle more power and have a better bass response than almost any guitar speakers available. They are an integral component to the KOCH sound.

Other products include the Loadbox which attenuates a tube amplifiers output without destroying its tone, i.e. no huge loss of high frequencies. The Pedalton is a semi–four channel, foot operated preamp which has four 12AX7 preamps tubes. One of these tubes acts as a 5W power tube! It has many patch points and output options for almost any application. Some famous people that use Koch are: Paul Reed Smith, Al Di Meola, Randy Bachman, Buzz Feiten, and Jimmy Bruno to name a few. KOCH also manufacturers the 300W EDEN VT300 all bass head and the 200W Sadowsky SA200 bass head on an OEM basis.

Koch Guitar Amplification
www.kochguitaramps.com
707–584–TONE(8663)

Lollar Custom Guitars & Pickups
According to Jason, he never really set out to become a custom pickup designer and builder. Jason Lollar is a guitar builder on Vashon Island, Washington (near Seattle) who originally began building pickups for his own guitars and a few friends when he couldn’t find the tone he was after. The word spread, and now Jason custom builds over 30 different pickups, including Strat, Tele, humbuckers, P90’s, custom steels and Charlie Christian–style pickups, all personally designed and wound by Jason. He is especially well known for his P90, Imperial Humbucker and Tele replacement pickups, but he has also designed pickups for many unusual applications.

Recently, Jason was acknowledged by gonzo pedal steel player Robert Randolph for having wound the pickups in his two custom Fesenden pedal steels. And the list doesn’t end there. Lollar pickups are used by many serious guitarists as well, with his Fat Channel pickup being the bees knees, along with his Fat Channel 60s pickup. Lollar also custom designs and builds pickups for guitar greats such as Billy F Gibbons, Peter Stroud, Kevin Russel, Rick Vito, Elliot Easton, Duke Robillard, and The Beasty Boys, among others.

Jason is always happy to personally consult with his clients via phone and e‐mail to determine the pickups that are right for each player, and TQR recommends Lollar pickups without exception. His Lollar Special Strat pickups are standard equipment in our custom built ToneQuest guitars. Call Jason or check out all the options available on his web site.

www.lollarguitars.com, 206–463–9838

Mercury Magnetics
The basis of every tube amp’s characteristic sound is the unique design of its transformers. Mercury transformers are legendary for their stunning tonal superiority, build quality, consistency, and reliability. We believe in old–world craftsmanship and a single–minded focus. Transformers are our only business, allowing us to concentrate on providing you with the best–sounding guitar amplifier transformers in the world.

If your amp is suffering from bland and unexciting tone, then it’s time for a transformer upgrade or repair. Here are your options:

ToneClone™ Best–of–Breed Series Transformers: Behind every great–sounding vintage guitar amp is a piece of transformer history. Within any amp line there are usually a large number of transformer variations, inconsistencies and just plain ol’ building errors that affect their sound (good or bad). At Mercury, we seek out, study, blue print and replicate only the best–of–breed transformer designs (including their all–important anomalies) and add these discoveries to our catalog. And we make these incredible tonal selections available to you through our ToneClone™ line.

Axiom® Series Next–Gen Transformers: Next–generation guitar amplifier transformers. The Axiom series are in a class by themselves. We’ve taken our advanced knowledge of modern transformer design and married it with historically best–sounding designs of the past. Axiom transy plays are hybrids that take vintage tone to the next level! More bloom, more overtone color, and awesome tone!

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Keeley Electronics
www.keelelectronix.com
tonal depth. If you ever needed convincing as to how outstanding transformers affect your sound, Axiom transtaps will astonish you.

**Mercury Vintage™ Transformer Service:** Most vintage transformers have already outlived or are nearing the end of their life expectancies. That’s the bad news – now for the good… Mercury will restore, rebuild or rewind your valuable original transformers. Or, we can clone your originals so that you can continue to play your old amp without fear of further “wear and tear.”

**Free Transformer Testing and Evaluation Service:** Do you think there might be something wrong with your transformer? Send it to us. We’ll test it in our lab and report back to you. Our evaluation procedures are thorough, complete and reliable, and always free. The transformers that come with a 10-Year Manufacturer’s Warrantee and a Money-Back Tonal Guarantee. Made entirely in the U.S.A.

**Mojo Musical Supply**

Mojo Musical Supply is the all-inclusive amplifier parts supply house. ToneQuest readers receive an exclusive 10% discount on all Mojo products! Just reference the “MojoQuest304” discount code when placing your order. Mojo specializes in pre-1980 amplifier parts, including a wide range of custom and vintage reproduction cabinets, a line of exact reproduction transformers, and hard-to-find electrical components. Mojo continues to supply a full range of speakers for the guitar market, including Jensen, Celestion, and of course, their own custom Mojotone speakers. The in-house cabinet shop at Mojo specializes in making authentic Fender and Marshall reproduction amplifier cabinets, custom cabinets from your own design, as well as cabinet repair and re-covering. Mojo stocks over fifty different amp coverings and grill cloths to insure that vintage enthusiasts and custom amp creators have a large palette to choose from. Within the last two years, Mojo has become one of the largest vacuum tube importers in the world, stocking over 20,000 tubes. Because they buy tubes in large volumes, their prices remain very competitive. For completed electronics, Mojo is the east coast distributor for Belov amplification and also the home of Mojotone Custom electronics. Mojo manufactures and markets the Tone Machine amplifier, a powerful and eclectical tube guitar combo. They are also able to offer turnkey and partial component electronics and cabinets for OEM’s and builders of all sizes. The future of Mojo lies in their ability to work directly with manufacturers, or bring the manufacturing in-house. Our plans for the coming months and years are focused on making quality vintage parts available at even better prices, while assuring that all of their products are of the highest quality.

**Resource Directory**

**Mojo Musical Supply**

Mojo Musical Supply
Winston-Salem, NC
www.mojotone.com
1-800-927-MOJO

**Nash Guitars**

Have you ever thought, “If they would just make a Tele with…”?, “I love my Strat but it just doesn’t…”? “Why don’t they make a Jaguar that could…”? Well, you’re come to the right place. From exotic woods, custom paint, unlimited neck types, custom designed logos, pick-up selections, Timewarp aging, or any other feature imaginable – Esquires with hidden neck pickups, Strats with interchangeable pickup assemblies, Custom Shad — whatever... If you can dream it, we can build it.

Each guitar is a unique work of art, handcrafted by me. The use of 100% nitrocellulose lacquer, high quality vintage hardware, superior woods and a wide variety of pickups and options produce magical instruments that have thus far not been available “off the rack”. The level of aging on our Timewarp guitars can be adjusted from “played it once a month at church” to “used to break open a window during a fire in a Louisiana roadhouse.”

Bill Nash is an Olympia, WA based builder of aged vintage guitars inspired by Leo Fender. Available through Nash Guitar dealers in the US and Overseas. Please see Nashguitars.com for information and a dealer near you.

**Plek**

The brand name PLEK stands for a technology which allows the best fret dress and setup work, based on a computer controlled scan.

The Plek is a computerized tool that scans an instrument string to pitch, generating graphic views of the fret plane, fret heights, fret shape and placement, fingerboard relief radius, humps and bumps — basically everything that luthiers and repair pros have wanted to see well but couldn’t, until now. Besides having measurement and dressing capabilities many times more accurate than the human eye allows, the Plek has two particularly great advantages over manual fretwork.

First, it scans and dresses a guitar while it is tuned to pitch. This is a major breakthrough, since necks are subjected to approximately 100 pounds of string tension. This string tension invariably affects the shape of the fret plane, creating curves and humps that change when the strings are removed for a fret dress. The Plek identifies precisely what needs to be done for perfect results when the instrument is re-strung, whereas even the most skilled luthier or repair professional must guess about how to compensate for the effect of string tension when dressing the neck with the tension released.

Secondly, the Plek applies very sophisticated formulas for optimum neck curve or relief, adjusting the calculations for the actual string height and individual string gauge from the treble side of the fingerboard to the bass. Achieving these same results by hand would be lucky and extremely rare at best!

The Plek is in use by some of the top repair and restoration experts worldwide. We invite you to contact the Plek repair shop nearest you, or learn more about Plek technology at

www.plek.com

**RS Guitarworks**

RS Guitarworks is the one-stop source for expert finishing, refinishing and aging, complete guitar assembly and repair, custom electronic upgrade kits, pickups, hard-to-find hardware, and more!

Located in Winchester, Kentucky, RS Guitarworks began as a small repair and refinishing shop in 1994. As the word spread among guitarists, our business rapidly grew and today we receive expensive guitars from around the world for aging and refinishing. We offer many hard-to-find vintage replica parts and other specialty items related to vintage Fender and Gibson guitars, and we also custom build complete guitars, including our “Old Friend” Series, “Step-Side” and “Artist Replica” models.

RS Guitarworks Premium Wiring Kits offer a dramatic and immediate improvement over the factory electronics found in even the most expensive guitars. During a year of research and development we tested over 20 different tone capacitors and nearly every type of potentiometer made before developing our upgrade kits, which feature measured CTS pots within 10% of their specified value, and RS Guitar parts in 022uf and 047uf values made expressly for us by Hofland. Our customers tell us that our wiring upgrade kits impart a fuller, clearer tone than standard factory components, with a smoother, more even and responsive taper from each pot. Additionally, each potentiometer is tested on a digital meter, checked for the proper sweep pattern and sorted and labeled as a neck/volume, neck/tone, bridge/volume or bridge/tone control.

Wiring Upgrade Kits are available in 5 different styles for various Les Paul type guitars, as well as Telecaster, Stratocaster, and PRS guitars, and Explorer and Flying V types. Nearly any other configuration can also be built with a call to our shop. RS Guitarworks is also an authorized Fender, Jackson, Charvel, Guild and Gretsch Service Center.

Please call or visit our web site for complete information on finishing, refinishing and aging of new and used guitars, custom wiring kits, vintage repro parts and repairs.

**RS Guitarworks**

859-737-5300, www.rsguitarworks.com

**Philitone, Baltimore/MD**

(410) 783-0260, philitone@emlx.com

**Peekamoose Guitars, New York, NY**

(212) 869-2396, www.peekamoose.com

**Suhr Guitars, Lake Elsinore/CA**

(951) 471-2334, johnsuhr@suhrguitars.com

**Charlie Chandler’s Guitar Experience**

London, UK: +44 20 8973-1441
sales@guitarexperience.co.uk

**GuitarLabs Scandinavia, Stockholm, Sweden**

Phone: +46 8 644-9480, info@guitarlabs.se
Ruokangas Guitars Located in Hyvinkää, Finland, Juha Ruokangas is a custom designer and builder of unique, handmade electric guitars. Many companies today use the terms “hand-made” and “custom-built” to describe expensive guitars that are built in large numbers in a factory—Ruokangas’ vision has always been to design and build instruments completely by hand in a low-production environment using the finest materials available in the world, and uncompromising craftsmanship.

Ruokangas guitars are available with a variety of unique custom options, including four standard neck profiles, three fret sizes and a wide range of finishes, binding, genuine pearl inlay and hardware combinations. All instruments are built using Thermo-Treated wood to impart a vintage look and sound even when new, and specific models feature genuine Arctic Birch figured tops combined with Spanish cedar—an exceptional wood with properties similar to Honduran mahogany. Models include:

The Mojo
Inspired by many requests received by our customers, the Mojo delivers all the twang you will ever need! Standard features include an Alder body, Rock Maple neck, Thermo-treated wood, high gloss finished body, satin finished neck, 25.5” scale length and 12” fretboard radius. The latest additions to the series - Grande and Supreme - have proven to be the most popular models with the unique semi-hollow Spanish Cedar body and Arctic Birch top.

The V.S.O.P.
All of us at Ruokangas are big fans of vintage guitars, and the V.S.O.P. offers fans of vintage Strats a bolt-on instrument that plays, feels and sounds like a classic. The V.S.O.P. can be designed with traditional single coils, humbuckers, or both utilizing split coils, and all models feature a Wilkinson tremolo tailpiece. The VSO Supreme takes the Strat concept to the extreme with the Spanish Cedar body and Arctic Birch top, fretboard and pickguard.

The Duke
The Duke Series covers all the bases—from the stripped-down solidbody Sonic, to the original carved top design that started the Duke Series as the Standard, the striking appearance of the Deluxe with highly figured maple or Arctic Birch top, to the vibrant, woody, semi-acoustic style of the semi-acoustic Artisan.

The best way to experience and appreciate the entire range of Ruokangas models and options is to visit our web site and take the tour! You can custom design any guitar we build online with all available options, and of course, we will be happy to answer your questions and offer our advice via e-mail.

Ruokangas Handmade Guitars
www.ruokangas.com
US contact: Eero Kilpi, New York,
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TonePros tailpieces feature a patented locking design. For years, guitars with stop tailpieces and wrap-around bridges have been cursed by “lean” or tilt on their stud mounts. Since string tension was all that held tailpieces on, the only contact area was just a bit of the edge of the bottom flange, just a bit of the lip of the stud top, and often just as little contact with the intonation screws. TonePros® Locking Studs provide 100% of the contact area of the bottom flange, 100% of the contact area of the stud top, no lean, and dramatically improved sus-

TonePros Systems II Components are found on the world’s best guitars, played by the world’s best artists.

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Visual Sound

Founded in 1995 by guitarist Bob Weil, Visual Sound is pleased to announce that its product line of high-quality effects pedals has increased, with the release of the V2 Series of effects pedals.

In addition to new, improved versions of the best-selling dual effects pedals – Jekyll & Hyde, H2O, and Route 66 – the V2 Series also boasts of a brand-new dual effect pedal, Double Trouble, which accurately reproduces the sound of the TS-808 Tubescreamer, but with a Bass Boost switch and far more output volume than the original.

However, the new V2 Series doesn’t stop there. Bob, along with chief engineer R.G. Keen, have designed single-effect pedals from the favorite effects that have made Visual Sound a growing hit in the guitar-playing world: Son of Hyde is the same distortion channel found in the acclaimed Jekyll & Hyde pedal, COMP 66 takes the compressor channel from the Route 66 and lets it ride solo; Liquid Chorus is a wonderfully-voiced effect for electric, acoustic, or bass guitar, taken from the H2O pedal, but with the second output being a true stereo output – ideal for spacious sounds when used with two amps or a PA system; Route 808 is designed to take the sound from the TS-808, but with a bass boost switch and greater volume output – along with Visual Sound’s proprietary tone-sweetening ingredients. Last – and far from least, the Angry Fuzz is an original effect that will blow away any other fuzz pedal on the market.

Why should you consider buying WGS speakers? At a time when speaker manufacturers have moved production to Asia, compromising quality and reliability, WGS continues to increase, as will wave continues to increase, our speakers are proudly assembled in the USA by a team with decades of speaker design and building experience, at a reasonable price. Our employees take pride in building the very best products with fast shipping and exceptional customer service.

For information on the entire range of WGS guitar and bass speakers, please visit our web site today.

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Visit us at www.wdsmusic.com and enter coupon code TQW023 at checkout. Please note: Coupon good for wdsmusic.com web orders only, offer not valid on wdbiz.com orders.

For the past thirty years WDG Music Products has been providing quality service and parts to satisfied working musicians, discriminating builders and OEMs. WDG pioneered the field of aftermarket pickguards and continues to lead the way in the niche we created in 1978. We have manufactured thousands of pickguards and if you need a replacement or something you envision yourself, we can make it happen. For many years WDG Music has also carried a full line of replacement parts for just about any stringed instrument.

As WDG® Music is proud to continue the legacy of Kluson® tuning machines, one of the most respected OEM and replacement tuners for decades. Replace or restore your vintage instrument with genuine Kluson® tuning machines from WDG® Music. We stock Kent Armstrong® pickups, L.R. Baggs® acoustic gear, Q-Parts® custom knobs and accessories, Bigsby® tailpieces, Graph Tech® products, Wilkinson® bridges, Grover® tuners and accessories, Big Bends® maintenance supplies, Guitar Facelifts, and much more.

History is repeating itself with genuine Kluson® tuners, continuing with WDG®’s customer service, and... Stromberg® Jazz Guitars. No one can attempt or claim to reproduce the prestige of the original archtop Stromberg® guitars. But with history in mind WDG® is also proud to distribute Stromberg® Jazz Guitars. With six models to satisfy everyone from the serious working jazz musician to the rockabilly king Stromberg® offers an affordable, quality instrument for almost any taste or style. Stromberg® Jazz Guitars is a small, limited production archtop guitar company whose main goals are quality, playability and affordability. Play one and see.

WD® Music Products. Thirty years of knowledge, service, quality parts and accessories waiting to serve you. Everything from pickguards, tuning machines, pickups, electronics, necks, bodies, bridges, prewired assemblies and hard to track hardware—if your guitar or bass needs it, chances are WDG® Music has it. Old fashioned customer service, genuine Kluson® tuners, classic Stromberg® Jazz Guitars, and so much more. Call 877-WDMUSIC or visit www.WDMUSIC.com.
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