

Signature Series Output Descriptions

In the lightly edited words of those who have played them

The Standard has strong tight bass, clear, slightly slow and breathy mids with moderate sparkle in the highs. Aimed at modern blues and jazz it has excellent clarity of detail and tone color. When used with a slide guitar it has that perfect character, a sweet swampy sound.

The Blues has tight punchy bass with scooped, quick, detailed mids and glistening highs. When you push it, the harder you work it the slower it responds, the more you can lean into it and the more it causes you to grin. Aimed at R & B, Hard Rock and traditional Blues it will reveal tone color superbly and is an outstanding choice for hollow body acoustics with piezo pick-ups due to it's natural, woody, character when played clean.

The Hi Def has a flat power bandwidth and is amazingly detailed. Bass is very tight with, fast, muscular definition that allows it to handle even dissonance without faltering. The mids and highs are clear, fast and very revealing without any trace of harshness. Aimed at a thoroughly modern amplifier it handles heavy distortion and heavy transients without strain. Clean channel response does not favor any particular preamp circuit but will inspire every player to experiment.

The Retro M has a unique Marshall flavor to it's open chord, bell like mids. With strong bass that never bloats and highs that never screech or fizz you can play with confidence. Aimed at Marshall amps from the plexi to modern day, it is very familiar, it grinds, it growls, it makes a cabinet sound ready to explode and then you discover just how much more you can get out of it.

The Retro F, when played through Celestions, has that even, flat, Fender character with an aggressive bass, tough clear mids and shimmering extended highs. It's sound is both familiar and entirely new. When played clean, with a Strat/DiMarzio combo, through alnico "vintage tone" speakers, there is not a sweeter, deeper, more honey rich sound on earth. It will work wonders with any Black Face tube amp and help reduce many "controversial characteristics" found in some of the later models.

The amplifier that all of the above comments were based on incorporates a Fender 5F6 Bassman circuit. The Fender Bassman style circuit was chosen because it is the basis for most modern guitar amplifiers. The circuit we used comes from page 369 of Aspen Pittman's superb reference "The Tube Amp Book" edition 4.1. A complete chassis kit, for the 5F6 reproduction, was purchased from VST Weber. The component layout was then copied from page 370 of Aspen's book and applied to the eyeleted circuit card provided in the Weber kit. Dale / Vishay RN 60D metal film resistors were used everywhere except the bias circuit. Sprague 415 "Orange Drop" capacitors were used as DC blocking / coupling capacitors. We chose to use the Dale resistor and Sprague capacitor combination because we knew they would provide the most neutral sound possible with affordable components. All of this allowed the players, whose responses created the above descriptions, to judge and comment on the output transformer characteristics, in as objective a manner as the playing of music allows.