



**MARTIN**

TESTED

000-15M ACOUSTIC



Vintage  
TESTED

FILLMORE  
V6JMH ELECTRIC



Carvin  
TESTED

STEVE VAI  
LEGACY II AMP

June 2010  
Vol 21 No 8 **£4.15**

# Guitar

**& BASS MAGAZINE**

## Fender

### The CBS years

A classic era? Full story inside

**10** WAYS  
TO MAKE YOUR  
GUITAR BETTER

**Plus:**

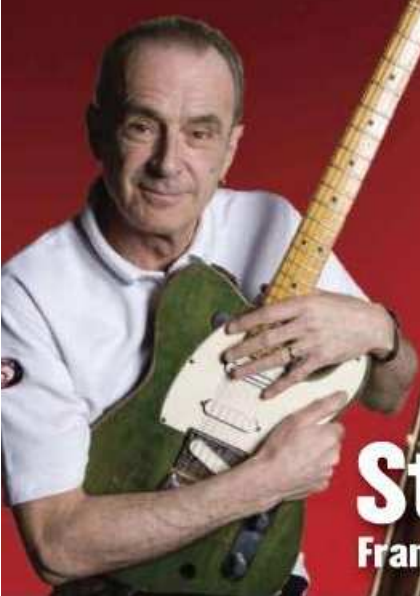
John McLaughlin  
interview

Freshman  
acoustics review

Glam rock guitar  
collection

Orange Terror Bass

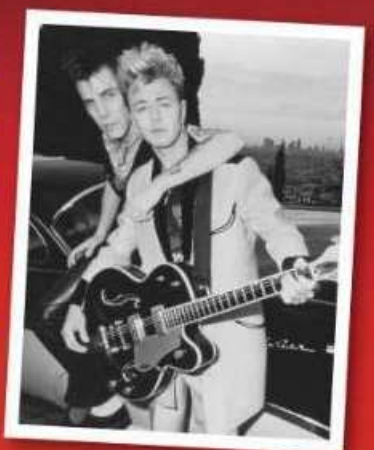
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**Status No!**  
Francis Rossi on going solo

**Strut  
Your  
Stuff!**

Learn Brian Setzer's  
twangsome techniques



LARRY GRAHAM  
**Bass Workshop**

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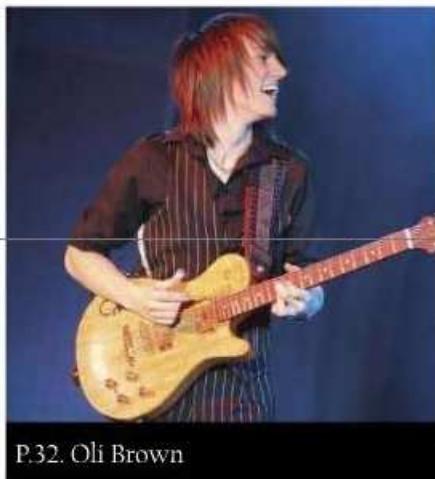
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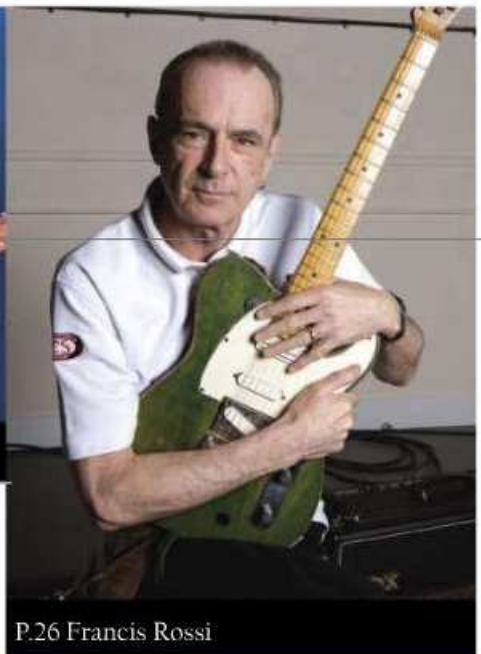
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Dylan, AC/DC and Gilmour

Price: 140-160 Euros

Benrod Electro of north-eastern France makes a range of valve amps based on well-known British and American designs, plus a handful of cookin' pedals. Review by Huw Price

# Benrod

## Classic Screamer & Cream Can



### FACTFILE

#### CLASSIC SCREAMER

**Specs:** Overdrive pedal. Made in France

**Controls:** Overdrive, Tone and Level with true bypass footswitch

**Price:** 140 Euros

#### CREAM CAN

**Specs:** Overdrive pedal. Made in France

**Controls:** Gain, Volume, Cream and Cut with true bypass footswitch

**Price:** 160 Euros

**Contact:** 0033 3 24 54 95 65  
[www.benrod-electro.fr](http://www.benrod-electro.fr)

Although most of Benrod Electro's products are unashamed recreations of classic pedals and amps, the Cream Can is an original design, whereas the Classic Screamer is based on the Ibanez Tube Screamer.

### CLASSIC SCREAMER

Why is the Tube Screamer the most copied of all the classic overdrive pedals? After all, everybody seems to think there's not enough bass, too much midrange hump, not enough gain... and they're not true bypass. Ben Rod Electro's version addresses some of these issues. It runs on the fabled JRC4558D chip and it's got 'true' rather than a buffered bypass. We can't check the components because only the solder side of the printed circuit board is visible and it's held in place by translucent gloop, but we love the matt green finish and what seems to be a laser-etched logo and legending.

### SOUNDS

Full admission: we didn't have a stock Tube Screamer to compare with the Classic Screamer (our TS-9 was modded years ago). However, the main impression is that the Classic Screamer is indeed closer to the original TS-808 than a TS-9. The trademark bass roll-off is present and correct, along with the pronounced midrange that does such an effective job at fattening up a single coil. It's sweet, smooth and most definitely retro.

The Benrod Cream Can is an original design, whereas the Classic Screamer is based on the Ibanez Tube Screamer

### CREAM CAN

The circuit uses a pair of MOSFETs for a dynamically responsive sound, along with germanium and silicon diodes for what Benrod calls a 'really old school sound,' while a dedicated op amp generates the overdrive gain. Once again the amp quality jack sockets are chassis-mounted, and Mogami cable is used for the wiring.

### SOUNDS

The Cream Can is a more sophisticated and refined overdrive than the Classic Screamer, with a broader range of sounds. It can go from a fairly transparent clean boost to a heavily overdriven crunch while staying relatively noise-free. With Cut fully off things sound aggressive and edgy, in a

good way, then you can take out the sting if you need to. Cream seems to sweeten the highs while thickening the low end, so there's a degree of interaction with the Cut control. It's particularly effective with single coils, where a bit more body might really help solos to slice through.

### VERDICT

The Classic Screamer is a well-made 'warts and all' recreation of the good old Tube Screamer, albeit with true bypass. Without doubt it's a classic tone, but one that today's players might find just a bit too limited and generic. The Cream Can is the more intriguing of the two; it's more versatile, but it shares the Classic Screamer's handmade charms.

CLASSIC SCREAMER	
Build Quality .....	17/20
Playability .....	14/20
Sound .....	16/20
Value for money .....	15/20
Vibe.....	18/20
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>80%</b>
Good for... authentic Ibanez Tube Screamer tones with true bypass	
Look elsewhere... Greater bass extension, transparency, very high gain use	

CREAM CAN	
Build Quality .....	17/20
Playability .....	16/20
Sound .....	17/20
Value for money .....	15/20
Vibe.....	17/20
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>82%</b>
Good for... Sweet, smooth overdrive and fairly transparent clean boost	
Look elsewhere... For '60s fuzz or extreme mid-scooped metal	

### THE COMPETITION

#### FULLTONE OCD

This is another 'transparent' overdrive from one of America's most famous pedal builders

**RRP:** £189

#### CROWTHER Hot Cake

Emlyn Crowther builds these tone monsters by hand in New Zealand. Great natural-sounding overdrive with tons of fab guitar tone

**RRP:** £135

#### T-REX Moller

A great overdrive with an independent adjustable clean boost section and a clean/overdrive mixer control based on a modded TS circuit

**RRP:** £169