It's supposed to sound like...

by **zentropa** » 05 Oct 2015, 20:06

I have recently been picking up a lot of distortion pedals that I had previously sold off so a lot of these are fresh in my mind.
I've always felt that after some of the very early releases, the majority of pedals are "meant to sound like" something specific and/or fill a role in things. People may disagree with these, but this is at least how I tend to picture "what they were trying to do." Let me know if you disagree with any of this or think something else is closer.

BD-2 - Fender Hot Rod/Blues Deluxe/Deville Drive channel
FZ-3 - 70's Fuzz
HM-2 - MXR Distortion+ into a JCM800
HM-3 - Grunge
MD-2 - Modern (90's+) American High Gain 6L6 Tube Amp (very close to a Crate Blue Voodoo)
ML-2 - Tubescreamer into an 80's Mesa
MZ-2 - ADA MP-1
OD-1 - Generic Overdriven Tube sound. Tends to take on the amp's characteristics.
OD-2 - Marshall Plexi
OD-3 - Generic Overdriven Tube sound with boost/improvements over previous designs.
PW-2 - 90's style OD-Boosted Big Muff
SD-1 - Generic Overdriven Tube sound. Tends to take on the amp's characteristics.
SD-2 - Marshall JCM900 EL34 High Gain Dual Reverb, both channels.
XT-2 - Industrial

zentropa

Re: It's supposed to sound like...

by **Pepe** » 05 Oct 2015, 21:13

> *zentropa wrote:*
> *HM-3 – Grunge*

Maybe I don't know the genre Grunge enough, but I tend to disagree on that one. The HM-3 has a great hard rock sound that cuts through the mix, at least in a live situation that I totally enjoyed a year ago or two. That was when I just decided whether to sell it or not. After that jam session I knew it's a keeper.

It has a lot of clarity, even with low-tuned strings. I bet it's a fantastic distortion for 7-string guitars. It was the first time that I liked having my guitar's low e string dropped down to a d and shredding power chords. It sounds massive and just absolutely right, at least through my Marshall 50W tube amp. I don't know what it is supposed to sound like. I'd say: mid-'90s Jeff Beck solo sound, whatever he used back then.

Pepe

Re: It's supposed to sound like...

by **zentropa** » 05 Oct 2015, 21:44

The HM-3s have a lot of sludge to them, especially on the low end. Think Soundgarden, Alice in Chains, the Melvins, or Mudhoney circa 1990ish.

A lot of those tones were developed by pushing several pedals together or a distortion type (not an OD) into an overdriven tube amp. I believe Boss was going for a single pedal that would be able to replicate sounds that traditionally required several factors in play to make that happen. While most of the signature tones were seemingly built through the Tubescreamer/OD1/SD1 type setup pushing an amp, a lot of the late 80's/early 90's grunge tones were built upon running DS-1's, big muffs, etc. into high gain tube amps and getting really thick, sludgy distortion sounds that really didn't exist in standalone pedals at that time.

The HM-3 is a lot more hifi than most of the Boss lineup with a largely expanded tonal range compared to the HM-2.
It also falls in chronologically with the trends in guitar tones.

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Re: It's supposed to sound like...

by **zentropa** » 05 Oct 2015, 21:48

Actually, I think this just about nails how I envision the HM-3:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jk_hjsPE6T0

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Re: It's supposed to sound like...

by **Dirk** » 06 Oct 2015, 15:41

Wasn't the OD-1 Boss's take on the Tubescreamer, or the other way round? I forgot...

Then there's the obvious ones:
BC-2 - Vox AC-30, the Brian May sound.
ST-2 - big Marshall full stack type of sound.
FDR-1 - Fender deluxe reverb
FBM-1 - Fender bassman

The ODB-3 was something of an oddity too, with a clean blend, super high gain and scooped mids.
Nothing like a Big muff, DS-1 or RAT which have always been popular choices for bass, whether modded or not.

What was the MT-2 based off? Metallica's ...And justice for all, super scooped mids crushing rhythm tone perhaps?

Dirk

Re: It's supposed to sound like...

by **zentropa** » 06 Oct 2015, 16:47

I'm pretty sure the TS came before the OD-1. I believe the OD-1 attempted to do it better by adding asymmetrical clipping. I believe both were designed as boosters to supplement the amps of the era.

It's interesting if you break down pedals into the following:
-Original creations

-Replications (something designed to do a sound or approximate tone)
-Evolutions

Something like a DS-1 would fall under original creation. The DF-2, DS-2, etc. were attempts at evolving/improving that. Some pedals like the DN-2 probably fall between original creation and evolution.

If the ODB-3 has the scooped mids (I've never owned one) it was probably designed to compliment a Stingray rather than fight its natural mid-scoop.

I think the MT-2 (and HM-3) were a reaction to a rapidly expanding player base and a lot of people playing solid state amps. The majority of previously existing distortions were heavily dependent upon complimenting or supplementing tube amps and there was a massive boom in guitar players ~'92-95 that were buying what they could afford or was common at the time (solid state). A lot of the competing pedals from other brands (DOD, Ibanez 10 series) had numerous pedals that would blend well with solid state amps better than the Boss lineup at that time. The changes to the DS-1 in that era also seemed to make that pedal more solid state friendly. The MT-2 has a pretty diverse range of sounds if you utilize the EQ well on it, so I think they may have had something like the gain of the metallica sound in mind, but I believe it was their attempt to pull off a heavy gain/compression tone that would also retain most of its characteristics with a solid state amp and variety of pickup combinations, e.g. someone playing a MIM squier strat through a fender deluxe 112+ amp (90 watt 1x12 SS combo) wanting to play metallica. If there had been a single "Tone" knob instead of the 3-band EQ and a more dialed in sound it probably would be more of a replication than original creation. I could be completely wrong here though

zentropa

Re: It's supposed to sound like...

by **sclitheroe** » 07 Oct 2015, 03:06

I think the OD-1 came first, and the TS was introduced with symmetrical clipping because Boss had patented asymmetrical clipping.

sclitheroe

Re: It's supposed to sound like...

by **zentropa** » 10 Oct 2015, 17:06

You are correct. The OD-1 beat it to the market by a few months.

zentropa