

this is not something you should take lightly, so let's take a minute to pause for The Cause – your ultimate fulfillment as a hopeful and willing tone hound. Do you actually believe that most of the stuff being hyped as the yellow brick road in your personal quest for tone will truly leave you floored and sated? Do you? The trend in 'gear-centric' media today has largely descended into little more than a crass grab for cash – yours, and the builder's, all in the name of 'tone.'

Advertising, MP3s, gear porn videos and artist endorsements will not transform an ordinary product into anything more than what it is, but these tools can effectively create an image of exceptional exclusivity and appeal, buoyed by users who understandably enjoy validating each other on product-driven fan forums. Yet in our quest to actually avoid the ordinary in the hope of finding something palpably better – extraordinary, even, we fall prey to that which gets heavily hyped the most. Dr. Z, on the other hand, has never exhibited at a NAMM show to our knowledge, he doesn't run full-page ads, and he has never given an amp away in exchange for an endorsement. Never had to. Still doesn't. Yet players play the living shit out of his amps because they a) sound great, and b) remain one of the best values in pro-level guitar amplification. Experienced within the context of the extraordinary choices that are available to you, ordinary products are simply grist for the grind – something to be hyped and sold, and the hype machine humping this stuff has never been more robust. The problem with hype, player, is that it universally pre-supposes that we, meaning you, me – all of us who play guitar – find the same sounds universally inspiring and appealing – as if we were all chasing the same sounds in our head. Are we?

“You mark me the deepest.” – Lula



What is tone? What is love? Why did you wind up with the one you're with rather than someone else? In our world, tone represents a

unique sound that connects with you as a musician in a much stronger, deeper and lasting way than other sounds. Can this mysterious and appealing quality be quantified on an oscilloscope? Nope – no more than an MRI would reveal why you find your mate so appealing. As reviewers, we question the *intention* of an amp in an effort to assess its broad appeal. What are the odds that *this* one will exceed your needs and expectations, in no small way completing *you* as a guitarist in your quest to find your own unique voice? We've nothing against marketing, we simply want you to understand that

with more potentially confusing choices confronting us today than ever before, mistaking marketing for reality can be expensive and disappointing. People love to brag about the 'killer' amp they just scored, but rarely do we hear a peep when they quietly unload it, having found something 'better.'



It seems to us that the sheer quality of No. 7's sound – the honest, unadorned simplicity of its organic,

hand-wired tube tone is remarkably appealing simply because it offers so little for anyone not to like. Its exceptionally rich, deep voice is endowed with adequate power (especially with a 2x12 cabinet), beautiful clean tones and graduated levels of distortion and musical clarity that allow rich harmonics to be fully experienced rather than obscured by zizzy grit, which also makes No. 7 the perfect 'pedal amp.' Clement's Amplifier No. 7 may be small in size, but in all other respects it casts a very large shadow over many similarly powered alternatives. If 15W- 25W is in your wheelhouse and you relish both lush clean tones and gorgeously endowed, bluesy distortion in an eminently portable package, get yours now. \$1795 shipped and worth every penny.[To](http://www.bcaudio.com)

www.bcaudio.com, 415-310-3087

the Amp Preserver Goes Postal



Thanks to John Peden's exhortations that we check out Carl Hartman's Amp Preserver last year, many of you seem to have jumped onboard with the lower line voltages that your vintage amps crave. Yes, you'll extend the life of your tubes and those irreplaceable 50-year old components, but the votes are in – your most

prized old amps will also sound much better at the proper 110 or 115 volts, too. Since our article on the Amp Preserver was published in the July/ August '09 issue of TQR, Carl Hartman has expanded his original concept with the intro-

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duction of the Amp Maniac, which allows the user to safely adjust the line voltage similar to a Variac (except that you can't exceed 120 volts and blow up your amp). Hartman has also cleverly developed a 7C5 tube adapter, which allows you to sub the sonically similar (and way cheaper) NOS 7C5 for 6V6s. Here's the scoop...

TQR: As far as the 7C5 to 6V6 Tube Adapter is concerned, its use and design is pretty straightforward and described well on your web site. What is your perception of the availability and relative cost of 7C5 tubes, and what were they used for primarily during the era in which they were made?



7C5s are generally always available on eBay in single quantities from quite a few sellers. Sometimes you can also find sellers with ten or more, all from the same manufacturer. Prices range anywhere from \$3 to \$10, which is considerably cheaper

than a NOS 6V6GT. 7C5's were designed for use in rugged applications, since they 'lock' in place. Their primary use was in early automobile radios, although some manufacturers used them in table radios as well – most notably Philco. Because of their relative obscurity, there is not a lot of history to be found about them. My first exposure to them was back when I was in high school (way before recorded history) repairing radios out of my parents' basement. A neighbor brought over her radio in need of repair, and when I took the back off, much to my surprise, it had all octal tubes.

TQR: Like wise, the Amp Maniac design is easy enough to understand, but I wonder if some players are under the impression that it can only be used with one amp at a time. We've been using ours with a



heavy duty power strip/surge protector that delivers current to 6 amps in our music room, all adjustable through the Amp Maniac. Are there any potential



Preserver has a max of 4.00 amperes. The use of a power strip is fine, as long as all the devices do not exceed the maximum current rating of the Amp Maniac. If you keep the inactive amplifiers on standby, then having more than one connected will ensure that you do not blow the fuse. If you have a pair of Twin Reverbs fully cranked, that may be problematic. The solution of course is to use a separate Amp Maniac for each amp, or keep only one amp on and adjust the output voltage to suit that particular amplifier.

TQR: What is your projected life span for the Amp Maniac in terms of the components used? Aside from the VU meter, there don't seem to be any moving parts – just those that are handling current... Also, do you recommend that a surge protector be used to protect the Amp Maniac?

The Amp Maniac should give years of service when not abused. The only moving part besides the voltmeter is the wiper arm on the variable transformer. Under the conditions of powering a guitar amplifier, the Amp Maniac should not require any regular service. I do not use a surge protector ahead of the Amp Maniac, but I do use a power strip that has surge protection plugged into the Amp Maniac to protect my amplifiers plugged into the power strip. I suppose the ultimate precaution would be to use a surge protector ahead of the Amp Maniac.

The bottom line here, gang, is that lower voltages than the standard 120-125 VAC pulsing behind your walls make for happier vintage amps and audibly better tone, and in just a few short months the Amp Preserver and Amp Maniac have already found their way into the hands of some major rock & roll outfits. As far as the 7C5 tube adapter goes, unless you are sitting on a stash of RCA 6V6GTs, this is a great way to cop that smooth vintage tone that can't be squeezed from modern tubes, and for mighty light dough. *Quest forth...To*

www.vintagesoundworkbench.com, 708-609-4050