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Subject: Update on Frankie Experiment

Posted by [cassent5150](#) on Mon, 03 Jan 2011 02:48:41 GMT

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Well the process is complete and I now have a Modified Frankenstein that "KICKS ASS". Still a 100 watt amp. It turned out better than expected. I have some photos of it at this link below let me know what you think. I'll pull out the chassis again and get a shot or 2 of the inside as well. Steve C

[http://www.flickr.com/photos/57807996@N04/sets/7215762705586\\_0546/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/57807996@N04/sets/7215762705586_0546/)

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment

Posted by [pleat](#) on Mon, 03 Jan 2011 03:25:44 GMT

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Steve, that is a great job making everything fit and it looks great. Now that you have it running. I think you did a great job on restoring it.

Pleat

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment

Posted by [cassent5150](#) on Mon, 03 Jan 2011 03:44:45 GMT

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I just got the shots of the inside posted in that same link if you want a look. It was a great fit. I dont know how the reverb tank was mounted before but this works with minimal transformer noise. I was very impressed at the sound quality of the module unit. Truly warm vintage "KUSTOM" all the way. Punchy as my 250's, but a whole lot warmer. I believe I'll hang on to this one. Steve C

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment

Posted by [pleat](#) on Mon, 03 Jan 2011 12:39:45 GMT

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Steve, the reverb tanks were actually mounted on the top inside of the T&R case. That was the reason for the high forehead on the Frankies. I have a photo of a old Frankie without the high forehead non reverb model. I've always favored the Frankie models for tone, the bass and treble controls have a robust effect when changing settings. A lot more than the A and B series.

pleat

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment

Posted by [chicagobill](#) on Mon, 03 Jan 2011 18:09:50 GMT

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Wow! That's some job there.

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment  
Posted by [cassent5150](#) on Tue, 04 Jan 2011 01:31:51 GMT  
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I definitely agree!!! The overall sound is quite warm to begin with and with the damping I put in the preamp signal I can get as loud as I can stand without loosing it. I use a BOSS SD-1 for my distortion so I'm not likly to push it too hard. I still got some experimenting to do with different speaker configurations. So far 3X15's work great for my Jackson bass, she'll rattle the windows out of the house. I've got a few cabs I'll be trying it out on for guitar. Thanks Steve C

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment  
Posted by [cassent5150](#) on Tue, 04 Jan 2011 01:45:06 GMT  
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Thanks chicagobill, I think I got what I was going for when I started this restoration. Keeping it Vintage Kustom in cosmetics and sound. Now its back to that Challenger Project. I got the 540L chip in there recaped what I could. Still seems to have way too much gain in the input section. The reverb tank is 200 ohm on both in and out. Man you cant barly get to one and the reverb it already overdriven. I put in a socket for RC4558 chip and put a new one in and that didn't help. Is there a way to dampen that reverb output signal so it doesn't hit the tank so hard? I'll start a thread on this if I cant resolve it. Other than that, I need to make a backplate for the cabinet and its done also.  
Thanks Again  
Steve C

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment  
Posted by [chicagobill](#) on Tue, 04 Jan 2011 17:21:07 GMT  
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Is the problem that the tank is being driven too hard or is there too much signal going into IC2?

If the tank is being driven too hard, the distortion is very mechanical sounding. If the signal is just too hot the distortion is more overdriven sounding. Hard to explain, but I think you get what I'm saying.

You can reduce the gain of the driver stage by changing the resistors around IC1B. Try increasing R19 to something around 47-100 ohms.

You can reduce the return signal by increasing the value of R48. Try 4K7 ohms.

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment

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Posted by [cassent5150](#) on Wed, 05 Jan 2011 09:14:18 GMT

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Thanks for the ideas on the challenger reverb issue. I found the problem. The reverb tank needed to be ungrounded at the input. That solved that issue. Thanks Steve C

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment

Posted by [chicagobill](#) on Wed, 05 Jan 2011 16:37:59 GMT

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That would do it. I didn't know that it wasn't an original tank. The grounded input would short out the 27 ohm resistor, causing the opamp to distort.

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment

Posted by [cassent5150](#) on Wed, 05 Jan 2011 17:26:58 GMT

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I kind of thought that here a while back when I said I had the reverb tank for it. A short black one with three springs and did notice back then the ground lifted on the input jack. I mentioned it in message #14938. I did change out those resistors and replace the 35677 transistors before I remembered the ungrounded input. I put the old parts back in and lifed the ground at the input and all was well. Sometimes its the simple things that can cause so much trouble. Thats another project/restoration complete. I'll get some pics and post a link. I wish I had taken before photos, cause it was pretty beat up and ragged looking. Steve C

The link is <http://www.flickr.com/photos/57807996@N04/sets/72157625755107252/>

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment

Posted by [stevo66030](#) on Thu, 13 Jan 2011 11:13:51 GMT

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New guy here.

Can anyone tell me where the name "Frankie" comes from?

Thanks.

Steve

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Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment

Posted by [cassent5150](#) on Thu, 13 Jan 2011 14:34:23 GMT

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I believe it is just the nickname for some of the first Tuck and Roll design where looking at the front the top portion was wider than the sides and bottom to accommodate the reverb pan mounted to the inside top of cabinet. Its kind of like a thick forehead like Frankenstein. Hence the name Frankenstein Amp. Frank or Frankie as I mostly use, is just short for Frankenstein. These were the earlier Models. Hope that Helps Steve C

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**Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment**  
Posted by [stevo66030](#) on Fri, 14 Jan 2011 03:15:49 GMT  
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Thanks for the response...

I have known Bud Ross my whole life (might even be distantly related) but haven't chatted with him for a long time.

I wasn't sure whether "Frankie" was a term he used in reference to his close buddy Frankie Chapman or not.

Thanks.

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**Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment**  
Posted by [cassent5150](#) on Fri, 14 Jan 2011 13:03:12 GMT  
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Well, keep in mind that I'm not an authority on the history of Kustom and that was my best interpretation of the term and how it has been used as far as I can tell. So you may be on to something there. Steve C

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**Subject: Re: Update on Frankie Experiment**  
Posted by [chicagobill](#) on Fri, 14 Jan 2011 17:57:50 GMT  
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Another Steve! Welcome.

I only heard the term Frankenstein here on the board, as it was a term that the big collectors used for the X95 series amps that have the high front brow or forehead like the Frankenstein monster had.

I don't know if Bud Ross has ever used the term himself or if he even knows about it, but I've only had the pleasure of meeting him once.

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