

GREUTER AUDIO

FULLER DRIVE

REVIEW BY **DAVID A. EVANS**

STREET PRICE **\$290.00**



Upon opening its box, I felt that I would like Greuter Audio's new Fuller Drive. Perhaps it was the simple black-on-white design or the oversized, brushed aluminum control knobs. Or perhaps the pedal's country of origin—Switzerland—suggested tone as big and majestic as the Alps. In the end, it was the Fuller Drive's tone—its harmonic complexity, its texture, and—dare I say—its fullness that won me over.

The Fuller Drive presents the user with six controls, including the offset foot switch. Generously large Volume and Drive knobs

are complemented by a comparatively petite Tone knob. On the starboard side are two small toggle switches; one wonders if the Fuller Tone's controls were intentionally graded from large to small for aesthetic or esoteric reasons. Perhaps, in a fit of inspiration, Greuter aimed to please to gods of tone, for whom irrational numbers and, therefore, dissonance are tantamount to blasphemy.

Smoothness of effect is a chief quality of the Fuller Drive. Low Drive levels (below noon) required a boost of Volume, but the

subsequent coloration rewarded my ears with subtle break-up and delicate responsiveness to my playing dynamics. At high Drive settings, with the appropriate combination of toggle and Tone settings, the Fuller Drive surprised me with its cello-like—even fuzz-like—smoothness.

The Fuller Drive produces a surprising range of overdrive tones depending upon the Tone knob's setting. I particularly enjoyed the lower settings, for which much of the high-end had been rolled off. This thicker, warmer tone

worked well with my bright bridge pickups, which still offered a pleasant amount of bite. On the neck pickups, the Fuller Drive replicated the classic '60s-era British valve tone. Of course, I couldn't resist playing a few Hendrix licks and some Led Zeppelin as well.

Higher Tone settings added plenty of airiness and clarity, plus a good deal of chime. Even strumming a few open chords in a progression felt fantastic, as if the chords roared out of the pedal and through my amp. Greuter is not lying when it says that the Fuller Drive is the pedal to use for that "cranked" sound at low volumes.

Complementing the standard Drive and Tone controls are a boost and cut toggle switches which are mounted on the pedal's starboard side. The toggles offer a Top Boost for a sound reminiscent of Vox's AC30s, as well as a Bass Cut that helps tidy up any low end messiness from larger cabinets.

The frontmost Top Boost switch seemed to boost the overall signal level by six to ten decibels. I suspect that this toggle boosted the signal prior to passing through the distortion circuit because of the sheer difference between the two distortion levels. Boosted, the distortion sounded fuller in the high end in comparison to the non-boost setting whose volume had been increased for a similar result.

The Bass Cut was subtler than the Top Boost. I felt that my amplifier was too small to really require any tightening up in the lower frequencies, so I generally preferred to keep the Bass Cut in the off position. However, I appreciated the sonic options that the Fuller Drive's toggles offered, because an even wider range of tones was available depending on the toggle settings.

I am a simple man. I do not understand many of the world's gadgets and do-dads. Frankly, electricity baffles me. However, when

I am presented with a pedal whose tone feels like a blessing from the gods, I do not hesitate to speak up. In the Fuller Drive, Greuter Audio has delivered the goods.

WHAT WE LIKE

A wide variety of overdrive tones which are variations on the classic British valve amps.

CONCERNS

None.