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PLEXI CLASS The BC Audio JTX45 Octal Plex

In an amp world full of boutique clones, Bruce Clement has developed a unique twist on the venerable '60s British plexi circuits using octal preamp tubes, true point-to-point wiring, and a range of customizations. The result is an amp with a voice of its own – and possibly one of the best plexi-style amps ever.

The JTX45, an installment in BC Audio's Octal-Plex series, delivers warm, clean tones with lots of low-mid range and some of the creamiest overdriven crunch we've heard. The range of tone is simply astounding, from the barest hint of warm signal breakup all the way to tweed Bassman-like meltdown – and everything in between.

The JTX45's tone palette is controlled through a straightforward series of front-panel controls including a normal-bright

toggle with independent Bright and Normal Volume controls, as well as Bass, Mid, and Treble knobs. A Presence knob operates on the amp's power section to adjust the overall brilliance.

The JTX45 is also equipped with a post phase-inverter Master Volume knob that lets the player obtain distorted tones at any volume by allowing the Normal and Bright Volume controls to overdrive the preamp. Of course, cranking the Master Volume drives the power section to breakup, as well.

We kept plugging different guitars into the JTX45 to find the limits of the amp's character. Everything sounded terrific.

The JTX45 can accommodate multi-impedance speaker cabs through two jacks in the back. We used a cab with a well-broken-in pair of 12" Weber alnico

speakers that worked beautifully with this moderately powered amp. There's also a fully tube-buffered effects loop send and return in the back (the effects loop is an optional feature), with independent controls for the send and return signals and a true-bypass switch. We plugged a Holy Grail reverb pedal into the effects loop and found it to be dead quiet. In fact, for an amp that can deliver eviscerating sound, the JTX45 can also be stunningly silent.

One of the features we liked most about the JTX45 is the optional two-button foot-switch, labeled simply "Vol" and "Gain." These switches do exactly what a guitarist wants: a little boost in volume for the solo and a little more grit for the riffs – and they do it without adding transistorized junk to the signal chain. Functionally, the footswitches reminded us of Neil Young's whizzer foot-controlled tone shaping using the amp's own circuitry.

But other than reverb, delay, or tremolo, there really isn't any good reason to mess with the native tones of the BC Audio JTX45. – Ray Wuolo VG



Price: \$2,075 (starting list)
Info: bcaudio.com

