FUZZrite

"Fuzzrite is amazing many professionals with its total performance. Foot operated. It offers the guitarist sound effects ranging from fuzzy to the wildest distortion. It is sturdily built and designed with the best materials available to give it a variety of expressive sounds."

- Mosrite Musical Instruments Catalogue c. 1966

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Catalinbread Fuzzrite™!

You are holding in your hand an exact sonic recreation of the original silicon transistor Mosrite Fuzzrite™ - the fuzz that launched thousands of Psychedelic and Garage bands in the mid and late 1960s. It's distinctive voice can be heard on so many classic recordings from that era - from Iron Butterfly's 'In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida' and The Stooges' 'I Wanna Be Your Dog' to even Country classics like Buck Owens' 'Who's Gonna Mow Your Grass'.
Nothing else sounds quite like a Fuzzrite…

In collaborating with the Moseley estate, we gained access to original new old stock Fuzzrite™ pedals to use as the sonic benchmark for our recreation. By playing and examining the components of these amazing rock and roll artifacts, some of which are seeing the light of day for the first time since the 60s, we were able to develop the Catalinbread Fuzzrite™ with absolute confidence that we got the sound and response right. Not only do we have original NOS Fuzzrite™ builds to test against, we also have the ears of our collaboration partner, Mark Moseley, who built them when he was a kid in Bakersfield working for his Dad, Andy and Uncle Semie at Mosrite. Through Mark, we also reached out to Ed Sanner, the original designer of the Fuzzrite™, who graciously offered additional insights to the circuit. Mark and Ed were there from the beginning and if anyone knows what a real Fuzzrite™ should sound like, it's these guys! We feel so fortunate to be entrusted with bringing this sound back - and we hope you enjoy this true labor of love as much as we do!

QUICK START GUIDE

Before you integrate the Fuzzrite into your existing set-up, let's try it all on its own - just your guitar and amp with nothing else but the Fuzzrite in between. Power it with a 9v battery or good quality 9vDC adapter. Begin with both knobs at minimum. The original Fuzzrites did not have gobs of output (in fact the some of the originals had a slight volume drop even at full up that we chose not to replicate), so we made sure the new version addressed that and gave it plenty of output. Bring up the **VOLUME** control to at least unity with your bypassed signal so you can hear what's going on with the quality of the second control, **DEPTH**. Begin with the **DEPTH** at minimum and take your time stopping at various points along the dial to appreciate the distinctive textures that reveal themselves along the way - experiment with your pick attack and the guitar's own volume and tone controls to learn how those also affect the quality of the fuzz textures being generated. You can also bring up the **VOLUME** control as well to see what effect it has pushing your amp into additional saturation. All of these variables are highly interactive and it's cool to be able to access such a wide range of sounds right from your guitar!

ORIGINAL MOSRITE FUZZRITE C. 1966

CONTROLS IN DEPTH

VOLUME - controls the output volume of the circuit. Higher settings will begin to overdrive your amplifier, which can add additional body and smoothness to the fuzzed out sounds. Crank it up!

DEPTH - the heart of the pedal. This knob is essentially a blend control that mixes in a second transistor gain stage with the first. At the minimum setting, you're hearing the first transistor on its own - cleanish and fat. As you begin to blend in the second transistor, at various points along the way you will notice more voltage-starved, gated sounds; pseudo ring mod-style upper octave harmonics; and at max settings a thinner, more aggressive saturated sound with a ripping top-end attack and huge bloom to the notes.

POWERING THE FUZZRITE

The Fuzzrite can accept a 9v battery, or any good quality 9vDC adapter for use with audio circuits that is filtered and regulated with a center-negative tipped plug. The Fuzzrite has a very low mA draw, so batteries will last quite a long time. Be sure to unplug the input cable to preserve battery life when not in use.

INTEGRATING THE FUZZRITE INTO YOUR RIG

Being an old school fuzz that is responsive to your pick attack and the guitar's controls, it's best to place it first in your chain of effects to get the best dynamic response. If that isn't practical for you, just make sure there are no buffers in front of the pedal as they can severely limit the dynamic potential when you use your guitar's controls. If you are planning on stacking the Fuzzrite with other dirt pedals, it pays to experiment with the running order of things as you can have dramatically different outcomes based on that order.

THE BACKSTORY

Taking on the task of recreating a legendary pedal - one of the first commercially available fuzzes in the US, was no easy thing...

The biggest obstacle in recreating the Fuzzrite was parts selection. The original units used several components that have long since gone obsolete - most notably, the transistors used. The original silicon Fuzzrites used a transistor that was labeled specifically for Mosrite so yeah - finding those in any quantity large enough to do production was going to be challenging to say the least. Luckily, we were able to consult Ed Sanner, the designer of the Fuzzrite. He offered us some insight into the transistor selection and that was extremely helpful in tracking down alternatives that were capable of recreating the sound and response of the vintage units. So Catalinbread's Parts Czar, Bryan went to work sourcing vintage silicon transistors for the new production Fuzzrites. He managed to track down a good supply of vintage NOS silicon transistors that proved to be the final piece of the puzzle in capturing the true Fuzzrite sound and feel - thanks, Ed!

The Fuzzrite is a primitive, elemental circuit (and thank goodness for that!) - the types of parts used have a huge impact on the sound and feel of the fuzz. And because of high parts tolerances and 50 years of aging of the components, no two of the originals sound alike. So Bryan and Howard evaluated dozens of capacitor types and values and spent countless hours A/B testing the new prototype builds, honing in on the best traits of the originals and distilling them into an idealized recipe until ours sounded and felt just like a vintage Fuzzrite in a blind test. Groovy, baby!

But for us as fellow pedal geeks, the best part of this adventure has been meeting and collaborating with Mark Moseley - he has been so incredibly generous sharing his knowledge, his stories of working with his dad and uncle at Mosrite, and his career in Music for the past 40+ years. Mark has lived it, folks - several times over - and he's still at it too which should be an inspiration to all of us. He still loves gear as much now as when he was a kid soldering those old fuzzes at the family business. We are so honored that he entrusted us with a piece of his family's legacy and we sure hope we've done them all proud in bringing the Fuzzrite back in all its ragged glory.

What started as a friendship between Nicholas Harris and Mark Moseley has led to this incredible opportunity for Catalinbread to bring a legendary sound back to your pedalboard. The best part of this adventure for us pedal geeks has been meeting and collaborating with Mark Moseley - he has been so incredibly generous sharing his knowledge, his stories of working with his dad and uncle at Mosrite, and his career in Music for the past 40+ years. Mark has lived it, folks - several times over - and he's still at it too which should be an inspiration to all of us. He still loves gear as much now as when he was a kid soldering those old fuzzes at the family business. We are so honored that he entrusted us with a piece of his family's legacy and we sure hope we've done them all proud in bringing the Fuzzrite back in all its ragged glory.

To paraphrase Timothy Leary:

"Plug in, tune up, turn on."

Dig it!