Boutique Tube Screamer

Here we have it: the most modded and copied pedal in all of boutique. The tube screamer is not only the most successful mass-market overdrive ever, it is also the foundation of 98% of the boutique overdrives. Many copies are just that: straight-up copies. Others use magical opamps, or different diode clippers. But all share the same heritage in the original circuit. This version is based on Jack Orman’s Son of Screamer circuit: a tube screamer stripped of the input and output buffers and with a few value changes. The Son of the Screamer is the foundation of countless boutique overdrives, so it is a great start on building and modding your own personalized overdrive.

Mods!
- Probably the #1 mod is all about the diode clippers. In this version, an asymmetrical layout is used, two values on one side, another type on the other side for D1/D2 and D3. You can go crazy here, substituting many different diode types and combinations.
- Opamp changes—this is another key mod: trying different dual opamp chips. An easy thing to experiment with.
- More gain: lower the R4 resistor to a value in the 1k-4k range for more gain.
- More bass: increase the value of C2 to increase bass response. Try values in the 56nF to 100nf range.