



the compressor. \_\_\_\_\_

COLLABORATION  
DEVICES



*operating manual*

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*design:* **peter bregman**

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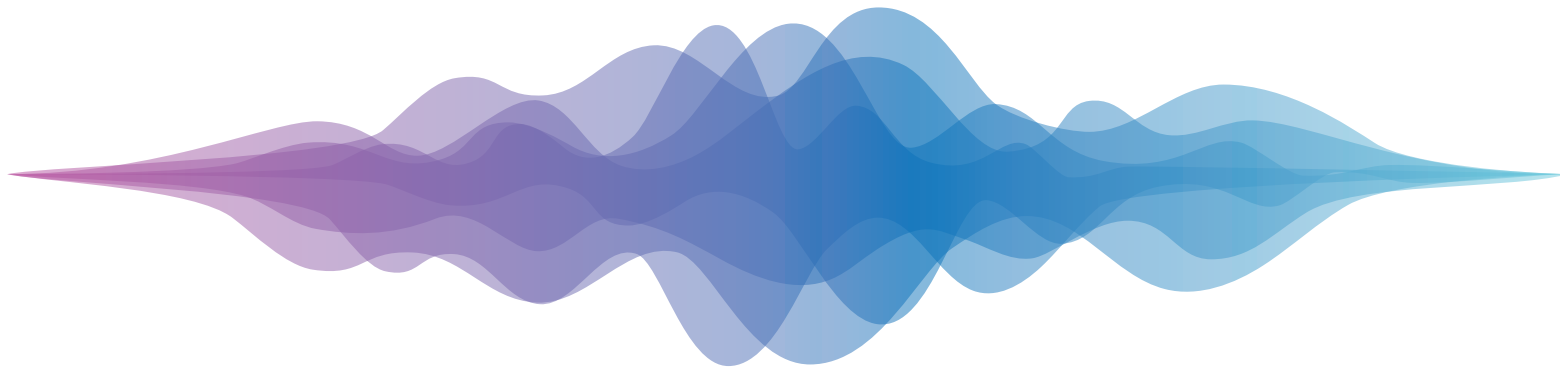
*production:* **cusack manufacturing**

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studio-grade  
classic VCA compressor  
parallel gain staging

# compression.

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Ok, let's talk about compression. It's the process of reduction in dynamic range coming from an audio signal path. Well, what does that mean, and more importantly why do I need it? Compression helps bridge the gap between your softest notes and your loudest notes. It narrows the range and variances in your playing. The Compressor was designed specifically to help your playing and signal path from instrument to amplifier in what we call "glue". Yeah, the sticky stuff that holds two things together. You'll hear a lot of this jargon if you're in the studio working on a console with an engineer close by.

I hit up Peter Bregman to ask his input about a compressor pedal. What did he have in mind when thinking about a classic studio grade compressor? Within minutes the discussion turned to that classic VCA we've all heard and were familiar with on countless records.

That set the path to the collaboration of The Compressor. I couldn't think of a cool name for the pedal, but I did have a working code name for it...the "557". One of the most important additions to the pedal that I wanted was a parallel gain stage. We both agreed that this would be a great way to add some saturation to your signal without compromising the original audio. I like to describe the sound as adding a British inspired amp underneath your compressed signal. Top boosting at its finest.

# nitty-gritty.

**Comp Level** Because the pedal is based on the “auto” release setting of the SSL Buss compressor, the attack/release times are dependent on the transients in the audio passing through the RMS detector. Likewise, the ratio and threshold are both controlled here by the **Comp Level**. Increasing this knob generally increases the ratio and decreases the threshold which are both dynamic and reactive to incoming signal. This is the gateway to the compressor, I wholly encourage exploring subtle to not so subtle settings.

**Comp Blend** This is a parallel blend for your compressed signal. When it is all the way to the left, you will only hear your clean signal. I wanted to add this feature to the pedal because I prefer effects where you can blend in the desired amount. This happens to be my favorite way to blend in compression.

**Make Up** When compressing your signal, you’ll generally be limiting it’s dynamic range. This can result in your overall signal coming down. The **Make Up** knob is your gain to bring that signal back to unity or give it an extra bit of boost. I love using this compressor at the end of mono signal chain and giving it a final gain stage boost. *There’s also a few surprises on the inside of the pedal I’ll get to in a bit.* Stay tuned!

**Saturation** Not only is this a compressor, but also a drive pedal. When the Gain stomp switch is engaged, you’ll be adding a secondary stage of overdrive to the signal path. The **Saturation** knob is, you guessed, a parallel blend. Have I mentioned how much I love this type of blend?

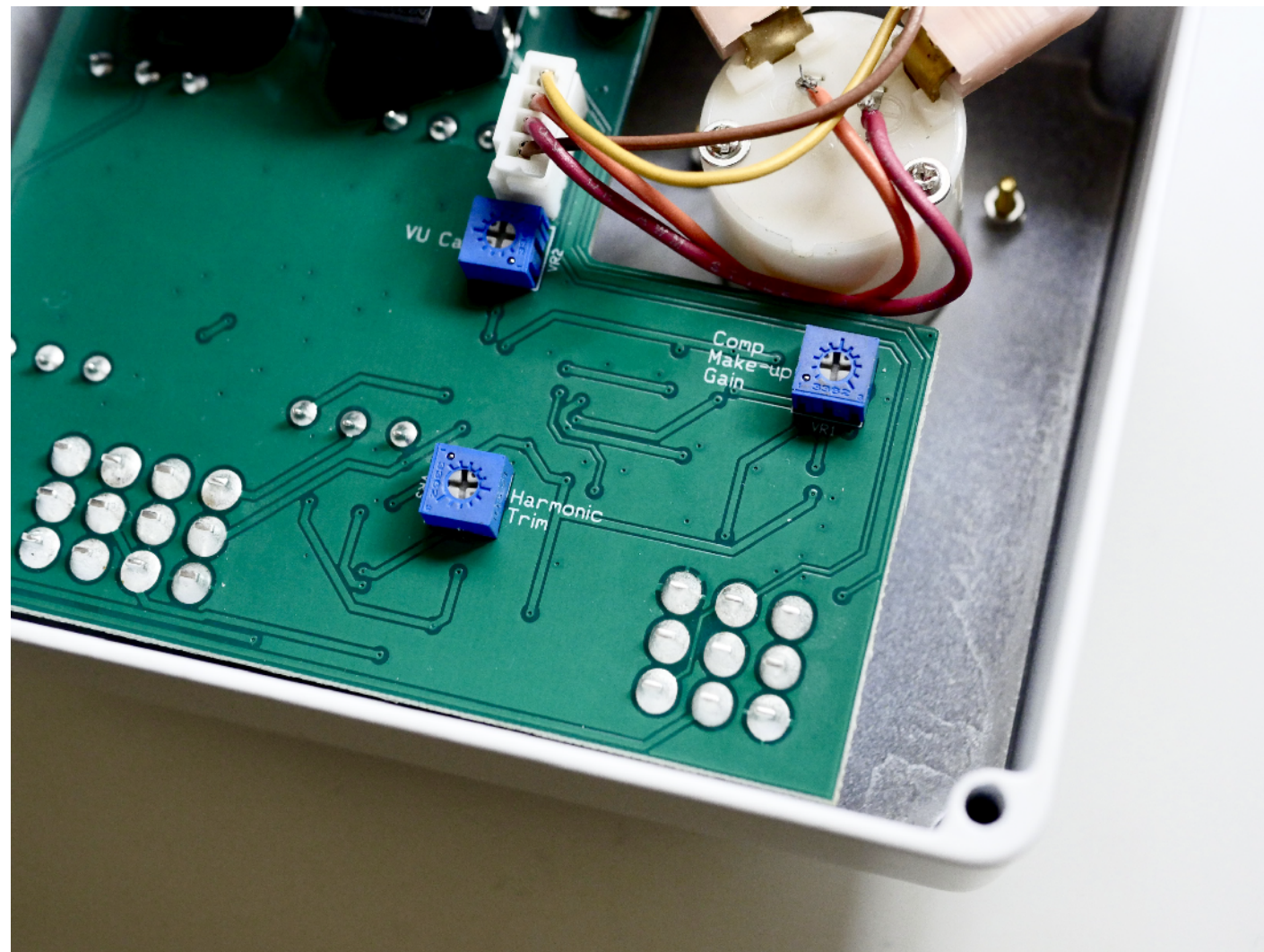


# under the hood.

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I wanted to give you further tweaking via trim-pots inside the pedal. These are more set and forget settings, but important none the less.

*\*VU Cal is set to factory and should really be left alone.*



## Comp Make-up Gain

This trim-pot controls the dynamic range of the compressor. It comes from factory straight up the middle. I encourage you to play around with this and find your sweet-spot. I love opening up the full range and then finding a spot at my level and blend. You'll hear how reactive all these knobs are once you're playing. I'm convinced you'll feel it as well. Like the compression from a cabinet, or tube rectifier. There's a bit of magic that I know many of you have experienced.

## Harmonic Trim

Here lies the secret sauce to your overdrive saturation. Think of this as the gain knob on any drive pedal. Turn it up for some grind, turn it down to get that edge of break-up. Then blend it in on the front of the pedal. There are no wrong settings here, have fun!