

GEAR Roundup

SPECS

TRILLIUM AMPLIFIER COMPANY
(317) 362-2707; trilliumamps.com

MODEL	Signature Series
PRICE	\$2,650 retail/ Street price N/A (\$2,850 as tested with five-piece cabinet)
POWER	7 watts
CHANNELS	One
TUBES	One JJ 6V6 power tube (can be sub- stituted with 6L6, 5881, or KT66); JJ 12AX7 preamp tube
SPEAKER	Two Weber 10" alnico
CONTROLS	Volume, Treble, Bass
UTILITIES	Impedance selec- tor (4/8/16 Ω)
FOOTSWITCH	Optional
WEIGHT	37 lbs
KUDOS	Delivers rich, class A tones. Extremely quiet. Beautiful wood cabinet.
CONCERNS	Limited features.



Trillium Signature Series

KNOWN FOR BUILDING AMPLIFIERS WITH VERY EXOTIC CABINETRY, TRILLIUM ROUTINELY HAS THE last word with its Art Deco-inspired Empyrean and Seraph models. These stately amps—which go for \$6,490 and \$5,790—respectively, feature curvaceous cabinets handcrafted from such beautiful woods as bubinga, paduak, bee wing's eucalyptus, claro walnut, and fiddle-back makore. And, as each is made on a custom order basis, no two Trilliums are exactly alike. That said, the Trillium folks base all of their models on the same amplifier section—the Nace M1-7 designed by audio engineer Art Nace. This single-ended class-A amp uses one 12AX7 and a 6V6 power tube to develop 7 watts. Users can install a variety of octal-base power tubes (including the 6L6, 5881, and KT66) without rebiasing, along with other preamp tubes such as a 12AT7, a 5751, and a 12AY7.

The Signature Series on review here sports a more traditional look, but there's no mistaking the flair of its cabinet, which is crafted from paduak with 1/4" maple stripes that encircle the front and rear of the cab. A laser-etched sliver logo plate looks sweet against the black grillecloth. The circuit is a minimum-parts-count affair that is laid out neatly on a thick PC board. I expected to see a handwired circuit, but, apparently, Nace favors this construction method in order to obtain an audiophile-grade signal-to-noise ratio of -65dB. The amp is indeed very quiet—even with the Volume knob all the way up—and it offers great touch sensitivity and dynamic response. The maximum distortion level is on par with other small single-ended amps (such as a Fender Champ), although the Signature typically sounds more even and refined across the overdrive spectrum. This amp also sounds excellent for jazz. Its clean tones are rich and detailed, and its quietness lends a CD-like “out of the blackness” vibe to these textures. Used with a variety of pedals—including new Way Huge distortion and fuzz boxes and a DigiTech Hardwire CM-2 Tube Overdrive, the Signature assumed a much more aggressive demeanor, while revealing a lot of subtle nuances from these effects. And while a 7-watt combo with furniture-grade cabinetry is unlikely to have a lot of gigs in its future, the Signature would make a fine recording amp, as well as something that could sit happily in your living room for practice, tube tasting, and just classing things up with the warm glow of rare woods. —Art Thompson

