

# MEZZABARBA

CUSTOM AMPLIFICATION



# NIRVANA

## PREAMP

User manual

## Index

Front panel.....	4
Rear panel.....	4
Basic sounds.....	5
MIDI programming, Midi Channel, Control Changes .....	6
Usage and periodical maintenance.....	7
Replacing tubes. ....	7
Troubleshooting.....	8
Fuses.....	8
Warranty.....	9
Customization options.....	9
Important safety information.....	10
Technical specifications.....	11
Contacts.....	11

### **IMPORTANT:**

**PLEASE READ SAFETY INFO ON PG. 10 CAREFULLY BEFORE SWITCH ON THE PREAMP**

## NIRVANA. The new 3 channel Rack Preamp by Mezzabarba.

Finally an all tube, midi controllable, 3 channel preamp dedicated to Modern sounds: from crystal clear Clean, through a classic punchy Crunch, to High Gain Bliss. The best of the MZero and Trinity in a rack preamp that offers the full range of the incredible tones available from Mezzabarba.

Used by an ever-growing number of artists worldwide for more than a decade, Mezzabarba amps are custom-built, all-tube beasts which are entirely hand-made in Italy.

Founded in 1998 in the Etruscan town of Farnese, between Latium and Tuscany, Masotti Guitar Devices and its high-end brand Mezzabarba Custom Amplification have become reference points for rockers in Italy, Europe and around the world. Based on 100% original R&D, top of the range components, custom-wound transformers and a no-compromise philosophy, these amps are fruit of a tireless obsession. They finally define a new amp personality and bring about a contemporary feel in what has become a monotonous world split between established industry leaders and me-too amps. Their ability to deliver an unusual combination of raw power, warmth and crystal clear tone allows the same amp to reach an unrivalled range of sounds, spanning from fusion, blues, rock, funk, all the way to brute metal.



*Pierangelo Mezzabarba*

-Masotti Guitar Devices CEO and Founder-

## Front panel



From left to right:

- MAIN INPUT jack.
- GAIN controls -these allow for gain management in the preamp section of Channel 1, 2 and 3.
- Equalizer section: Bass, Mid, Treble.
- VOLUME controls -respectively, for the Clean, Drive and Overdrive channels.
- Master Volume controls -these allow for volume management of the entire preamp.
- Control Panel: 7 switches for programming as described further.

## Rear panel



From left to right:

- IEC plug
- Master power switch
- Mains fuse
- Ground Lift switch
- Midi In/Footswitch connector, Midi Thru, USB - for controlling multiple functions;
- OUTPUT.
- Secondary INPUT.

## Basic sounds

The NIRVANA Preamp was conceived to express its full potential in any musical context, hence the preamp section was specifically engineered to deliver an unusual array of possibilities. Whether you are using a NIRVANA Preamp in combination with distortion pedals, digital effects, or on its own, you will be amazed by the response you'll get in any of these contexts. Imagine the dynamics and rage of the best, late 60s' Brit amps, beautifully infused with a more modern tone, all of which results in an elegant elaboration of a classic, evergreen sound.

3 channel - Clean, Drive and Overdrive - for 24 different sounds, all programmable, with 128 presets. Every channel has Boost, Bright and Dual Master functions.

Although particularly suited for Rock and Metal, the NIRVANA Preamp, as the TRINITY and the MZero, is the fruit of a 20-year search for the ultimate, devastating, yet classy tone. Dedicated to Modern sounds, from crystal clear Clean, through a classic punchy Crunch, to High Gain Bliss.

### Channel 1

Dedicated to clean sound, it's equipped with a brite switch to refresh high frequencies. Drive and volume controls are inter-dependt and they can be set in order to obtain different sounds. With the boost engaged, it's easy to have a very impressive crunch.

### Channel 2

Channel for mean overdriven sounds, the 2nd channel starts from clean gradually dirty up to reach a rhythm rock sound full and dynamic. With the boost engaged is similar to the former but is more useful for modern sounds, both for rhythm and solo parts, with very high gain, dynamics and transparency.

### Channel 3

Modern high gain channel, great headroom with rich armonics, perfect for Rhythm and Solo parts, with Boost engaged. Very reactive to the pick, with a solid and fully controlled response to low frequencies, it gives a "liquid" and sustained sound.

The resulting dynamics, combined with the guitar volume and your personal touch, will open a portal to a virtually infinite world of tone which will make the NIRVANA the last preamp you will ever need.

## MIDI programming

For maps programming, please see the following sequence:

1. Switch ON and connect MIDI controller to MIDI IN connector of NIRVANA Preamp; Default Midi channel is #1.
2. Switch ON NIRVANA Preamp as described above.
3. Push Prog pushbutton on Control Panel; the Prog Status Led will bright and it indicates that NIRVANA Preamp is ready to store.
4. Select desired configuration – channels and functions- through the 6 switches on the front panel.
5. Send the Program changes in which you want to store the map.
6. Repeat points 4 and 5 according to your needs.
7. Press Prog pushbutton. The Status Led it's OFF and indicates that NIRVANA Preamp is ready for normal functioning. Now the patches are stored permanently and they can be recalled via MIDI.
8. You can go from normal mode to prog mode and back in any time by pressing Prog button.

## MIDI Channel

Any MIDI channel can be associated to NIRVANA Preamp. Programming is very simple and consists of the following points:

1. Connect and switch ON a pedalboard to MIDI IN connector; check that pedalboard sends Program or Control Changes messages on desired MIDI channel.
2. Switch ON NIRVANA Preamp and push the Prog switch at the same time. The Program Status Led will bright 3 times, then it will ON.
3. Send a Program Change or a Control Change messages on desired MIDI channel.
4. Switch the Prog OFF.

## Control Changes

NIRVANA Preamp can be used via Control Changes, on desired Midi Channel:

- CC81: Channel 1
- CC82: Channel 2
- CC83: Channel 3
- CC85: Master2
- CC86: Boost
- CC87: Bright

Value:

0-63 **OFF** – 64-127 **ON**

## Usage and periodical maintenance

The NIRVANA Preamp does not require any more precautions and maintenance than any other tube preamp. Make sure you do not obstruct the air cooling grids located on the top, front, and back of the amp, in order to allow for optimal cooling.

The external chassis can be cleaned with a clean, damp cloth. The paint is resistant to normal cleaning products but not to aggressive solvents (benzene, acetone, etc.) which should therefore be avoided.

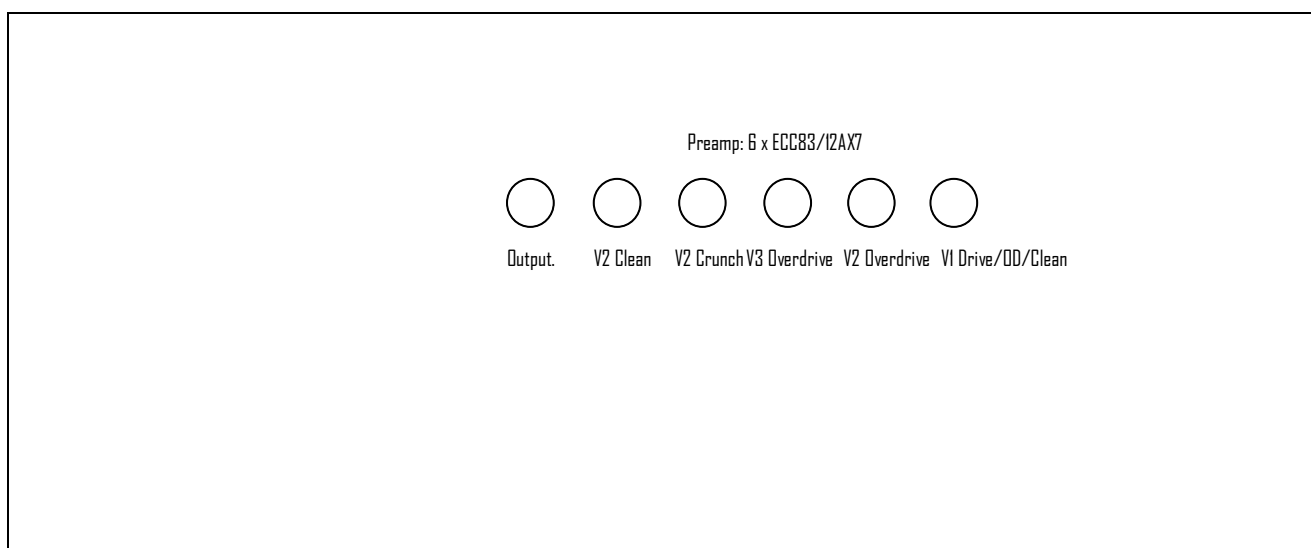
If you are using your NIRVANA Preamp mostly in a studio setting, you will simply need to periodically replace the tubes, just as you would in any other tube preamp. If on the other hand, you use your NIRVANA Preamp mostly on the road, it is advisable to periodically check that all of the internal components are properly connected and functioning. Given the heavy-duty build quality of your NIRVANA Preamp, this might be necessary as little as once a year, and in any case only if you use the preamp on the road every day.

**Warning: the afore-mentioned checks must be carried out solely by qualified MGD (Masotti Guitar Devices) personnel and/or authorized technicians. Before scheduling any such check, please contact MGD for full advise.**

## Replacing tubes

All of the factory-supplied tubes in your NIRVANA Preamp are accurately handpicked by MGD. The six ECC83/12AX7 tubes have a life expectancy of several years and their replacement does not require any additional adjustments.

The layout of the tubes is represented in the following diagram:



Any short-circuits caused by a faulty tube can lead to burning one or more fuses, which must be replaced by **qualified MGD personnel and/or authorized technicians.**

The brand and type of the preamp tubes, affect the overall amp tone and can be chosen based on personal taste. Feel free to contact us for any advise!

**Warning: replacement of tubes and internal fuses, adjustment of the bias and any other operation inside the NIRVANA must be carried out by qualified MGD (Masotti Guitar Devices) personnel and/or authorized technicians, while the amp is powered off and has been completely disconnected from a power source for at least 30 minutes!**

## Troubleshooting

Here below are some of the problems that you might experience when operating your NIRVANA Preamp. Some of them are trivial whereas other ones might require the intervention of **qualified MGD (Masotti Guitar Devices) personnel and/or authorized technicians**. Please do not hesitate to contact us when in doubt, we are at your complete disposal for any help you may require.

- ✓ **NIRVANA Preamp is not turning on.** Check whether there is power running to your socket. Check the power cable. Check the fuse on the rear of the unit and replace it with an identical one. If the problem persists, contact MGD.
- ✓ **The power indicator is lit but no sound is coming from your amp.** Check that all of the jacks are properly plugged in. Check the Drive, Tone, and Volume controls, making sure none of them are on 0.
- ✓ **You hear a scratchy noise while turning one or more pots.** Do not attempt to clean with spray products! Please contact MGD and we will be happy to replace the faulty pot(s)
- ✓ **Sound quality has deteriorated; the amp tends to feedback or makes strange noises.** One or more tubes need replacement. Please contact MGD for advise and service in order to continue getting the best out of your NIRVANA Preamp.
- ✓ **LEDS are regularly ON but no sound is present.** Check cables, connectors and their proper position. Check pots level.
- ✓ **NIRVANA does not receive MIDI patches.** Check MIDI cable and its proper connection. Check MIDI footboard/controller or NIRVANA Preamp channel and mode.

## Fuses

NIRVANA Preamp is equipped with 1 external fuse:

- 1) **MAINS FUSE:** External Mains fuse: 250V 500mA-T delayed (1A-T for 117V).

The external Mains fuse can fault also following a series of power outages and must therefore be replaced by qualified personnel with an identical one.

**Warning: replace the external fuse with one with identical characteristics! Internal fuses must be checked and replaced only by MGD personnel or authorized technicians.**



## Warranty

Limited Lifetime Warranty: New Mezzabarba Amplifiers are lifetime warranted to the original purchaser against failure of parts/materials and workmanship if purchased through an authorized dealer. No other warranty applies.

Tubes, transformers and speakers are warranted for a period of ninety days. Pots, connectors and switches are warranted for a period of two years. This warranty applies only if the amplifier has not been damaged by accident, misuse or as a result of repair or modification. The use of non-authorized Mezzabarba tubes and replacement parts may void this warranty. Mezzabarba reserves the right to make any design changes without notice or obligation to incorporate these changes in products previously purchased. Masotti is not liable for any freight or duty charges.

Return Authorization is required for all products returned to Mezzabarba Custom Amplification. In most cases we will be able to supply the technical information needed to repair the amplifier thus avoiding the shipping issues and costs. All shipping costs to/from Mezzabarba shall be borne by the owner, after 90 days of purchase. Mezzabarba will be responsible for the factory-to-customer return shipping cost to the original owner for only the first 90 days of ownership. Authorized Returns should be shipped in the original Mezzabarba box and original packing materials. A return packing/handling charge may be applied to any product shipped to Mezzabarba in sub-standard or damaged shipping box and materials. This is to make sure your amplifier is packaged safely in a new box and to recover our costs for doing so. Since the courier doesn't honor damage claims for non-original packaging, Mezzabarba is not responsible for any factory-to-customer return shipping damage to products shipped in non-original box and packing materials. A copy of the final Sales Receipt from an Authorized Mezzabarba Dealer is required with this Warranty Registration.

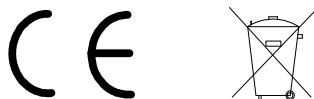
## Customization options

We are at your complete disposal to discuss any other solution to optimize your NIRVANA Preamp.

## Important safety information

Your NIRVANA Preamp was engineered and built according to the strictest electrical safety standards as per international norm, EU IEC-62368 and according to the electromagnetic compatibility requirements specified by international norms EN 55032. It thus fully complies to EU standards and therefore carries the CE marking on the rear panel.

Our amps utilize as much as possible eco-compatible materials. Do not however dispose of any parts of the amp in the environment and please use special containers as per EU regulations.



To reduce the risk of electric shock or wounds, please follow the instructions on this manual very carefully, with particular reference to the following ones:

- Do not open the chassis for any reason. Removing the rear grid or removing the metal chassis from the wooden frame will expose you to live circuitry which is powered by potentially hazardous electric tension. Should you need to replace the tubes or the internal fuses, please contact either MGD or an authorized technician.
- Do not remove any screws from the amp.
- Do not expose the amp to rain or moisture, steam, metal particles and anything that may penetrate inside the amp through the air cooling grids.
- Do not obstruct the air cooling grids. Always make sure that the top and rear parts of the amp are not obstructed.
- Do not introduce any foreign objects (metallic or insulating) in the air cooling grids.
- Do not use the amp without the protective metal grid on the rear.
- Do not insert objects other than the standard jacks inside the amp's input and output jacks.
- Do not expose the amp to excessive heat.
- Do not subject the amp to excessive vibrations or shock, especially when it is powered on.
- When setting up the amp in a room temperature environment following storage and/or transportation at very low temperatures one, dew might form on the outside and/or inside of the amp. Make sure that the amp stays at room temperature for about 10 minutes before turning it on in order for the dew to evaporate.
- Always use standard power cables making sure they are intact. Do not remove or interfere with the ground connection of the plug or socket.
- Always check that the mains power complies to the specs written on the rear panel of the amp.
- Disconnect the device from mains during thunderstorms. ☐
- Should the HV fuse fail in absence of exceptional external events such as violent power surges, severe thunderstorms, etc., the cause might be one or more faulty power tubes. Do not attempt their replacement on your own. Contact MGD or an authorized technician.
- Do not force pots and switches.

## Technical specifications

Power supply: 230V/117V $\pm$ 10% 50Hz

Power consumption: 62VA

Input impedance: 1M $\Omega$ .

Output impedance: 1K Ohm

Tubes: 6 x ECC83/12AX7

Environmental operating parameters: 10-40°C, 30-90% humidity without condensation

Dimensions: 2 Rack Units x 30 cm.

Weight: 5 Kg

## Contacts

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