



# ***Interstellar Overdrive Preamp***

**OWNER'S MANUAL**



**SWR • CORONA, CA • USA**

## **IMPORTANT SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS**

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**CAUTION: TO REDUCE RISK OF ELECTRIC SHOCK, DO NOT REMOVE THE COVER OR BACK. NO USER-SERVICEABLE PARTS INSIDE. PLEASE REFER TO A QUALIFIED SERVICE TECHNICIAN.**

**A. Read Instructions:** All safety and operation instructions should be read before the product is operated.

**B. Retain Instructions:** The safety and operating instructions should be retained for future reference.

**C. Heed Warnings:** All of the warnings on this product and in the operating instructions should be adhered to.

**D. Follow Instructions:** All operating and use instructions should be followed.

**E. Cleaning:** Unplug this product from the wall outlet before cleaning. Do not use liquid cleaners or aerosol cleaners. Use a slightly damp cloth for cleaning.

**F. Water and Moisture:** Do not use this product near water; for example, near a swimming pool, wet basement, and the like.

**G. Accessories:** Do not place this product on an unstable cart, stand, tripod, bracket or table. The product may fall, causing serious injury to a child or adult, and serious damage to the product.

**H. Ventilation:** Slots and openings in the unit are provided for ventilation and to ensure reliable operation of the product, to protect it from overheating, thus these openings must not be blocked or covered. This product should not be placed in a built-in installation such as a bookcase or rack unless proper ventilation is provided or the manufacturer's instructions have been adhered to.

**I. Grounding:** This product is equipped with a three-wire grounding-type plug, a plug having a third (grounding) pin. This plug will only fit into a grounding-type power outlet. This is a safety feature. If you are unable to insert the plug into the outlet, contact your electrician to replace your obsolete outlet. Do not defeat the safety purpose of the grounding-type plug.

**J. Power Cord Protection:** Power supply cords should be routed so that they are not likely to be walked on or pinched by items placed upon them, paying particular attention to cords at plugs and the point where they exit the product.

**K. Lightning:** For added protection of this product during a lightning storm or when it is left unattended and unused for long periods of time, unplug it from the wall outlet. This will prevent damage to the product due to lightning and power-line surges.

**L. Overloading:** Do not overload wall outlets or extension cords as this can result in a risk of fire or electric shock.

**M. Object and Liquid Entry:** Never push objects of any kind into this product through the openings as they may touch dangerous voltage points or short out parts that could result in a fire or electric shock. Never spill liquid of any kind on the product.

**N. Servicing:** Do not attempt to service this product yourself as opening or removing covers may expose you to dangerous voltage or other hazards. Refer all servicing to qualified service personnel.

**O. Damage Requiring Service:** Unplug this product from the wall outlet and refer servicing to qualified service personnel under the following conditions:

- 1) When the power supply cord has been damaged
- 2) If liquid has been spilled or objects have fallen into the product
- 3) If the product has been exposed to rain, water, or other conductive liquids
- 4) If the product does not operate normally by following the operating instructions
- 5) If the product has been dropped or damaged in any way
- 6) When the product exhibits a distinct change in performance.

**P. Replacement Parts:** When replacement parts are required, be sure the service technician has used replacement parts specified by the manufacturer or have the same characteristics as the original part. Unauthorized substitutions may result in fire, electric shock, or other hazards.

**Q. Safety Check:** Upon completion of any service or repairs to this product, ask the service technician to perform safety checks to determine that the product is in proper operating condition.

**R. Heat:** The product should be situated away from heat sources such as radiators, heat registers, stoves or other products that produce heat.

## **DESCRIPTION**

At last - a bass distortion unit that faithfully reproduces low end. Also capable of thick, clean tube sounds. May be used as a practice amp, preamp or effects unit. The preamp of choice for rock bass legend John Paul Jones.

## **FRONT PANEL FEATURES**

Dual independent input jacks compatible for both active and passive instruments

All tube preamp gain stages

Aural Enhancer control

Active bass, midrange and treble controls

Drive function with external drive pedal ability

Blend control for mixing clean and overdriven signals

Effects loop

Tuner send

Rack mountable

Rack Handles

Phase Switch

Standby Switch

On/Off Switch

## **REAR PANEL FEATURES**

Balanced XLR record out with ground lift, pad and mute function

Unbalanced line out (pre master)

Balanced direct XLR out with pad

Speaker jack (4 watts)

Tuner send

## **INTERNAL FEATURES**

(1) 12AX7 Preamp Tube

(2) EL84

## **DIMENSIONS**

1.75" H x 19"W x 8.75" D (one rack space)

## **WEIGHT**

10 lbs

## **ACCESSORIES**

Interstellar Overdrive Volume Pedal

Specifically designed for use with the Interstellar Overdrive, this external volume pedal can be used to control the amount of drive present in the signal path. Great for hands-free switching between clean and dirty tones.



## **GENERAL INFORMATION AND HISTORY**

Around the beginning of 1991 SWR started hearing from an increasing number of bassplayers trying to integrate some amount of overdrive into their sound. Simultaneously, we were getting more requests for an all tube bass amplifier. Finally at the January, 1993 NAMM Show in Anaheim, Jack Casady (BASS PLAYER, Sept/Oct '93) and Hutch Hutchinson (BASS PLAYER, Dec '93) cornered us and said it was time to actively start working on a product to address these needs. Since we had become known for designing the cleanest and most hi-fi bass amps possible for the last 9 years, it would certainly be a challenge.

Most of what was available on the market for overdrive was designed for guitar players. Since the frequency response was tailored for guitar and not bass in these units, the low end response, as far as the bass guitar was concerned, was sacrificed. Secondly, the effect was uneven over the range of the neck. Some notes were overdriven hard while others were barely distorted. To solve this problem, at least in the studio, bassplayers were sending a clean signal to one channel while sending the distorted sound to another channel and then mixing them together. This brought back some of the integrity of the instrument but was hard to duplicate "live." After numerous interviews with our advisory staff, which includes players from metal to jazz, we decided to put the two above requests into one unit by miniaturizing a tube preamp/power amp, complete with an output transformer for its saturation qualities, into a single rack space preamplifier/effects system.

Vintage tube amps, known for their overdriven qualities, such as a Versatone, etc., were brought in as a reference point for dirty. We listened to a MacIntosh for warmth and clarity. We tried class A type power amps and push-pull. Push-pull was decided upon as it seemed more musical and even. Our R&D expenses skyrocketed as we went through 8 prototype output transformers. The company that makes our transformers groaned when we told them we needed to fit it in a single rack space.

After the basic clean and overdrive sounds were achieved our advisory board told us they wanted a built-in direct box, tone controls, the ability to adjust drive with a foot pedal, blend the clean and dirty signals together as in the studio, be able to kick in or out the dirty signal with a footswitch and, oh yeah, it had to be really quiet! We said (gulp) no problem.

Now came the hardest part. What do we name it!? Since the features were defined to us by professional musicians, or "communication between the stars", this can loosely be defined as "Interstellar". Thus, the Interstellar Overdrive.

## **USING THE INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE AS AN EFFECTS UNIT**

Using the effects loop of your amplifier, run a shielded patch cord from the send or "to effects" jack on the amp to one of the inputs on the Overdrive. Read the owners manual to adjust for volume levels, mixes, etc. The clean signal will always be present at the output of the Overdrive. The Blend control can be used to adjust volume levels if you plan to go from clean to dirty. The overdriven signal can be switched on and off in the mix via the footswitch. The tone section can be disabled by setting the controls to the flat (center click) position OR by taking the signal from the EFFECTS SEND jack. In doing this, you will be using just the tube preamp/power amp section and blend section of the Interstellar Overdrive. The tone section and Master volume will NOT be operable, so you will probably need an effects loop on your amp that has an effects return volume control. On SWR amps, use the Blend control to adjust for volume differences.

## **USING THE INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE AS A PREAMPLIFIER**

Plug your instrument into one of the inputs of the I/O and use either the balanced or unbalanced output to send a signal to your power amplifier, just as you would with any other preamplifier.

## **USING THE INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE AS A PRACTICE AMP**

Since the Overdrive incorporates an all tube power amp to achieve warmth, clarity and overdrive capabilities, you may plug a speaker in the "speaker" jack for low volume practicing. The power amp will deliver about 5 watts RMS @ 8 ohms. Although a 4 or 8 ohm speaker can be used, an 8 ohm impedance is recommended. The speaker jack is pre tone controls and Master volume. Therefore these controls will not function under these conditions. If so desired, an external unit (that is made to go between your instrument and the input of an amp) that has tone controls, can be used.

## **TIPS FOR USING THE INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE**

The SWR Interstellar Overdrive Preamp is a unit designed to provide real distortion for bass without significant loss of low end (as occurs when you plug into something like a standard distortion pedal). It can also give you a very warm and sweet clean tube preamp sound depending on how the controls are set.

The key thing to remember is that the Interstellar Overdrive is in essence a preamp as opposed to an effects unit. It can be run in the effects loop of another amp, but it operates best when run as its own preamp into a power amp and then into its own dedicated cabinet.

Another note to remember is that in order to achieve the warm distortion Stella is capable of delivering, the tweeter on the speaker cabinet it's being run into should be turned all the way off (if the cabinet even has one to begin with).

Knowing that, here are some setup tips for different types of sounds and situations:

To run as an "overdriven" sound (as opposed to a wide-open distortion sound):

1. Run a regular 1/4" patch cable from the unbalanced 1/4" out to your power amp of choice (this is the patch for all of the different sounds to follow).
2. Plug your bass into the passive input jack. Just because you have an active bass doesn't mean you need to plug into the active jack. Think of the active jack as a -14db pad on your signal. It's only necessary in basses with intense amounts of preamp gain.
3. Set the Bass and Mid EQ controls to taste, but set the treble at 3:00 (as on a clock) or higher.
4. Set the Aural Enhancer at 1:30.
5. Set the "Drive" knob to 2:00.
6. Set the "Blend" knob to 10:00 AM.
7. Adjust the Master Volume to taste.

The tone should now be overdriven, but not excessively distorted. Further backing off on the drive knob leads to even mellower overdrive, and it becomes more "touch sensitive"—as in the harder you play, the more overdriven the signal will be. The above settings are particularly useful when employing the "In/Out" Footswitch", because the clean and dirty sounds are nearly equal in level.

To run as a wide-open distorted preamp (or, in other words, totally crunched out):

1. Follow steps (1) and (2) from above.
2. Set the Bass and Mid EQ to taste, but turn the treble up to maximum (about 5:00).
3. Set the Aural Enhancer at 1:30.
4. Set the "Drive" knob up to maximum.
5. Set the "Blend" control to 11:30 AM.
6. Adjust the Master Volume to taste.

This should be some serious distortion. BE SURE THAT THE TWEETER IN THE SPEAKER CABINET IS OFF when using these settings.

As mentioned above, the unit can also be run as a warm, fat, clean tube preamp. The tweeter can and should be used for this setting:

1. Follow steps (1) and (2) as above (use unbalanced 1/4" out to power amp, plug instrument into passive input).
2. Set the Aural Enhancer at 1:30.
3. Set the EQ to taste (there's no need to boost the treble in this instance).
4. Set the "Drive" knob between 9:30 and 11:30 AM, according to taste. This way the sound of power amp tubes will be achieved, but not so much that they become heavily overdriven. A slight edge should be present on only the hardest-struck notes.

5. Adjust the “Blend” knob to taste—closer to the “direct” side will employ less of the power amp tubes, while closer to the “line” side will use more of the power amp tubes in the clean signal. The “line” side tends to be warmer and fatter, but it’s a good idea to blend in some of the “direct” side as well.

6. Adjust the Master Volume to taste.

The INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE VOLUME PEDAL allows for variable adjustment of the amount of drive present in the signal. In simpler terms, it hijacks the “Drive” knob and allows you to control it from the ground. It does not affect the level of the “Blend” control, which should still be set to taste.

The INTERSTELLAR IN/OUT FOOTSWITCH allows you to switch between a preset amount of overdrive and a clean signal. It hijacks the drive knob, but in a different way—when the red light is on, the amount of drive present will be at whatever level the “drive” knob is set at. When the red light is off, it is as if the “drive” knob has been turned down to the minimum, leaving only a direct signal. It is important to remember that the blend control is still active no matter what you do with the footswitch. For example, if the “blend” control is set all the way to “line” and the “drive” is set all the way to “min”, the engaged footswitch position (red light on) will give you...nothing, acting as a mute. For best results using this footswitch, use the presets suggested for the “overdriven” sound on the previous page and adjust from there.

## **FRONT PANEL FEATURES**

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### **DIRECT OUT XLR PAD**

Adjusts the volume or level appearing at the XLR connector AND the Tuner Send/Unbalanced Direct 1/4" out jack on the rear panel. See "Back Panel Features" for more information on how these two outputs can be used.

Being a "Pad" as opposed to a volume control, some signal will be heard through these outputs even with the knob turned full counter-clockwise. As this control is turned clockwise, the level increases.

### **PASSIVE AND ACTIVE INPUT JACKS**

The Passive input jack has 14 dB more gain than the Active input jack. The terms "passive" and "active" refer to the type of instrument electronics you are using. An "Active" instrument will employ a battery, a passive instrument's electronics will not. In most cases the Passive input should be used. If you are using line level devices such as a keyboard or outboard preamp, or using the Overdrive in an active effects loop, you will probably need to use the Active input.

After reading the entire owners manual, perform the following test:

1. Set up your system as you intend to use it.
2. Plug your instrument into the passive input jack.
3. Set the Blend control to the DIRECT position (full counter-clockwise). The Drive control will not be used in this test, so it's position will not matter.
4. Adjust the tone controls to your liking.
5. Set the Master volume for a low listening level.
6. Play or strike your loudest note.

If you do not hear any distortion or clipping, USE THE PASSIVE INPUT! If you should hear some distortion, be sure you have eliminated any other possible causes. These can include a weak or dead battery in your bass, power amp clipping, faulty speakers, the Blend control not set fully counter clockwise, etc.

### **DRIVE CONTROL**

Adjusts the level or signal being sent to the ALL TUBE preamp/power amp. It does not affect the signal at the Direct Out or the "clean" signal being mixed at the Blend circuit. Since this is also a pad, a small amount of sound will be heard even with the Drive control set to minimum. Overall volume will be achieved using the Drive control in conjunction with the Master volume. To best familiarize yourself with the 3 basic sounds or drive capabilities of the Interstellar Overdrive, first set the Blend control to the LINE or full clockwise position.

From the minimum position to about 10 o'clock, 'Stella (as we have nicknamed it at SWR) will produce a clean, warm tone reminiscent of the finest tube amps made in the 50's and 60's. To expand on that sound, SWR has incorporated an output transformer whose frequency response has been extended down to 20 Hz and up to 10 KHz.

For those of you into "purity" in the studio or live, you may want to try plugging a favorite cabinet into the SPEAKER jack on the back panel and miking it. Since the speaker jack is PRE tone controls and Enhancer, this will eliminate all other processing. Single 12's, 15's or 18's seem to work the best in our findings. Naturally, this can be done regardless of your desired setting of the Drive control and actually will enhance the sound coming from your main speaker system. See the "Speaker Jack" section of the owners manual for more information.

At the 10 o'clock to about the 2 o'clock position of the Drive control, the power amp will begin to reach maximum headroom and start to distort or be overdriven. If you like a slight "edge" to the peaks of your notes with a small amount of compression, this is that area. The best example of this sound we can give you is to listen to Jack Casady's bass parts on the album "Bless It's Pointed Little Head" by the Jefferson Airplane.

After the 2 o'clock position to full maximum, the power amp will be heavily overdriven and saturation of the output transformer will occur. Heavy distortion, sustain, HARMONIC feedback and compression may be incorporated into your sound under these conditions.

In the full drive position, we have found that a light touch, whether you are using fingers or a pick, will help produce a more "musical" tone. In fact, you may want to start practicing "Dueling Tubas."

### **EXTERNAL VOLUME PEDAL**

An external volume pedal is available from SWR as an accessory item to the Interstellar Overdrive. The pedal allows the user to adjust the amount of drive with their foot from a remote location. The benefits of this feature should be obvious. Plugging in the volume pedal overrides and disconnects the Drive control on the front panel. A myriad of effects and dynamics can be achieved using the external pedal.

Great care was taken in the design of this feature so that it does not add hum, noise or frequency loss as inherent with some common volume pedals. It also allows the patch cable between the unit and the pedal to be ANY length desired.

### **FOOTSWITCH IN/OUT JACK**

With the insertion of a footswitch, the user is able to defeat the signal in the LINE mode of the Blend control. Therefore, if you have a preset mix of dirty and clean that you may be using for a solo, or just a change in volume, the footswitch allows you to go from one to the other. Any common footswitch available in your local music store that performs an "open" and "closed" condition will work. If you do not have a footswitch, you may use a 1/4" phone plug. Insertion of the plug turns the line function off, taking it out turns it back on.

### **BLEND CONTROL WITH PHASE FUNCTION**

Under the "Input Jack" section of this manual you were asked to perform a test as to what input jack you should use. This action got you acquainted with the clean or "direct" mode of the preamp section. The Drive control section discussed the "line" mode and it's different capabilities. With the BLEND control you are able to "mix" these two signals both in and out of phase and at varying levels. Two examples follow.

### **MIXING CLEAN WITH CLEAN**

Close scrutiny of the direct sound and the clean sound achieved through use of the Drive control will result in the fact that the direct sound is a little "drier" with more top-end. The Line "clean" sound is warmer and slightly "fatter." Keeping the Master volume at a listening level, adjust the Drive control until the line signal (blend control full clockwise) is as loud as the direct signal (Blend control full counter-clockwise) by going back and forth with the Blend control. When this is achieved, hit any note and rotate the Blend control from one end to the other. You will notice a rise in volume in the mid-position due to the fact that the Blend circuit is adding the two sounds. Keeping the Blend control at 12 o'clock, pull the knob to the "out" position. Your volume level should decrease and the sound will become quite "thin." By adjusting the Blend control one way or the other, you may get the clean sound you have been searching for all your life. Essentially you are doing the same thing guitar players do when they put their pickups out of phase. Like going from a Les Paul to a Telecaster. To bassplayers, this would be like going from a Tobias to a Sadowsky. Of course, different clean sounds can be achieved with the two in phase, but not as radical.

## **MIXING CLEAN WITH DIRTY**

With the Blend control in the Line position, adjust the Drive control for the desired amount of overdrive. Now, back off the Blend control to mix the clean with the overdrive. If the Drive control is at max, the clean or direct sound will not take affect until about 1 o'clock. As well, you can mix these two sounds both in or out of phase for just about any desired effect.

If you find a certain mixed setting that you would like to use during solos only, you may preset this as described above and kick it in at the proper time via the footswitch function.

It should be noted that the phase switch changes the phase of the DIRECT signal with respect to the line signal. In other words, the phase switch puts the direct signal out of phase while the line signal remains in phase.

## **AURAL ENHANCER**

The Aural Enhancer was developed to bring out the fundamental low notes of the bass guitar, reduce certain frequencies that help "mask" the fundamentals and enhance the high-end transients. This effect becomes more pronounced as the control is turned to maximum. The result is a more transparent sound and is especially noticeable using a slap style playing technique.

## **BASS CONTROL**

Cuts or boosts the lower or bass frequencies. Mid position, identified by a "click" is flat (no cut or boost). Starting at mid position, turning the control counter clockwise cuts the bass response and turning the control clockwise boosts the low end. The bass control is centered at about 80 Hz.

## **MIDRANGE CONTROL**

Cuts or boost the midrange frequencies and is centered at approximately 200 Hz. Especially useful for "cutting through" in loud situations.

## **TREBLE CONTROL**

The Treble control is a shelving type tone control that cuts or boosts the high notes and their octaves. Starting from mid position, turning the control counter clockwise cuts the highs while turning the control clockwise boosts the treble region.

## **MASTER VOLUME**

Adjusts the overall volume found at the Line XLR balanced out and 1/4" unbalanced out jack. As the Drive control is increased or decreased, the Master volume may be used to maintain desired overall volume.

## **STANDBY SWITCH**

The Standby switch should be turned to the ON position after the Power switch is activated. This switch turns on or off the high voltage to the vacuum tubes, or as the English say, valves. Turning the Standby switch off keeps the tubes in readiness while allowing no sound to pass through the preamp. Turn the standby switch off while changing instruments or during breaks. When shutting down the entire Interstellar Overdrive, turn the Standby switch off first, then the Power switch. Reverse this process when turning the unit back on.

## **POWER SWITCH**

Moving the Power switch to the On position activates the electronics as indicated by the blue LED being lit. Don't forget to turn the Standby switch on when you are ready to perform.

## **\*SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE**

Because SWR chose to put the least amount of components possible in the signal path to retain purity, turn on and turn off transients appear at all the outputs. For this reason, the Interstellar Overdrive should be turned on first and the power amp second. Likewise, the power amp should be turned off first and the Overdrive second.

## **REAR PANEL FEATURES**

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### **GROUND LIFT SLIDE SWITCH**

When moved to the "lift" position, interrupts or breaks the ground connection to pin 1 of the Balanced D.I. output. Sliding the switch to the GND position returns pin 1 to ground. If you are experiencing a buzz or hum while using the D.I. output, try both positions of this switch. If this does not eliminate the problem, check the A/C wiring of the wall socket with a socket tester as well as associated cables for good connections.

### **BALANCED D.I. OUTPUT**

The Balanced D.I. output is essentially a built in direct box. The signal present is taken from the output of the first tube stage and then electronically balanced. The signal heard will be the same as that plugged into the input jacks. The level at this output can be adjusted with the Direct Out Pad located on the front panel. No front panel controls other than the Pad are active (affect the sound) at the D.I. output.

Wiring of the XLR connector is: pin 1= ground, pin 2= +, pin 3= -

### **TO TUNER INPUT/UNBALANCED D.I. OUT**

This feature can be used to access a tuner, drive an unbalanced recording input, and act as a splitter for your input to drive more than one system.

ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT THE DIRECT OUT PAD CONTROLS THE LEVEL AT THIS JACK AS WELL AS THE BALANCED D.I. OUTPUT.

THROUGH THE USE OF A "Y" CORD, MORE THAN ONE OF THESE USES CAN BE UTILIZED AT THE SAME TIME.

### **TUNER**

Run a shielded patch cord between this jack and the input to your instrument tuner. This allows the user to tune up without having to go back and forth from amp to tuner. This feature is on a "side chain" and avoids loading down of the instrument that could cause a loss in dynamic range.

### **UNBALANCED RECORDING**

Run a shielded patch cord from this jack to the unbalanced input of any recording device. You may also send an unbalanced feed to a house mixing console.

### **USE AS A SIGNAL SPLITTER**

Since this signal is a direct feed from the input jack(s), you may send an "uncolored" signal to another device. For example, if you would like to use the Interstellar Overdrive on certain songs and another preamp or device at other times, you can plug your instrument into the 'Stella then run a patch cord from this output to the input of the other preamp or amplifier. By using a mixer or either preamps Master volumes, you may switch between the two or blend them together without loading down your instrument.

### **TUBE ACCESS COVER PANEL**

To service the tubes in your preamp, detach the A/C cord and remove the four screws located in each corner of the service panel. Make sure the tubes have sufficiently cooled. Tube designation from left to right is: EL84, EL84, 12AX7. This is also noted on the panel. The tubes will need replacing if they become noisy, microphonic (sounds like glass tingling in the background) or dead. Before replacing any tubes, try using a high quality contact cleaner spray on the tube sockets.

Your unit is installed with premium tubes. Optimum results will be achieved with matched EL84's rated 4, 5, or 6. Replacement tubes are available from SWR.

The access panel allows servicing of your tubes without having to remove your unit from a rack or removing the top panel. Access to the 12AX7 is easiest if the middle EL84 is removed first.

## **BALANCED LINE OUT AND GROUND LIFT**

Use this output to send a feed to the balanced input of a power amplifier, recording console, house mixer, etc. The signal present is the output of the Interstellar Overdrive and it's level is controlled by the Master volume on the front panel. Having both a line and direct balanced out enables the user to send a "clean direct" and colored "line out" feed for recording or house mixes. The engineer is then able to use each feed accordingly. Some very interesting mixes can be obtained by panning and mixing the two signals together.

The ground lift switch to the right of this output connects (GND) or disconnects (LIFT) the ground connection to pin 1 of the XLR jack. Always be aware of the position of this switch when using the Balanced Line Out. The ground lift switch does NOT affect the Unbalanced Line Out.

Pin out of the XLR connector: Pin 1= Ground, Pin 2= +, Pin 3= -

\*If the equipment your are plugging into comes from Europe, check the pinouts of the XLR connector for compatibility.

NOTE: The Balanced Line out has a potential of +24dB and should be sent to the "Line In" on mixing consoles, etc.

## **UNBALANCED LINE OUT**

Use this 1/4" jack to send an unbalanced signal to the input of a power amp, mixer, etc. using a high quality shielded cable. The level or amplitude appearing at this output is controlled by the Master volume.

## **EFFECTS LOOP**

The effects loop in the Interstellar Overdrive is an "in line" type. This means that any device inserted in the loop will always be active. For example, if it should fail, no sound will be heard from the line outputs of the Overdrive.

The Effects Loop is located in the signal chain after the gain stages and Blend control and before the tone controls and Master volume.

The signal at the effects loop is line level. Units made to go between your instrument and the preamp input may be overloaded or have signal loss. If your effect has a switch for setting input levels it should be set for 0db or +4db.

## **SEND JACK**

Run a shielded patch cord from the SEND jack to the INPUT of your effects unit. This jack may be used as an additional line level output (pre EQ).

## **RECEIVE JACK**

Run a shielded cable from the RECEIVE jack to the OUTPUT jack of your effects unit.

## **SPEAKER JACK**

Inside the Interstellar Overdrive is a complete miniaturized TUBE power amplifier and output transformer that will deliver about 5 watts RMS into a 4 or 8 ohm load. With nothing inserted into the speaker jack the power amp is loaded with an 8 ohm resistor. Generally speaking, the resistor portrays a full range, uncolored signal. Speakers and their respective cabinets however have natural roll off characteristics, peaks and valleys and changing impedances based on frequency. The output transformer reacts to these changes. Therefore a speaker cabinet plugged into the speaker jack will color the sound depending on its natural characteristics.

To experiment with this feature, set up your system as you normally would and listen to the sound. Now insert an extra speaker cabinet into the speaker jack. Depending on the qualities of the speaker and cabinet, certain nuances should be introduced into the sound coming from your main speaker system. Depending on the volume of your main system, you may or may not hear the sound coming from the extra cabinet since it is only producing a few watts.

An excellent alternative to the above is to use a high quality speaker emulator such as those made by Marshall and Groove Tubes. These units offer a variety of speaker types all in one rack space package. These units should be set to an 8 ohm impedance.

The Interstellar Overdrive may be used as a small practice amp by plugging in a cabinet in the speaker jack. Remember however that the speaker jack is pre-EQ and Master volume so these controls will not function under these conditions.

## **A/C LINE/MAINS FUSE**

The line fuse can open (blow) due to power surges or high powerline transients. This fuse will also open in the event of an electronic component failure inside your amplifier.

Correct size and rating of the Line fuse is 3AG, 1/2 amp slo blo.

DO NOT DEFEAT THE PURPOSE OF THIS FEATURE BY USING A FUSE WITH A HIGHER RATING. IT CAN CAUSE FURTHER DAMAGE TO YOUR PREAMP AND VOID YOUR WARRANTY.

## **A/C LINE CORD RECEPTACLE**

Accepts a standard A/C power cable (supplied with the unit in the United States) used with almost all current musical, professional and household appliances. We recommend taking great care when packing up. Put the cable in your instrument case, accessory case, etc. If it does become misplaced, replacement will be easy at almost any appliance store, super market or the like.

Electrical rating for a replacement cord should be type SJT or SVT, 3 conductor, 10 amp, 120V. Always purchase a UL approved product. Outside the United States, contact your local dealer/distributor for proper replacement information.

## **RACK MOUNTING INSTRUCTIONS & PRECAUTIONS**

Several heat producing components are inside the Interstellar Overdrive. These include the 3 tubes, power transformer and load resistor for the power amplifier. Adequate ventilation is achieved by three vents. These are located on the top and bottom panels and one at the rear. It is very important that these vents not be obstructed in any way to avoid overheating.

DON'T FORGET ABOUT IT! A lot of repairs to rack mount equipment is due to loose mechanical connections. Periodically, take the unit out of the rack and tighten all EXTERNAL screws, dust it off, clean the contacts on your patch cords and replace. Make sure the rack rails are in good working order while the rack is empty. You will be happy you did.

## **EXTERNAL DRIVE PEDAL INSTRUCTIONS**

The external drive pedal (available separately from SWR) overrides the Drive control on the front panel and allows the user hands free operation in adjusting the volume or distortion present in the signal.

To operate the Drive Pedal, run a stereo cord from the 1/4" phone jack provided on the side on the pedal to the input labeled "External Vol Pedal" on the front panel of the Interstellar Overdrive. This will automatically activate the Drive Pedal and render the Drive knob on the front panel inoperative.

Since the Drive pedal is electronic, any length stereo cable up to 50 feet can be used. As well, the cable need not be shielded. Ready made cables of various lengths can generally be purchased through any hi-fi or electronics store. If you would like to make your own custom length, use any 3 conductor cable between 24 and 18 gauge (22 is the easiest to find and solder) and two high quality connections between tip, ring and sleeve.

## **INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE LIMITED WARRANTY**

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The **INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE** from SWR is warranted to the original consumer purchaser for TWO YEARS from the date of purchase against defects in materials and workmanship, provided that it is purchased from an Authorized SWR dealer. This warranty applies only to products purchased in the USA or Canada.

This warranty is VOID if the unit has been damaged due to accident, improper handling, installation or operation, shipping damage, abuse or misuse, unauthorized repair or attempted repair, or if the serial number has been defaced or removed. FMIC reserves the right to make such determination on the basis of inspection by an Authorized FMIC Service Center.

All liability for any incidental or consequential damages for breach of any expressed or implied warranties is disclaimed and excluded herefrom.

Some states do not allow limitations on how long an implied warranty lasts, or the exclusion or limitation of incidental or consequential damages, so that the above exclusion may not apply to you. This warranty gives you specific legal rights and you may also have other rights which vary from state to state.

### **SHOULD YOUR SWR AMPLIFIER REQUIRE SERVICE OR REPAIR, PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE:**

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- 1** Locate your original receipt showing date of purchase, model and serial number.
- 2** Determine the closest Authorized FMIC Service Center to your location. The fastest way to get a complete list of Authorized FMIC Service Centers is on the web at:  
  
<http://www.mrgearhead.com/faq/allservice.html>  
  
You can also get this information by calling FMIC Consumer Relations at (480) 596-7195
- 3** To receive warranty service, return the complete product to an Authorized FMIC Electronics Service Center, with proof of purchase, during the applicable warranty period. Transportation costs are not included in this Limited Warranty.
- 4** Defective products that qualify for coverage under this warranty will be repaired or replaced, at FMIC's discretion, with a like or comparable product, without charge.

**For a complete list of Authorized FMIC Service Centers, and the latest SWR news, interviews, and more, check out our website:**

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***swrsound.com***

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