

M Britt Profiles – Grammatico Steel String Singer Pack

The Grammatico SSS Pack contains 69 studio profiles, 11 Merged Rigs and 3 Performances finalized using the latest 8.2.2 release firmware. Please make sure you are current on your firmware (at least 8.2.2 release) before using.*

John Grammatico has been building amps for some of music's biggest stars for years and recently relocated to Nashville where I got the opportunity to meet him and try out many of his amps at his shop. They were all great and each had their own thing going on, whether it be tweed or dumble or trainwreck inspired. When we got around to his Steel String Singer, I was quite literally blown away. The fullness, power, and clarity of this amp can easily knock down the little pig's brick house all while sounding smooth and refined. Low strings have a twang to them and high strings have a roundness and attack that is never piercing and always pleasant and clear. I left the shop and the sound of that amp haunted me. I'm so glad I recorded a clip of me playing it on the first day to refer back to.

I had read about some of my favorite guitarists using a Steel String Singer: Stevie Ray Vaughan, David Lindley, Eric Johnson, etc. And as soon as I played this amp, I can hear it. It's predominantly a clean amp but unlike any other clean amp I've ever played because it sustains like a high gain amp. The notes bloom and change timbre as they develop, full of rich overtones that make the amp seem 3D, especially compared to other amps. Which is what I did... I took some of my favorite amps to John's shop a few weeks later and listened and compared them, just to see if my memory of the SSS had become mythical or if I had just dreamed it and built it up bigger in my head. Soon, a room full of some of my favorite amps sounded *little*. The tones of them were still there and I could hear the sounds coming out of the speakers, but the SSS was just **bigger** and yep! 3D. It's like seeing a high-definition TV for the first time.

Bigger is usually better, but what is really special about the amp is how it makes me feel when I'm playing it. Notes jump off the strings, not having to be pulled or coaxed. I could dig in or play soft and everything came out smoothly without any ice picks or loss of energy. I went through my SRV licks and country licks and rock licks (if I do indeed have any). It honestly felt like I *found* the sound I've been hearing in my head all these years. So, it is without hyperbole when I say that this amp is truly an incredible amp and I can happily say that it's mine and will be for a long time.

As all of you know, I'm a die-hard Kemper user for live shows and recording and I was a bit curious to see if what I hear when playing the SSS in my room would translate to the

Kemper's 1's and 0's during the profiling process. Some boutique amps don't always profile accurately for whatever reason, but I did some test profiles and lo and behold they turned out great. The next week I was already using them as the basis for my live rigs and within another week, I had ditched my big Stage pedalboard and extra drive pedals. The profiles of the SSS and included drive pedals covered everything I needed so well that I am back to just using the Stage with most every song utilizing the SSS profiles included in this pack.

The Kemper does a really good job recreating the tones in this amp but if you ever get a chance to hear the real thing in the wild, please jump at the opportunity because it is still way cooler than even the great profiles of it. Follow Grammatico Amps on Instagram, Facebook, and the Grammatico website as well (links below).

<http://grammaticoamps.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/grammaticoamps>

<https://instagram.com/grammaticoamps>



RIGS:

High/Low Filter:

One of the coolest features of this amp is the high/low filter/expander controls. These are two 7-way “click” knobs that control the overall high and low cutoffs using a network of components to shape the high and low points. These do more than just add/subtract highs and lows, rather affecting the overall tone in subtle ways. For instance, the High filter, while allowing more highs to pass through as the knob is turned down (left) it also adds a touch more gain and changes the midrange as well, similar to a tone knob on a simple Volume/Tone circuit amp. Conversely, the Low filter allows more low end into the circuit as the knob is turned down (left). This also affects the gain slightly as well as shaping the midrange as well. The interaction of these knobs can yield different tones that can be used for tonal variation or to dial in tones easily for different pickups/guitars.

Most of the Rig Names incorporate different combinations of these knobs, denoted as the first two digits after “Gramma SSS”, such as “Gramma SSS 44 4”. The “44” means the High Filter was in notch 4 (from left) and the Low Filter was also notch 4 (from left). Not all combinations yield amazing results and I’ve included most of my favorite combinations here.

Bright Switch:

Another tone shaping tool is the Bright switch. The amp has plenty of clarity and top end in general but I did employ the Bright switch on a number of profiles. These details can be found in the Rig Tags seen in Rig Manager.

FET:

There is also an FET preamp stage that can be activated using the FET input. It’s like having an FET boost pedal in front of the amp and some people really dig it. I find it a bit shrill depending on the guitar/pickups used, so I only employed it on a couple of profiles. FET settings are noted in the Rig Tags.

Mid Switch:

Near the output Level knob there is a small Mid switch which adds mids as well as some gain. I employed this switch on a half dozen profiles as well. It is not my personal favorite setting of this amp, but with some guitars, it may be just the trick. Mid switch on is noted in Rig Tags.

Pedals:

I profiled many of my favorite drive pedals with this amp as well. It takes overdrive pedals really well and it's such a wide range amplifier that you can really hear the differences in the drive pedals used. These profiles use the following nomenclature to let you know which pedals are used:

BD – Boss Blues Driver
CS – Rockett Chicken Soup
D – Rockett Dude Pedal
FD – Fulltone Fulldrive
K – Klon
KA – Lovepedal Kalamazoo
R – MBritt Red pedal (Colonel Angus)
SR – Schaffer Replica
T – Timmy pedal
TK – Timmy + Klon
TKA – Timmy + Kalamazoo
TS – Ibanez 80's TS9 Tube Screamer

MB Rigs:

The first group of profiles I made of this amp used a few different high/low filter settings as I was trying to figure out the best tone for my live show rigs. The Rigs labeled "MB" denote those rigs and some of those comprise the basis of "my" tones that I am using in our Lonestar shows. They are all fairly similar but with some slight variations. For a good starting point for clean base tones, these are a good place to start.

Merged Rigs:

There are 11 Merged Rigs that I've included that will give those wanting to use Merged Rigs some variation. I made merged versions of some of my favorite tones in the pack. If the rig name ends in an "M" then it is the merged version.

PERFORMANCES:

Included in this pack are a few Performances that showcase some of the well-known sounds you might associate with the Steel String Singer (and/or Dumble amps) as well as a good starting point for a couple different type gigs, using the awesome Kemper built in fx.

SRV SSS (These were dialed in using a Strat)

| | | |
|---|-------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Riviera | Clean SSS tone like the song “Riviera Paradise” |
| 2 | Pride & Joy | Bluesy Edge of Breakup for this SRV Classic |
| 3 | Cold Shot | Bluesy Rotary Speaker tone with more gain on morph |
| 4 | Crossfire | More Saturated SRV with wah and univibe on tap |
| 5 | Voodoo | Hendrixy SRV vibe with over-the-top fx on morph |

Famous SSS (Mostly dialed in with Strat)

| | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Dover Cliffs | A couple of EJ tones from clean to solo (on morph) |
| 2 | Runnin on Lindley | David Lindley-esque slide (or not) with octave on tap |
| 3 | Mayer Cln | J Mayer like clean tone with screamer on morph |
| 4 | Dixie Chicken | Doubled comp'd Lowell George tone with more morph |
| 5 | Robbin Fjord | Bluesy Jazzy fusion with expressive low to mid gain |

MB SSS (dialed in with Red Anderson Cobra w/P90's)

| | | |
|---|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | MB Clean | My basic clean (but not entirely) tone for solid base |
| 2 | MB Delayz | A touch of Schaffer Replica and some Edge type delay |
| 3 | MB Crunch | Light crunch rhythm tone with Timmy |
| 4 | MB Klon | I use as my main beefy rhythm tone, more on morph |
| 5 | MB Kalamazoo | One of my fave lead tones, more on morph |

Possibly Useful Info –

Naming Conventions – As noted above, the first number digit pair denotes High/Low Filter settings. The letters either indicate pedals used, MB-series, or M (at the very end) for merged rigs. The single digits usually are just the number as I did them in the series. Generally, they tend to go up in gain but there are some variations.

Speakers and mics – This pack was profiled exclusively with a 3rd Power Switchback 212 cab with the ports open and the Classic Lead 80 speaker was used throughout. This speaker mates extremely well with this amp as the amp is so powerful it really needs a high wattage speaker that can withstand the low end without the high end getting too shrill.

Tweaking – **Feel free to tweak these profiles to fit what you want to hear just as you would a traditional amp.** I strive to keep my EQ section as flat as possible so it gives the user plenty of room to adjust as necessary. **I find the Definition control**

extremely useful in dialing in profiles as it can sweep the focus of the overall eq without having to grab the eq knobs. I often start there. If you find the profile “dull”, start by turning up the Definition. If you find it harsh, try turning the Definition down til it smooths out. The Power Sagging, Compressor, Clarity control and the speaker Character control can all be helpful as well. Some profiles may require more tweaking than others in getting “your” sound out them. The EQ in the amp section is also very useful to tailoring the profiles to fit the sound of your pickups as there is a huge variety of pickup tones out there and yours may not be exactly like mine.

***These rigs and presets were created in firmware 8.2.2 release and contain the filetype .krig, so users will need 8.2.2 release firmware or newer and the latest version of Rig Manager to import these files. Updates for Rig Manager and Kemper are available for download at the official Kemper website.**

<https://www.kemper-amps.com/downloads>

