



PHIL JONES BASS

BP-800 head, C27 and C47 cabs

It's that bass maverick Jones again, back with more luxurious amps for Rod C Taylor's road-test

\$799,
\$499, \$299

Phil Jones Bass
www.pjbworld.com

In the world of bass gear, the name Phil Jones has long been associated with packing surprising power into small units. From their Double Four miniature practice amp, which features two 4" NeoPower speakers, to their C9 cabinets, which has nine 5" woofers, this company has repeatedly demonstrated that you can get huge sound out of speakers that would be unimposing if judged by size alone.

This was not always the case. Until the early 2000s, the Phil Jones company concerned itself mostly with audio acoustics and loudspeaker design, but after spending a number of years in the field of high-end general audio, Jones found his way back to his first love, the bass, and we're all the better for it. The new BP-800 head and C27 and C47 they sent to us for a test-drive prove that point, providing an incredibly compact but powerful rig that delivers beautifully in terms of tone, depth, and resilience.

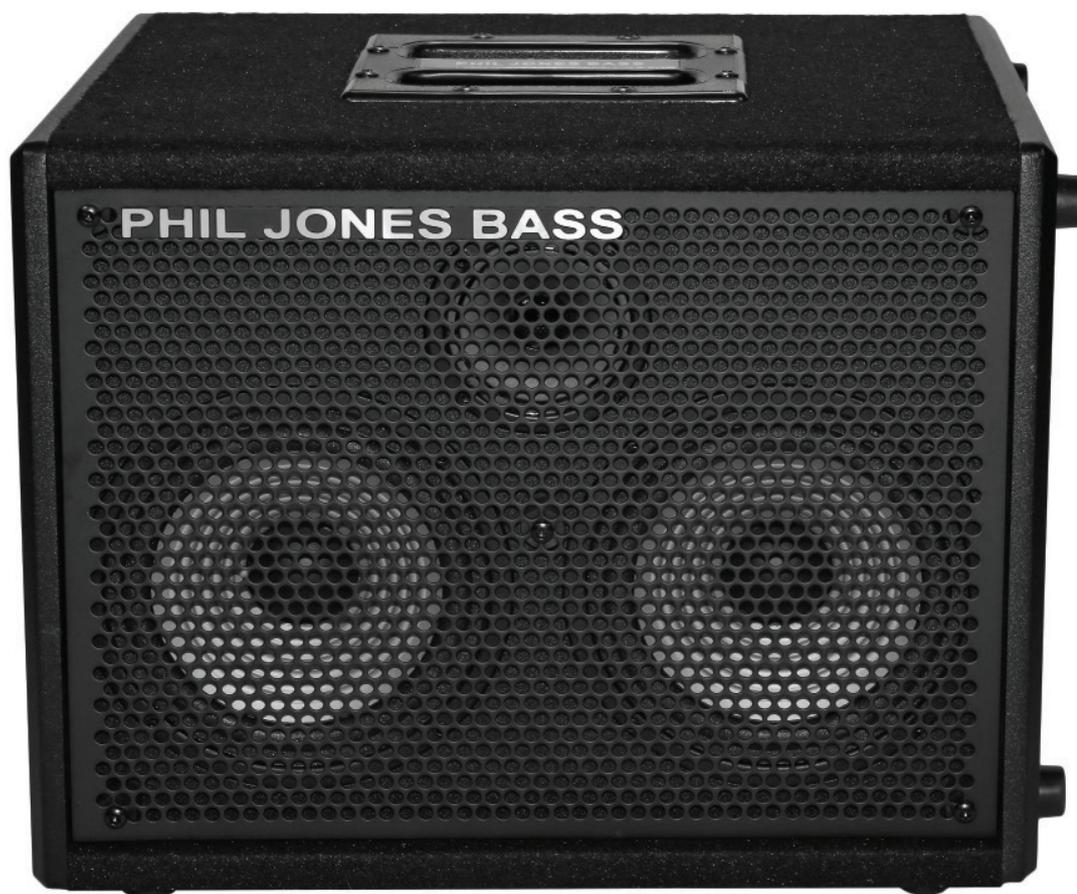
I usually start out testing gear by putting it through the paces in my home studio before taking it out around town, but this time I decided to do the reverse. The day the gear arrived, I had a rehearsal that same evening with Nashville powerhouse Ashley Cleveland and a group of singer-songwriters she was preparing for a show; I was part of the house band. The venue featured a small stage and a room that sat about 125 – the perfect kind of space to try out this setup.

I stacked the C27 on the C47, which seemed to make the most sense to me, and hooked up the amp. For this gig, I was playing two different basses; a passive American Fender Jazz and a custom active Zon Sonus fretless. These basses produce substantially different sounds, so I was curious to see how much tweaking I had to do as I switched between them.

Turns out, not much. Set straight up, the BP800 very accurately represents the instrument in your hands, which is a big deal to players like me who invest a lot of time and money in choosing particular instruments for their unique tonal qualities. With the Fender, I ran it straight up all night. For the Zon, I tweaked it minutely to add a few more mids, since I tend to solo the bridge pickup quite a bit. Overall, this combination pleased me, the artists, and the sound guy. You can't ask for much more, right? I should mention that loading it in was a breeze, too. It's not that the cabinets are light, but rather that their size makes them simple to handle when moving them from house to car to stage.

Back home, I put the amp and cabs through their paces with the above two instruments, along with a Spector EuroLX 4 and 6, an Xotic ProVintage 5, a Fender P-Bass and a Roscoe Beck V. Each performed well through the rig, but I was most impressed with how good the

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five-strings sounded, their tones delivered with the same deep, meaty, growly lows I'd expect from larger speakers. When I got to the Xotic, I turned up the active bass EQ all the way, cranked the volume, and hammered away on the B string to see if I could get my neighbour to come out of his house to see what was going on. (He did, but we're friends so it's all good.)

In short, I was impressed not only with the volume the amp produced at low frequencies, but also with how, at that volume, there was no breakup, no squeezed tone, and nothing else to indicate that the amp was being stressed by how hard and low I was pushing it. Add in the thoughtful design, light weight and aesthetics of the amp, and you have a winning combination. For example, I dig the simple but effective five-band EQ, and I especially like the Mute Passive/Active switch. It's important to me that something clearly indicates when the mute feature is engaged on an amp, but instead of adding a whole other light

just for that, Phil Jones makes use of the clip indicator, which stays lit when you engage the switch to mute the amp. It's the little things that matter, right?

All in all, I love this setup. So many of our gigs as bassists are on tight stages where big rigs don't make much sense, but in those moments we don't want to go with a small sound just to conserve space. The Phil Jones BP800 amp, paired with the C27 and C47, solves that problem. Vincent Van Gogh once said "Great things are done by a series of small things brought together." This setup provides a wonderful example of the truth of that statement, and I encourage you to give it a try to see for yourself. ■

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Phil Jones PJB BP800 Head

Price | \$799

Made in | China

Power | 800 watts @ 4 ohms,
400 watts @ 8 ohms

Features | Input, Mute/Low/High switch, five-band EQ (Lo-Bass, Hi-Bass, Mid, Lo-Treble, Hi-Treble), clip indicator, AUX in, headphones out, input level control, AUX level control, master volume, effects send/return, XLR DI with ground lift, Speakon out, preamp out

Size | 7.5" x 12.5" x 2.5"

(190mm x 317mm x 63 mm) W x D x H

Weight | 5.7 lbs / 2.59 kg

Phil Jones PJB Cab-47

Price | \$499, including PJB cover

Power | 300 watts at 8 ohms

Speakers | 4 x 7" baffle mounted drivers, 3" tweeter

Inputs | 2 x Speakon inputs

Size | 16.3" x 12.6" x 17"

(414mm x 320mm x 431mm), W x D x H

Weight | 38.6lbs / 17.5 kg

Phil Jones PJB Cab-27

Price | \$299, including PJB cover

Power | 200 watts at 8 ohms

Speakers | 2 x 7" baffle mounted drivers, 3" tweeter

Inputs | 2 x Speakon inputs

Size | 13" x 16" x 13"

(330 x 460 x 330 mm) W x D x H

Weight | 19lbs / 13.1 kg

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Beautifully transparent amp and cabs, perfect for small to medium gigs

Minus | None

Overall | If you're looking for a compact but powerful rig, you'll want to give this one a try

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY
SOUND QUALITY
VALUE

