# Randomized overdrive neural networks

## **Christian Steinmetz**

Queen Mary University of London c.j.steinmetz@qmul.ac.uk

#### Joshua D. Reiss

Queen Mary University of London joshua.reiss@gmul.ac.uk

#### **Abstract**

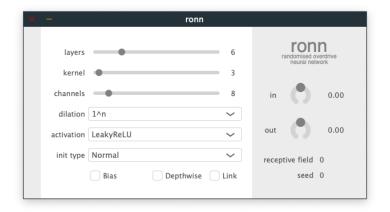
## 1 Introduction

Throughout the history of audio technology, engineers, circuit designers, and guitarists have searched for novel sonic effects as a result of clipping or distorting audio signals. These distortion effects were first discovered by pushing early guitar amplifiers beyond their operating range, or in some cases even from the accidental damage amplifiers or speakers [7]. These pursuits are a clear example of creators taking advantage of the limitations of their tools for creative effect.

Today, distortion effects have permeated most genres like blues, jazz, rock, metal, and these effects also play a central roll in modern pop and hip-hop styles. Whether it be vacuum tubes, diodes, transistors, op-amps, integrated circuits, or broken speaker drivers performing the distortion, it appears as if nearly all the methods of generating this sought after effect have been exhausted. But maybe there is a relatively under-explored in the task of generating distortion, and thats the realm of neural networks.

Neural networks are far from new, and in fact they came into existence in the same era that blues guitarists began their experiments with distortion [5]. Now with the emergence of modern deep learning approaches, these methods have already applied to the task of trying to mimic the characteristic distortion of famous amplifiers and distortion effects [1, 6, 8, 2, 4]. The aim of this work deviates from these modeling approaches, and very much in the spirit of the original distortion pioneers, our work aims to take advantage of neural networks in a way that departs from their intended design, .

[3]



- 2 Method
- 3 Discussion

## **Broader Impact**

## References

### References

- [1] J. Covert and D. L. Livingston. A vacuum-tube guitar amplifier model using a recurrent neural network. In 2013 Proceedings of IEEE Southeastcon, pages 1–5, April 2013.
- [2] Eero-Pekka Damskägg, Lauri Juvela, Vesa Välimäki, et al. Real-Time Modeling of Audio Distortion Circuits with Deep Learning. In *16th Sound and Music Computing Conference* (SMC2019), May 2019.
- [3] Brecht De Man and Joshua D Reiss. Adaptive control of amplitude distortion effects. In *Audio Engineering Society Conference: 53rd International Conference: Semantic Audio*. Audio Engineering Society, 2014.
- [4] Marco A Martínez Ramírez and Joshua D Reiss. Modeling nonlinear audio effects with end-toend deep neural networks. In *ICASSP 2019 - 2019 IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech and Signal Processing (ICASSP)*, pages 171–175, May 2019.
- [5] Jürgen Schmidhuber. Deep learning in neural networks: An overview. *Neural networks*, 61:85–117, 2015.
- [6] Thomas Schmitz and Jean-Jacques Embrechts. Nonlinear real-time emulation of a tube amplifier with a long short time memory neural-network. In *Audio Engineering Society Convention 144*. Audio Engineering Society, 2018.
- [7] John Shepherd. *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Performance and production. Volume II*, page 286. Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Volume 1: Media, Industry and Society. Bloomsbury Academic, 2003.
- [8] Zhichen Zhang, Edward Olbrych, Joseph Bruchalski, Thomas J. McCormick, and David L. Livingston. A vacuum-tube guitar amplifier model using long/short-term memory networks. SoutheastCon 2018, pages 1–5, 2018.