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## Vinny Roth



**"I'M A DINOSAUR AS FAR AS GEAR goes,"** says Vinny Roth, whose current CD is *2 Stratz Are Better Than 1* [Big Veee]. "I play a stock 1987 Fender American Standard Stratocaster through a Traynor YC-80—which sounds like an old Fender Twin, but weighs half as much—an original Ibanez TS808, a Morley Bad Horsie wah, and a Boss DD-6 Digital Delay. I also have a custom guitar built by my pals at Wooden Wizard Guitars that's equipped with a set of Joe Barden SSH pickups, and I use a stock '90s Gibson 1959 ES-335 Dot Reissue for slide work."

Roth deployed his relatively sparse setup to cop some of the tones close to his heart. He used the ES-335, the Traynor (reverb on

3), and the TS808 (Gain full up and Tone on 0) to evoke Clapton's live 335 sound with Cream. He went to the Strat, the TS808 (Gain still full up, but Tone on 5), and the Boss DD-6 to craft a clean tone with just enough dirt to emulate Hubert Sumlin's tone during his Howlin' Wolf years. He also struggled to get as close to Duane Allman's slide tone as possible.

Not surprisingly, given the references above, Roth wanted his album to sound as if it was recorded by producer Tom Dowd in 1973, be true to his blues and jam band roots, and act as a "resume" of the styles he plays, just in case "someone big time looking for a guitarist would hire me."

"And that was the main challenge," Roth admits. "To play and create the music I love, I woodshedded with so many records, and I developed my ear stealing as many licks as possible. So when I recorded *2 Stratz Are Better Than 1*, I had to try to let go of all of that and be myself. Having learned so many musical styles, it is so easy to regurgitate many of my hero's riffs. But I certainly didn't want to sound too much like B.B. King when I played blues, or the Allmans when I played slide, or Danny Gatton when I played Country. Luckily, once I got into my 'zone,' I found I could do what I have been doing my whole life—to just feel it and let the music flow." —MICHAEL MOLEND