

with a continual barrage of volume swells. The AD9Pro will also yield rockabilly-approved slapback, with the quick repeat being just muddy enough not to be overbearing. Although it's not cheap, and many will find the price-to-delay-time ratio a bit steep, the AD9Pro is a boon for fans of drippy, analog delay in an easy-to-dial-in package.

KUDOS Analog delay in all of its warm glory—in stereo too.

CONCERNS None.

CONTACT Maxon, dist. by Godlyke, (866) 246-3595; godlyke.com

MXR M-169 CARBON COPY ANALOG DELAY

The Carbon Copy (\$254 retail/\$149 street) offers Regen, Mix, and Delay controls, as well as two of the most blindingly bright LEDs—one for on/off status, and the other for a surface-mounted Modulation button that adds warble to the pedal's repeats—you're likely to encounter. Inside the Carbon Copy's immaculate green-sparkle enclosure are two mini pots that control the Modulation's Width and Speed. Flaunting 600ms of delay time and a mono output, the Carbon Copy excels at yielding soupy, burnished repeats—the *raison d'être* of analog delay. I was more than satisfied with every sound, from subtle slap to long trails of cascading repeats, as its natural, organic-sounding layers fattened up rhythm and lead lines exquisitely. The Modulation function can be used to really smear the already hazy delays. The internal trimpots are thoughtful, albeit powerful tools for expanding the Carbon Copy's freaky factor, however, those little suckers are *small*. I had to tear my toolbox apart in order to find a screwdriver that could fit them. Still, the Carbon Copy is a great sounding, well-constructed analog delay with a bit of a twist owing to its Modulation control. And it's offered at a price that's a steal for an analog unit. Well done!

KUDOS A small footprint analog delay with happening modulation effects. Affordable.

CONCERNS None.

CONTACT MXR, (707) 745-2722; jimdunlop.com



RED WITCH EMPRESS CHORUS/VIBRATO

Ah yes, chorus—an effect that has been the signature of many great guitarists, and the Achilles' heel of many more. Still, there's no denying the expansive lushness a well-deployed, musical-sounding chorus can give you. The Empress (\$380 retail/\$300 street), sports a bewitching control set that will cast a spell on even the most hardy of chorusing souls. Aside from Mix and Depth knobs, you get Velocity (speed), a Bright switch, a Chorus/Vibrato switch, and an internal slide control that adds a slight boost when the effect is engaged. The nut of the stereo output-equipped Empress

is its Voice control, which glides you between tubular, almost flange-like chorusing to more classic, thickly modulated tones—with barely a nudge of the knob. Make no mistake, this powerful feature offers myriad sounds. High settings of the Voicing control add some hiss, but it's within the realm of acceptability and the tones are exquisite. The Vibrato effects are as wacky or as subtle as you want, and with the Mix control, I was able to attach freaky waves of modulation to a mostly dry signal for a subliminal, haunting effect. The Empress is a three-dimensional modulation machine, and when you couple its vast array of sounds with absolutely wicked construction—and some cool graphics—you've got one of the drippiest sounding chorus/vibrato pedals ever made.

KUDOS Tons of different sounds and textures to be had for the discriminating chorus hound.

CONCERNS None.

CONTACT Red Witch, dist. by Dana B. Goods, (805) 644-6621; redwitchanalog-pedals.com



TECH 21 BLONDE

Tech 21's SansAmp Character series features four classic guitar amp emulators: VT Bass Character pedal. Each pedal has the same control set—Level, Mid, Low Character, and Drive—as well as far-screened graphics rendered in the color of the amp the pedal is emulating. Designed to be run in front of an amp, in an effects loop, or plugged directly into an amp, these boxes are sneaky powerful. They sport active EQ for maximum tweaking and enough insane output and gain to warrant a "warning" sticker. The Tech 21 Blonde (\$195 retail/\$149 street) is Tech 21's emulation of classic Fender amps, and as with the Character Series pedals, dialing it hinges on what you're plugging it into. For example, running it in front of a Deluxe Reverb, I found it took some tailoring to the treble and midrange respectively, but the ranges are incredibly vast. All Character control affects everything from frequency response to attack and sustain. Using the Blonde as a traditional stereo effect is do-able—in fact, there are some cool things to be had in this configuration. Blonde shines much brighter when it's used in an amp's effects loop (thus bypassing the amp's EQ and preamp). In my Reverend Goblin 5, the Blonde's Fender voicing becomes more apparent. I was able to get an excellent approximation of a Fender Champ cranked and clean, or a Fender Reverb, or a twangy Fender Telecaster turned up 11. Some sweet tones. Blonde Tech 21 NYC Enj with pres: The F reacted wor

