

## The Unmistakable Vibe of the 'UniVibe'



Who hasn't been captivated and intrigued by the gently swirling sound of a tastefully played guitar track laid down with a UniVibe? Yes, Hendrix and Trower first introduced this phasing/chorus/tremolo effect to our musical soundscape, but it has continued to be used by many artists since to achieve an eerie sense of movement not entirely of this world. Even Eric Clapton has doggedly kept a hulking, reinforced Leslie cabinet in his stage rig for decades, whether "Badge" was in his set list or

not. We'll properly credit Doyle Bramhall II for having brilliantly mined this effect during the past decade, and if we aren't mistaken, you can also hear phasing on a few of the vocal tracks found on his solo albums (*Jellycream* and *Welcome*). Yeah, we've said it before, but if you don't own these recordings, you've missed two of the most brilliant rock albums released (with deafening silence) in the past 30 years.

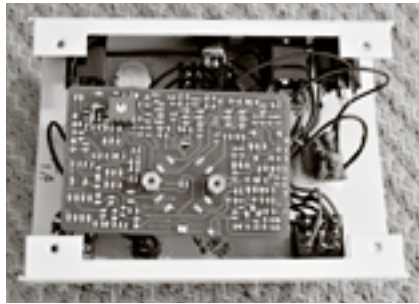


Mark Selby's track titled "Baby I Do" features a lone Stratocaster running through a stereo Dunlop Uni-Vibe model UV-1SC that endows this slow ballad with a stark, rolling, melancholy

mood that suits the lyrics perfectly, allowing the guitar to orbit the bass and drums anchoring the center of the mix. We acquired a new Dunlop stereo Uni-Vibe UV-1SC for \$129.00 online, and we also borrowed a new, \$249.00 Fulltone Deja-Vibe from Midtown Music to experience both ends of the spectrum, or so we thought.



Both units feel solidly built and feature chorus and vibrato, speed, intensity, mix and volume controls. The Fulltone has a nifty trim pot on the bottom of the case that adjusts the amount of cur-



rent delivered to the bulb controlling the amount of 'bend' and chorus; there is also a warmer, softer 'vintage' and a clearer 'modern' setting, and you can

switch between the chorus and vibrato effect with a toggle switch, while the Dunlop uses two separate output jacks for chorus and vibrato. It didn't take much time to realize that the Fulltone Deja-Vibe delivers more clarity and far surpasses the Dunlop in its ability to preserve high frequencies when the chorus effect is set at high levels. There is no apparent treble loss with the Deja-Vibe, nor do the lows and mids seem as muddy and indistinct as the Dunlop, yet the more we used it, the sharp brightness of the Deja-Vibe began to lose its appeal. The Dunlop performs best at less extreme mix settings, but once you've passed 2 o'clock, the affected tone becomes much more middy than the natural, unaffected signal, and the lower strings lose definition. This is not to say that you can't get decent sounds out of the Dunlop, but you do have to work a little harder to find its narrower range of optimal settings. Still, we can easily see how individual players might prefer either of these effects over the other despite the obvious nod to the Deja-Vibe for clarity and brightness, *if that's what you like...* Some people might just prefer the warmer, murkier sound of the Dunlop over the pristine clarity of the Deja-Vibe, and at less extreme settings, the perceived 'shortcomings' revealed in a one-on-one A/B test are far less apparent. You need only reference Mark Selby's tracks cut with the Uni-Vibe, which reveal nothing in the way of 'bad tone.' In fact, the stereo Uni-vibe sounds *very* good on Selby's recording.

Switching to the vibrato effect that 'bends' pitch to the speed you set, the Deja-Vibe is a clear winner. Where the Dunlop sounds jittery, nervous and staccato, the Deja-Vibe's vibrato produces a smoother, more musical and natural sound at all speeds.

As we spent more time with both versions, we found ourselves wanting things that seemed missing in both – a less processed and deeper, more organic, liquid sound, warmer than the Deja-Vibe, but brighter and more transparent than the Dunlop. We also weren't overwhelmed by either of these effects when combined with overdrive and distortion effects, or simply with an overdriven amp. Both produced a reasonably good stereo Uni-Vibe effect, but with dramatically different levels of clarity, tone and a natural-sounding effect. Credit Fulltone for clarity and functional versatility, Dunlop for an affordable Uni-Vibe that gets you in the neighborhood, but we weren't ready to stop looking just yet...

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We set the Fulltone and Dunlop aside and began researching alternatives, ultimately finding a new crop of boutique Vibes and tremolo/phasers, including the rare Red Witch Deluxe Moon phaser from

New Zealand, the Sweetsound Mojo Vibe, and the FoxRox AquaVibe. We bought and received a Red Witch Deluxe Moon Phaser just before this issue went to press, and our first bit of foreplay was a mesmerizing experience. The Red Witch sounds *incredibly* good, yet, technically it is a clone of nothing, and not really a 'UniVibe' at all, but an analog tremolo and phasing device that produces what the builder describes as 'tremophase.' Whatever you wish to call it, this is a spectacular effect. Housed in a chrome-plated aluminum case, the Moon Phaser features three controls; 'Velocity' manages the tremolo/phase sweep from a dead crawl, to the jitterbug pulse of a jet-lagged tourist in an Amsterdam coffee house. *Careful with that hash, Eugene...* Think of the underwater intro to Zep's "No Quarter." The 'Trajectory' knob adjusts the shape of the phased wave (you need to hear it), and the 'Cosmology' control is a 6-way rotary switch that delivers three phaser settings, two tremophase settings and a tremolo setting, while also notching EQ in very interesting ways. True to its name, the Moon Phaser produces a dramatic range of celestial effects with incredible 3-D depth and movement. The sounds lurking in this box are magic. The FoxRox AquaVibe and Sweetsound MojoVibe arrived too late for a review in this issue, so stay tuned for our reviews and commentary from the builders in the March 08 issue. [To](#)

[www.jimdunlop.com](http://www.jimdunlop.com)

[www.fulltone.com](http://www.fulltone.com)

[www.redwitchanalogpedals.com](http://www.redwitchanalogpedals.com)

## Who's Playing Where? Copper Mountain Guitar Town Festival

On July 28-29, 2007, we attended the Copper Mountain Guitar Town festival in Copper Mountain, Colorado. This year the festival will be held August 9-10, co-sponsored by ToneQuest, and we promise a stellar line-up of performers and interactive workshops at the spectacular Copper Mountain resort, one hour west of Denver.

We've included a peek at a few of the many highlights of the festival, which included a Saturday morning workshop and Q&A with Jim Weider and Mitch Stein (Project Perculator)

and a Sunday session with Johnny Hiland, Brent Mason, Mark Selby, John Jorgensen and Lee Roy Parnell.

Mark your calendar now for August 9-10, 2008 and stay tuned for more information on the Guitar Town Festival and ToneFest at Copper Mountain. See you there! [To](#)

[www.villageatcopper.com/guitarTown/](http://www.villageatcopper.com/guitarTown/)



Jim and Mitch wake us up with a little Perculator from Jim's CD.



Lindley requires absolutely no explanation.



Adrian Legg warms up the early crowd as only a veteran busker from London can...



Dickey with son, Duane, working with a vintage goldtop.



Junior Brown feelin' it.



Lee Roy Parnell and John Jorgensen... Jorgensen's AC30 echoing in the Rockies was unforgettable.



Copper Crowd