

# KEELEY ELECTRONICS

## MONTEREY

REVIEW BY  
**DAVID A. EVANS**

STREET PRICE **\$299.00**



Imagine an effects pedal whose decor is reminiscent of Keith Haring's work, and which offered up a set of tones that was at once classic and contemporary. Okay, so perhaps the hand-written "Monterey" on Keeley Electronics's new hybrid fuzz and modulation pedal brings to mind images of a California beach more easily than Haring's work. Yet the pedal offers an intriguing mix of Hendrix-like fuzz, vibe, rotating speaker, and wah sounds, as well as a contemporary octave doubling effect. The Monterey aims at a thoughtful fusion of past and present, and succeeds

admirably.

The modulation effects are very tasteful, and tend to be a bit more restrained than those offered by competitors. For example, the rotary speaker effect, which is selectable with the small center-mounted toggle switch, offers up a comfortable but not insane Leslie effect at its maximum depth and rate settings. By comfortable, not "insane," I mean that the speed is more than adequate for all but the most extreme musicians for whom a rotary speaker's primary use is comedy and the creation of bizarre noises. For typical players, the Monterey's

warm, liquid rotary effect should do the trick nicely. Likewise, the Monterey's Uni-Vibe offers the throbbing, pulsing phasing that certain guitar legends have made so famous. In fact, in combination with the built-in fuzz (not temperature-sensitive), the Monterey will pump out some of the tastiest Hendrix tones that this writer has heard in some time.

The Monterey's octave doubler produces a more contemporary sound than was expected, but it is by no means a demerit. Actually, the Monterey's octave doubler offered the sort of sounds that most

people wouldn't normally associate with phasing and fuzz of the Hendrix variety. The doubled-down octave gave my signal a powerful, synth-like low end that still sounded fairly traditional. The octave-up setting, however, sounded a lot more like the recent harmonizer pedals offered by DigiTech. The doubled-up signal was slightly delayed, which created a fuller sound. Some people may dislike the more contemporary approach and tone of the circuit, but I found it to be refreshing given the pedal's emphasis on re-creating other, more classic effects.

The fuzz circuit, like the rotary circuit, is also tastefully restrained. It's not the sort of fuzz that's going to win over the "more fuzz is better fuzz" crowd. Instead, it produces a responsive, sizzling fuzz that's reminiscent of certain of the original fuzz boxes from the '60s. As mentioned earlier, when the fuzz is combined with the vibe, the Monterey really sings. I almost believed that I could pull off a good Hendrix

impression for a moment. It's safe to say that the Monterey, rather than my playing, made the better impression on me.

As for the wah circuit, the Monterey features not just one, but three options for all wah-wah needs. Of course, an expression pedal (any will do) helps to expand the pedal's potential, but it's not really necessary. Even without an expression pedal, the Monterey produced a fun auto-wah that was great for funk strumming, while the harmonic wah touched on sounds that I would have expected from an unusual Uni-Vibe.

Keeley's Monterey comes in 12 different paint styles, so it's likely that the pedal readers receive will differ from the one which I tested. But, inside, the circuits will be the same, which is a good thing—the Monterey offers a wealth of tones that reach back to the past but also remind one of the present. Check it out.

## WHAT WE LIKE

A plethora of high-quality new and classic modulation effects in a compact box.

## CONCERNS

None.