

# KEELEY ELECTRONICS SEAFOAM+

REVIEW BY **FLETCHER STEWART**

STREET PRICE **\$189.00**



## A CHORAL THREE-FOR-ALL

One gets the sense that with each new Keeley pedal the man and his team are so inspired by their own gear that they are picking up where a previous pedal left off, and expanding upon it. Keeley and Co. are literally riffing off design ideas and taking each pedal as far down the R&D rabbit hole as it can go. If this means some overlap in functionality, then so be it. Buying a Keeley pedal these days is like being a loyal regular at the local deli, paying for a small sandwich and getting the mile-high, just because the

owner knows you and feels generous.

Imagine having the cool silky warm movement of a Boss CE-2 Chorus, the squidgy, rubberized bounce of a Boss VB-2 Vibrato, the clear sickly-sweet swirl of a digital rack chorus, the unpredictable interweaving voices of an ADT (Automatic Double Tracker), and the phosphorescent glisten of a vintage Electro-Harmonix Electric Mistress, all in an MXR-sized, easy-to-tweak pedal. As if that wasn't enough bang for the buck, throw in a hyper-realistic Abbey Road-inspired room reverb, and the ability to isolate chorusing to low or

high frequencies only. Enter the Seafoam+...

## COOL CLEAR CHIME OR BUCKET BRIGADE BRINE

Starting in the ADT mode, we are privy to the Dimension portion of Keeley's previous 30ms Automatic Double Tracker pedal. This brings in two additional voices that randomly deviate in pitch for a beautifully organic, free-form accompaniment to the core tone. Because there is no low frequency oscillator (LFO) regulator in this mode, the non-cyclical nature of the effect feels unique and different from more familiar chorus units.

I love running the ADT in my effects loop to not only accentuate the haunting movement of the voices, but to properly place the excellent Abbey Road-esque reverb after my amp's distortion.

In Seafoam mode, we are cooling our heels in pure classic chorus with a few secret sonic treasures hiding in the dials. In this mode, the LFO is introduced for a classic repeating swirl of sound. The Space control becomes a tone knob that only affects the effected signal (not the dry). This takes the chorusing from pristine rack-style chorus, to chewy MN3005 bucket-brigade territory, and, when rolled off completely, I can hear the dark bouncy nature of the fabled SAD4096. Speaking of rubbery, when the Mix knob is at full, the dry signal is taken out of the equation and a very convincing Boss VB-2-style pitch vibrato squiggles to life. It is worth mentioning here that the internal Dip Switch can be set to a sort of global vintage high-end roll off that makes all

modes and settings sound like they have been doused by the bucket brigade. No other digital chorus I have tried even comes close to these authentic tones. Also under the hood is a chorus-flange mode that is voiced for bass, but totally guitar-friendly as well. This can get mighty close to the old TC Electronic Spatial Expander or EHX Electric Mistress if tweaked right.

Moving on to Dual Chorus mode, the Depth and Space controls become independent high and low pass chorus controls, affecting only those frequencies above or below the high E-string. Remember that old Boss HF-2 High Band Flanger? This works in a similar fashion, and is great for those "you don't notice until you switch it off" scenarios. Flicking the internal Bass Mode Dip Switch in Dual Chorus mode unlocks a secret undulating tremolo on the low end that leaves the upper notes chorusing and shimmering away. Johnny Marr's tone on "How Soon is Now," anyone?

## WHAT WE LIKE

Besides the Eventide MicroPitch algorithms, I have never been a fan of digital chorus, vibrato, or flange tones—even when they claim to be based on vintage units. They often sound fine clean, but any amount of dirt in the tonal equation reveals the flat cold soulless slurping I so abhor. Keeley has cracked the code with the Seafoam+, giving us a veritable library of vintage and modern time-based effects. Wide and lush, tight and wobbly, dark and creamy, light and sparkly, or wet, gloomy and slap back roomy, it's all here, and it's all beautiful.

## CONCERNS

As with the 30ms, I would still like stereo quarter-inch outputs.