

# Line 6 M13 Stompbox Modeller | £398

All four classic Line 6 modelling pedals in one stage-friendly floorboard. Can this be? **Robbie Stamp** stomps his way to the truth



## WHAT IS IT?

Guitar effects pedal modelling floorboard made up of four user-assignable FX units

## CONTACT

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 All four classic Line 6 modellers in a box
- 2 Great connectivity
- 3 Well-built to endure a real stomping

**L**ine 6 seem to never tire of creating products that offer up their acclaimed digital modelling algorithms in a

myriad of formats, from single pedals to rack mount processors. Their successful range of stomp box modelling pedals (DL4, DM4, FM4 and MM4) have now been bundled together and offered up in the hefty M13 Stompbox Modeller. Four LCD displays, fifteen shiny metal footswitches and an array of parameter knobs form the control surface to this four-effects-boxes-in-a-pedal-board.

The M13 is made up of four FX units, each of which can be assigned to

any of the 75+ stompbox models available, so you can even have the same effect four times if you're that way inclined. Each unit has three footswitches (A, B and C) to toggle between effects within each 'scene' (pressing the same switch a second time bypasses that FX unit). There are 12 possible 'scenes' accessible via the Scenes footswitch and these are snapshots of all four FX units' settings. There are two other non-FX unit footswitches: one accesses the Looper mode and the other is for tap-tempo. The latter also switches on the tuner when held down. The Scenes and

Looper switches are held down to access the scene setup and global setup functions.

The green, purple, blue and yellow of the original modeller pedals (delay, filter, modulation and distortion respectively) has been carried over into the M13 LCD displays and footswitch lights (along with an additional orange for reverb) to allow easy identification of what type of effect is selected. All the footswitches are lit with their respective modeller-type colour, with the inactive ones dimmed. All this adds up to a very clear and simple visual feedback system that saves squinting or bending down, leaving the player to concentrate on rockin' out!

Below each of the LCD screens sit six knobs. One selects the modeller type (delay, modulation, etc) when pressed, while rotating selects the particular effect model. The other five knobs control the effect parameters, with the LCD screen displaying the information in a corresponding arrangement.

## Ins and outs

At the rear of the M13 are ten ¼" jack sockets, two MIDI sockets (In and Out), the power switch and PSU input socket. Eight of the jack sockets handle input, output and the FX send/return loop all



## Jacking In, Jacking Out



The M13 boasts mono and stereo connectivity at input, output and through the FX send and return path. Though as a guitar effects processor it is less common to use stereo, using the output to drive two amps can make really make the most of the modulation and delay effects. The FX loop can be

placed anywhere in the signal path via a setting in each scene's setup menu.

The beauty of this is that a signal can be slaved off to another amp, or through another set of pedals before going to the proceeding effects. If the return is not used (or fed by a split guitar output) then

one can effectively divide the effects between different amps.

In fact one could even feed four separate amps the same signal, or have two separate stereo amp setups, with one panning delays and the other panning a phaser. When recording the FX send can be used to divide the guitar signal

and provide a clean DI signal for later reamping.

The stereo FX loop can also be hijacked to create two parallel external pedal loops to further enhance stereo processing or just keep certain pedals from running into each other (e.g. a wah-wah and an envelope filter).

in mono and stereo, just like its pedal predecessors (see the *Jacking In, Jacking Out* box above for more detail). The other two are inputs for expression pedals, which can be assigned to any parameter. The only limitation here is that each FX unit can deal with only one expression pedal at a time, though this is hardly a deal-breaker. Beyond the main effects, the M13 also has a 28-

settings before a scene change and a manual function keeping the memory static, unless a scene is changed and then saved. Though this seems obvious, it is nonetheless useful as it can be as annoying to lose your cool new sound due to an accidental scene change as it is to play a gig finding that the scenes have all changed after tweaking settings absent-mindedly at sound check.

on the more studio-style options. This is not due to their quality, I just don't like them coming out of a Marshall stack! And herein lies the beauty of this unit – like the pedals before this is, despite its floorboard form, as useful a studio tool as it is a guitarist's.

The combination of sound quality, simplicity and good visual feedback make the M13 a heavyweight in its

field. The fact that this is essentially four stomp boxes makes it very attractive to those of us addicted to all things 'pedal'. Basically this is the DL4, DM4,

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second loop function which, once accessed by the 'Looper Controls' footswitch, can be simply operated with a number of the main footswitches.

Alongside the standard record, overdub, play and stop controls there is an undo function, half-speed and reverse, 'Play Once' for single phrase playback and a pre/post switch for playing the loop with or without effects.

## Features-a-plenty

Though the true quality of the M13 should be judged by the sounds it is capable of, it is worth mentioning a few features that lurk beneath those shiny footswitches. Firstly there is an option for True Bypass ('straight wire' analogue connection from input to output) when all the effects are bypassed, which is a real favourite of tone purists. There are two options for saving scenes, with an auto-save function keeping the latest

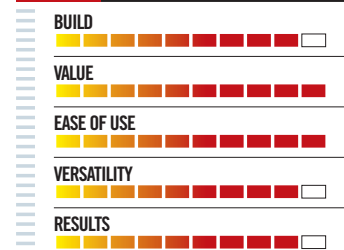
If you have ever used the original modeller pedals, you will already know what the M13 sounds like. The delays and echoes are excellent, as are most of the modulation and filter effects. I am not a big fan of the DM4, but hearing these distortion and boost/compressor pedal models in conjunction with the other three pedals has made me reappraise my opinion, as there is plenty of grit and tone possible, especially if a couple are chained up at lower gain settings to create a thicker overdrive/fuzz characteristic.

Being able to quickly chop and change between the four FX units and tweak parameters without having to fish through convoluted menus makes tone shaping simple and pleasurable.

Line 6 have added a set of reverb models on top of the original four modeller pedals which provides some nice spring reverbs, though I'm not sold

FM4 and MM4 in one box with total recall, a load of routing options that don't require repatching, and it takes up less floor space. If that is not enough, then consider that all four of those pedals would cost over £700 new, making the M13 around half the price, which is a bargain in my book. **FM**

## FutureMusic VERDICT



The best Line 6 modeller effects in one sturdy box at a bargain price – a guitarist's new 'must-have'

## SPECS

**Connections:** 2x input (mono/stereo), 2x output (mono/stereo), 2x FX send (mono/stereo), 2x FX return (mono/stereo), MIDI in, MIDI out, 2x expression pedal inputs

**FX units:** 4 (assignable to any of the 75+ stompbox models included)

**Rotary knobs:** 6 per FX unit

**Footswitches:** 12 for FX selection (3 per FX unit), 3 for other functions

**Scene memory:** 12 (all user programmable)

**Displays:** Four 58mm x 17mm backlit (multicoloured) LCD screens

**Dimensions**

385 x 302 x 63mm

**Weight:**

6kg

## ALTERNATIVES



**TC Electronic Nova System**

£ 512

Utilising some of the effects from the more expensive G system, the Nova also boasts analogue distortion circuitry and balanced stereo inputs and outputs for studio usage. A little more expensive than the M13, this is probably its closest competitor.

[tcelectronic.com](http://tcelectronic.com)



**Boss GT10**

£349

The GT10 is more of a standard effects floorboard and has a built in expression pedal, as well as amp modelling. There is also a USB feature for recording direct to hard drive and non-MIDI dump settings archiving.

[bossus.com](http://bossus.com)



**Zoom G9.2t**

£349

A much more 'digital' box with 32-bit DSP processing and USB connectivity, Zoom also use a 12AX7 vacuum tube in the signal path for 'warmth' and harmonic extension. A little bit cheaper, but a far more standard issue.

[zoom.co.jp](http://zoom.co.jp)