

ELECTRO-HARMONIX KEY9 £173

The key to guitar-led electric piano tones

THE follow-up to EHX's mind-blowing B9 and C9 Organ Machines, the Key9 transforms your guitar into an electric piano or keyboard. The Key9 packs nine sounds, including emulations of various Rhodes and Wurlitzer keyboards, plus a few more off-the-wall models, notably a vibraphone and steel drum. Each keyboard offers two controllable parameters, which can be anything from low octave to high-end overtones or preset-specific modulation.

What we loved about the Organ Machines was their consistency: there wasn't a duff sound in 'em. And while the Key9 is no slouch, it's more of a mixed bag. Dynamo, with its 70s/80s clean keys; or

Suitcase, which is pure *No Quarter*, never fail to raise a smile; and Mallets' wood marimba effect is surprisingly convincing. But the Wurlitzer imitation doesn't go far enough, while Tri-Glorious is, ultimately, just a chorus. They're not bad sounds; they're just of more limited appeal if you want full-on keyboard textures. And while tracking is spot-on, the pedal still has a hint of latency.

The Key9 has some impressive sounds, but for our money, it's of a more niche appeal than its organ brethren. Nonetheless, if you simply have to have an electric piano tone or two in your arsenal, this is still the simplest way to get keyed up.

Michael Astley-Brown



TYPE: Organ emulation pedal
CONTROLS: Dry volume, keys volume, control 1, control 2, type
SOCKETS: Input, keys output, dry output, power
BYPASS: Buffered
POWER: 9V power supply only (included)
CONTACT: Electro-Harmonix
www.ehx.com

SUMMARY	FEATURES				
	SOUND QUALITY				
	VALUE FOR MONEY				
	BUILD QUALITY				
	USABILITY				
OVERALL RATING		★★★★★			

KHDK GHOUL SCREAMER KIRK HAMMETT OVERDRIVE £199

Do tread on me

WE spoke to Kirk Hammett and his KHDK partner David Karon in TG276, and the first pedal we're getting to grips with is fittingly the Metallica man's signature overdrive, the Ghoul Screamer. The GS is designed to be a more versatile take on the Tube Screamer, and with all switches up, it delivers a classic TS-808 tone – cutting bass and boosting mids.

Hitting the bass switch engages a full bottom-end, and flicking high brightens dark humbuckers, but without getting muffled or shrill. Meanwhile the body switch gives the upper mids a boost and fattens your overall tone. The compression switches open up further versatility still: one is your standard TS compression, two is a

glassier voicing, while three kicks in a tight, biting rock tone – crank up the drive for instant AC/DC and Blackmore thrills.

But the Ghoul Screamer is really designed to boost a distorted valve amp, and here it really wails. Set the pedal to low drive and maximum volume, and the body switch adds definition, while compression mode three gives an aggressive attack that's its a quick fix for helping gained-up palm muting and leads to cut through.

It's rare to come across a pedal quite so instantly gratifying. When it comes to boosting and tightening up metal tones, the Ghoul Screamer is among the best TS-alikes we've used.

Michael Astley-Brown



TYPE: Overdrive pedal
CONTROLS: Drive, tone, volume, bass switch, highs switch, body switch, 2x compress switch
SOCKETS: Input, output, power
BYPASS: True bypass
POWER: 9V battery, 9V power supply
CONTACT: GuitarGuitar 0800 456 1959
www.khdkelectronics.com

SUMMARY	FEATURES				
	SOUND QUALITY				
	VALUE FOR MONEY				
	BUILD QUALITY				
	USABILITY				
OVERALL RATING		★★★★★			