

# PEDALBOARD

MANUFACTURER  
UNIVERSAL AUDIO

PRICE  
£355 EACH

MODEL  
GOLDEN REVERBERATOR, STARLIGHT ECHO  
STATION & ASTRA MODULATION MACHINE

CONTACT  
UNIVERSAL AUDIO  
WWW.UAUDIO.COM

## ROUND-UP

# Universal Audio pedals

An old name in audio becomes a new name in stompboxes set to impress

Words Trevor Curwen Photography Olly Curtis

Studio equipment manufacturer Universal Audio may be best known for its authentic plug-in emulations, powered by DSP in the company's own hardware, but now it's using its technology in a series of guitar pedals with dual-processor architecture. The Golden Reverberator, Starlight Echo Station and Astra Modulation Machine provide reverb, delay and modulation respectively, with various mono and stereo options.

Each pedal has a choice of three effects with toggle-switched variations, but you can download an extra effect (two for the Astra) via USB. Each pedal stores a single preset – just dial in your sound, flick the Store switch and you're done. The footswitches give you access to two sounds. The left footswitch accesses the Live sound representing the current positions of the knobs and switches, while the right one calls up the preset with its stored values.



UNIVERSAL AUDIO

## Golden Reverberator

£355

Having a decent spring reverb emulation is usually the hallmark of a quality reverb pedal, and the three spring variations on offer here – based on Fender amp 'verb – tick all the boxes, with plenty of tweaking options available. Likewise, the plate reverbs are excellent and work nicely with guitar tone. For a larger space, there's a Hall reverb, too, but it adheres to the pedal's retro vibe as it's based on the (more than 40-year-old) 12-bit Lexicon 224 and, in true 70s/80s style, has optional chorus. It also provides bonus reverb, two more plates and a chamber.

There's no doubting the quality of the sounds, but for onstage work some may take issue with the fact the pedals don't have an expression pedal input or MIDI, and support just a single preset. There's that USB socket and Bluetooth, though, so perhaps there's more to come? **G**

**VERDICT** Not the most comprehensive, but it delivers the vintage essentials with class



UNIVERSAL AUDIO

## Starlight Echo Station

£355

The tape echo, BBD analogue delay and pristine digital delay on offer here should cover your needs when it comes to delay. Oh, and there's a delay based on a garden hose!

The tape emulation is based on a single-head Echoplex and sounds great as the preamp section has been modelled with adjustment for more grit via 'record level'. You get three variations – pristine, old tape or a bit knackered – and adjustable wow and flutter, too. DMM is an authentic take on the Electro-Harmonix original (as used by The Edge) with the straight sound or with chorus or vibrato engaged, while Precision does digital delay chores with options for added flanger or chorus. Wild card download Cooper Time Cube has lower-fi charm with three filter options, and the tap tempo works great, but switching to the preset isn't instant – it needs a footswitch hold of 1.5 seconds. **G**

**VERDICT** No multi-taps, but for straight old-school delay sounds you're covered



UNIVERSAL AUDIO

## Astra Modulation Machine £355

With emphasis on classic amp tremolos and iconic pedals, the Astra offers two variations on each effect plus two positions of the Mode knob, which offer different stereo options. There's an accurate reproduction of a Boss CE-1 sound in both its Chorus and Vibrato modes, while the MXR Phase 90 is recreated in two incarnations with the subtleties of the early 'script' logo sitting next to the chewier 'block' version. An emulation of the vintage MXR Flanger/Doubler offers a familiar sound and serves up some decent ADT, too.

Trem is represented not just by a typical Fender photocell sound with sine or square wave but also by its harmonic trem, with two variations – one more phasey than the other – and cool dynamic control of trem speed set up via the Shade and Shape knobs. A bit of tweaking also gets you into Uni-Vibe territory. **G**

**VERDICT** Look no further for authentic recreations of vintage modulation effects

## Tech Spec

**ORIGIN:** USA

**TYPE:** Reverb pedal

**FEATURES:** Selectable True/Trails bypass

**EFFECTS:** Spring 65, Plate 140, Hall 224, Chamber & Plate 224

**CONTROLS:** Decay, Predelay, Mix, Bass, Treble, Mod, Effect Type switch, Store switch, Mode switch (A/B/C), Pair switch, Preset footswitch, Bypass footswitch

**CONNECTIONS:** Standard inputs (1/Mono, 2/Stereo), standard outputs (1/Mono, 2/Stereo), USB

**POWER:** 9V DC adaptor (not supplied)  
400 mA

**DIMENSIONS:** 90 (w) x 144 (d) x 63mm (h)



9/10

## Tech Spec

**ORIGIN:** USA

**TYPE:** Delay pedal

**FEATURES:** Selectable True/Trails bypass, Tap Tempo,

**EFFECTS:** Tape EP-III, Analog DMM, Precision: Modulation, Cooper Time Cube

**CONTROLS:** Delay, Feedback, Mix, Division, Color, Mod, Effect Type switch, Store switch, Mode switch (A/B/C), Pair switch, Preset/ Tap footswitch, Bypass footswitch

**CONNECTIONS:** Standard inputs (1/Mono, 2/Stereo), standard outputs (1/Mono, 2/Stereo), USB

**POWER:** 9V DC adaptor (not supplied)  
400 mA

**DIMENSIONS:** 90 (w) x 144 (d) x 63mm (h)



9/10

## Tech Spec

**ORIGIN:** USA

**TYPE:** Modulation pedal

**FEATURES:** Selectable True/Buffered bypass, Tap Tempo option

**EFFECTS:** Chorus Brigade, Flanger Dblr, Trem 65, Phaser X90, Dharma Trem 61

**CONTROLS:** Speed, depth, Intensity, Shade, Shape, Mode, Effect Type switch, Store switch, Mode switch (A/B), Pair switch, Preset footswitch, Bypass footswitch

**CONNECTIONS:** Standard inputs (1/Mono, 2/Stereo), standard outputs (1/Mono, 2/Stereo), USB

**POWER:** 9V DC adaptor (not supplied)  
400 mA

**DIMENSIONS:** 90 (w) x 144 (d) x 63mm (h)



9/10

