



SOURCE AUDIO ONE SERIES PEDALS

£129 each

These compact plug-in-and-play stompboxes get a boost in feature sets and flexibility with Source Audio's Neuro app

Words Trevor Curwen Photography Adam Gasson

Source Audio's One Series includes three dirt pedals, but here we're looking at the four modulation options: the Vertigo Tremolo, Lunar Phaser, Gemini Chorus and Mercury Flanger. If you merely glanced at their top panels, you'd think that these were just fairly standard stompboxes with four knobs and a toggle switch for selecting three sound variations. You can, of course, use them just like that if you like to keep things simple, but if you're keen to explore, each of these pedals has a lot more going on.

The key to unlocking the potential in these 'boxes is Source Audio's Neuro app (available for both iOS and Android). Once loaded into your phone or device, you can connect the supplied mini-to-standard jack cable to a pedal's Input 2 socket and access an editing page that offers a bunch of editing parameters and control options beyond the four physical knobs. For example, parametric EQ and a low-cut filter

are covered here, and you can also access

more algorithms than the three defaults initially called up by that toggle switch. Neuro also has access to loads of edited effects that can be browsed and tried out – and maybe transferred to the editor and loaded into the pedal. There are factory presets, presets from other users and storage for your own customised effects, which can be shared with other users if you wish. While the tremolo has its own algorithms, the architecture of the phaser, chorus and flanger allows all three to share the same effects, making each of them very versatile. You could, for example, load any one of the pedals so the toggle switch could call up a chorus, a flanger and a phaser effect. We have to say that the prospect of a CE-2, Electric Mistress and Phase 90 in one compact pedal does appeal.

Each pedal can also save a single preset onboard for instant access to a sound, regardless of the physical knob positions. Once you've dialled up a sound that you like, you can simply press and hold the

footswitch to save it. Switching the pedal between normal operation and Preset mode is easily carried out. Each pedal can operate in a standard mono signal chain, but also has true stereo operation and various mono/stereo combinations. If you fancy a bit of live parameter manipulation, each pedal has a mini-jack control input to take an expression pedal, Source Audio's Hot Hand (a motion sensing controller) or a tap-tempo switch. A USB port lets each pedal connect as a plug-and-play device to a DAW, allowing synchronisation via MIDI clock.

If you want to build a complete system utilising the pedals, then you can purchase the Neuro Hub (for around £80), which can connect up to five Source Audio pedals. A scene-saving facility allows you to create up to 128 multi-pedal presets complete with external expression control. These presets can be recalled using an external MIDI foot controller.

With our introduction complete, let's take a closer look at the pedals over the page...

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1 SOURCE AUDIO VERTIGO TREMOLO £129

Guitarist CHOICE

ORIGIN: China

TYPE: Tremolo pedal

FEATURES: Selectable bypass (analogue buffered or relay-based true bypass), Neuro app editing

CONTROLS: Depth, Speed, Shape, Level, Normal/Harmonic/Bias switch, bypass footswitch

CONNECTIONS: Standard inputs 1 and 2, standard outputs 1 and 2, mini-jack control input, USB

POWER: 9V DC adaptor (supplied)

DIMENSIONS: 70 (w) x 114 (d) x 51mm (h)

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Just as Strymon's Flint combined tremolo and reverb in a pedal, there are three types of tremolo available here. The Normal setting is an optical-style tremolo that's based on a 1967 Fender Vibrolux. The Harmonic setting has a phase-y sound as found in Fender's early 1960s 'brownface' amps. The Bias tremolo offers more of a dirty pulsing sound, if you're looking for the sort of trem heard from a Vox AC30.

All three sound excellent and offer variation via the Speed and Depth knobs, but if you want to move away from 'amp tremolo' sounds, the Shape knob offers waveform shaping with a typical sine wave at its central position, running to square wave and sawtooth at the two extremes of its travel. The Neuro app can take things more 'out there' with alternative algorithms, including filtered tremolo, tremolo mixed with chorus, or flanger and odd sequenced effects. [TC]

VERDICT The perfect buy if you want a tremolo pedal but don't want to be stuck with one sound

9/10

2 SOURCE AUDIO GEMINI CHORUS £129

ORIGIN: China

TYPE: Chorus pedal

FEATURES: Selectable bypass (analogue buffered or relay-based true bypass), Neuro app editing

CONTROLS: Depth, Speed, Mix, Tone, Dual/Classic/Quad switch, bypass footswitch

CONNECTIONS: Standard inputs 1 and 2, standard outputs 1 and 2, mini-jack control input, USB

POWER: 9V DC adaptor (supplied)

DIMENSIONS: 70 (w) x 114 (d) x 51mm (h)

Aiming to give you all the chorus sounds you'll ever need, the Gemini starts off with Classic, which does a really good emulation of the early Boss sounds that started the whole chorus thing off and set the standard. If you like your effects richer and lush, it also offers a dual-voiced chorus and the sort of complex quad chorus with four voices that came to prominence in the late 80s. A mix knob runs from 100 per cent dry to 100 per cent wet, which allows you to blend in as little or as much of the effect as you like, while the tone knob will gently shade the effect to add a bit of extra sparkle or keep things more subdued in the mix.

With those, plus any parameters you wish to call up with the Neuro app, there's a spectrum of chorus to be explored, including some cool rotary speaker-style tones and a choice of phaser and flanger sounds, too. [TC]

VERDICT With comprehensive implementation delivered, chorus can have a life beyond Police covers!

8/10

3 SOURCE AUDIO LUNAR PHASER £129

ORIGIN: China

TYPE: Phaser pedal

FEATURES: Selectable bypass (analogue buffered or relay-based true bypass), Neuro app editing

CONTROLS: Depth, Speed, Resonance, Shape, Vibe/Classic/Multi switch, bypass footswitch

CONNECTIONS: Standard inputs 1 and 2, standard outputs 1 and 2, mini-jack control input, USB

POWER: 9V DC adaptor (supplied)

DIMENSIONS: 70 (w) x 114 (d) x 51mm (h)

While the Lunar's toggle-switch offers three variations on the phaser theme, along with Speed and Depth controls, we also get a Shape knob that affects the LFO, morphing the sine wave into a harder-edged square wave. There's also a Resonance knob, for dialling in a more metallic sound. Vibe is modelled after a Uni-Vibe and reproduces throb and warble well, while an expression pedal gives you the foot-controlled speed variations of the original.

Classic is a simple four-stage phaser like the MXR Phase 90 – which it can emulate nicely when dialled in correctly – but it goes beyond what the single knob on a 90 could conjure up, particularly with the Resonance knob emphasising the 'wow' of the sweep. Multi delivers an eight-stage phaser effect that's more complex and is a great freak-out tool for end-of-set knob manipulators, especially after distortion. [TC]

VERDICT Several shades of phasing nicely covered, with many more sounds waiting in the wings

8/10

4 SOURCE AUDIO MERCURY FLANGER £129

ORIGIN: China

TYPE: Stereo flanger pedal

FEATURES: Selectable bypass (analogue buffered or relay-based true bypass), Neuro app editing

CONTROLS: Depth, Speed, Resonance, Delay, Classic/Thru-Zero/Shadow switch, bypass footswitch

CONNECTIONS: Standard inputs 1 and 2, standard outputs 1 and 2, mini-jack control input, USB

POWER: 9V DC adaptor (supplied)

DIMENSIONS: 70 (w) x 114 (d) x 51mm (h)

The Mercury's Classic setting conjures up the sort of vintage flanging that's relatively mild and not unlike a chorus effect. The difference between flanging and chorus lies in the delay time, and the Mercury has a Delay knob that delivers in the appropriate range. Set it right and there are familiar flanger sounds here, reminiscent of an Electric Mistress, especially with the resonance knob turned up to add a metallic edge.

Utilising two delay lines, the Thru-Zero setting is designed to emulate the sort of flanging originally created in the studio using two tape machines, and sounds good with fuzz or distortion in front of it where it can offer a similar flavour to Queen's *Keep Yourself Alive*. The Shadow setting dials in a more animated and intense flanging experience. Again, it's a perfect partner for dirty sounds and the place to be if spaceship and ray-gun sounds are on your agenda. [TC]

VERDICT A great sounding flanger, but – to be fair – the Gemini, Lunar and Mercury are interchangeable

8/10