Eventide Space | £499

Digital effect masters Eventide add a reverb to their growing stompbox range. *Greg Scarth* prepares to blast off into space

WHAT IS IT?
Top quality reverb in a convenient pedal format

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HIGHLIGHTS
1 Mixture of new algorithms and code from the H8000 and Eclipse
2 Built-in modulation effects including chorus, distortion and pitch shifting
3 Expression pedal input for live performance

The hardware reverb unit has taken a bit of a beating over the last decade. Not so long ago, dedicated hardware was your only option for realistic reverb sounds. Now, any home computer has enough processing power to handle all your echo needs. Eventide earned their reputation back in the days when computers ground to a halt at just the thought of real-time dynamics processing. The company's first Harmonizers and delays hit the market way back in the early 70s, and were soon joined by specialist reverbs.

The company's decades of experience are now also being applied to a range of stompboxes, which started with the launch of the TimeFactor and ModFactor back in 2008. Those two *FM* favourites have since been joined by the PitchFactor and now the Space. However, as you'd expect from Eventide, this isn't your typical cheap guitar reverb pedal. In fact, it's described as a "reverb and beyond", packing a serious feature set aimed at live performance and studio use.

Form

Like the rest of the Eventide stompbox range, the Space's build quality immediately tells you that this is a serious piece of equipment. You wouldn't want to throw it into a gig bag without wrapping it safely, but the die-cast aluminium construction feels built to last. With so many knobs to play with, it's reassuring that the pots also feel solid and reliable.

The preset knob is the only rotary encoder, slightly looser than the pots but still high quality. Stompbox footswitches are usually a bit clunky for operating with your hands, but the light action of the Space's metal switches make the unit feel perfectly usable as a desktop effect module.

Round the back, you'll find mono and stereo input and output, plus connections for an expression pedal, up to three aux switches, USB (for software updates and preset management) and MIDI in/out. To ensure that levels are suitable for hooking up to your other equipment, toggle switches allow the input and output to be set to guitar/amp or line level. Unfortunately the current draw would make battery operation impractical, so the Space only runs from an external DC adapter.

Function

The obvious way to get started is by flicking through the presets, and I'd highly recommend keeping the manual and preset guide handy while you do so. The Space is based around 12 algorithms, each of which is supplemented by slightly different modulation effects. First up, there are five standard reverb settings – Hall, Room, Plate, Spring and Reverse – which offer the usual range of realistic sounds.

On the more experimental side, the Shimmer, ModEchoVerb, DualVerb, TremoloVerb, DynaVerb, Blackhole and MangledVerb algorithms can create more extreme results with the addition

of effects such as pitch shifting, tremolo, compression and chorus.

The main algorithms show the unit's clear links to Eventide's existing products – the Blackhole and ModEchoVerb settings are based on H8000FW code and the overdriven and detuned MangledVerb is based on the excellent Eclipse V4.

Effect parameters are edited using nine pots on the front panel (plus the mix pot), with each knob performing a

Sound of Space

It's hard to ignore the fact that the Space is priced firmly in the top tier of stompboxes. We're so used to seeing dirt-cheap pedals with mediocre sound that the Space's price might seem slightly excessive, but you shouldn't be fooled into thinking the sound has anything in common with those low-budget alternatives.

The pedal format makes the Space convenient and portable, but the sound

delay-style effects to clunky spring reverbs, infinite sustain to pristine, evolving ambient textures. Options including tap tempo, simultaneous expression pedal control of multiple parameters, and support for up to three auxiliary switches allow the Space to become an integral part of a live performance or a dynamic mix.

In addition to controlling parameters, patch changes and bypassing the effect, the Space's MIDI support also means that an external clock signal can be used to control delay times for tempo synced effects.

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slightly different function depending on the selected algorithm. Small adjustments of parameters can have a dramatic effect, while the additional modulation options make things even more versatile but also complex.

As a result it's wise to refer to the literature in order to understand how each patch – and each parameter – works. You can get away with sticking the Space straight into your effects chain and immediately making wacky noises, but to take control you'll really need to put in a bit of quality time with the manual.

quality is still on a par with Eventide's more expensive rackmount units – the quality of the processing hasn't been compromised in moving to the stompbox format.

The form factor also reinforces the idea that the Space is designed for live performance rather than simply setting up a static reverb sound for a mix. A big part of the fun comes from adjusting parameters in real time and playing with the expression options. Manipulating reverb size, delay time and feedback level allows you to create everything from pitch-shifting tape

Conclusion

For many potential buyers, the price of the Space may be a major stumbling block. Despite the excellent sound quality, there's no doubt that the RRP of £499 seems high for a pedal. It certainly isn't cheap, but you shouldn't judge the Space by the standards of typical stompboxes.

The RRP translates to a street price somewhere around £420, which is reasonable for a pro quality reverb unit. The Space impresses with the quality of its algorithms, the range of its parameters and its expressive ability as a live performance tool. **FM**

Preset Your Goals

The Space's 35 factory presets are supplemented by 65 artist presets from the likes of Richard Devine, Justin Meldal-Johnsen (Beck, M83), Flood and Alan Moulder. We often moan about presets but with a unit as complex as the Space they're a great way to get yourself in the right ballpark. The units' presets are highly usable, offering a range of effects that bear the characteristic sounds of particular artists and producers. The only real complaint is that some producers have contributed a wide variety of presets while others have chipped in with just a few.

It's a shame all the contributors didn't take the opportunity to show off the unit's range and contribute a nice variety of patches. Could Jónsi and Alex Somers really only be bothered to come up with a single patch?!

FutureMusic VERDICT

BUILD

VALUE

EASE OF USE

VERSATILITY

RESULTS

Versatile top quality reverb with experimental tendancies in a convenient portable package.