



PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMANDA THOMAS



The Rivals

If you're after a miniature amplifier that you can gig, the **Electro-Harmonix 44 Magnum** (£109) makes an excellent back up for your main rig, but lacks the sonic quality of the Micro Terror. The Jim Root Terror's main competition probably comes from within the **Orange** camp in the shape of the **Dark Terror** (£399) but also be sure to check out **Hayden's MoFo** (£429) if you need some dirt in your lunchbox.

Orange Signature #4 Jim Root Terror & Micro Terror £439 & £99

We get our mitts on the Slipknot guitarist's signature amp and throw the tiniest of all Terrors into the bargain

by Chris Vinnicombe

You have to hand it to Orange. As we've mentioned previously in these pages, if imitation is the sincerest form of flattery then the British amplifier company must feel justifiably smug about the way that the huge success of its Tiny Terror amp triggered a practically industry-wide lunchbox amp craze.

Time for them to kick back, relax and watch the cash roll in? Don't bet on it. Hot on the heels of such additions to the range as the none-more-metal Dark Terror and the Terror Bass heads comes a pair of new models: the Signature #4 Jim Root unit and Orange's smallest head yet, the impossibly cute Micro Terror.

Slipknot and Stone Sour guitarist Jim Root has long been a fan of the Rockerverb 100. Orange's technical director Adrian Emsley explains the signature amp's evolution:

"When I spoke to Jim to discuss a signature model, he wanted something that people could afford, so I suggested we

make it a Terror. The appearance was Jim's idea as he is a fan of the look of the old 'pics only' amps, so we came up with what you see here.

Emsley also reveals that the appearance of the Signature #4 Jim Root Terror's matching PPC212 cabinet (£367) was down to the oft-masked guitarist: "He wanted real basket-weave grille cloth – not the material used on the bass gear – but in black. The speakers are Orange 'Voice Of The World' 12s, which have a vintage top end but a very fast and tight bottom end that tends to speed up with more power amp overdrive.

"They sound quite different to Celestion Vintage 30s and are not a copy. The cabinet contains two eight-ohm versions of this speaker, wired in series to make the cab a global 16 ohms."

The head itself is one of the most flexible Terrors to date, with a full three-band EQ and a ECC81/12AT7-driven FX loop alongside one 16-ohm and two

eight-ohm speaker outputs. Providing you don't need a high-headroom clean sound then 15 watts might just prove enough juice to give your drummer a run for his/her money, with the seven-watt mode ideal for the increasing

number of live venues forced to use noise limiters.

But what if the Root Terror is just not tiny enough for you? Enter the Micro Terror. At just 16.5cm (6.5 inches) wide and weighing in at just 0.85kg (1.87lb), it would be easy to assume this is a novelty practice amp. However, the unit is not only housed in the same tough high-tensile steel case as its larger brethren, but it can also crank out a cool 20 watts into four ohms thanks to a solid-state Class D power amp.

A single ECC83/12AX7 preamp valve gives the Micro Terror two stages of gain based loosely on the voicing of the front end of the original Tiny Terror head. A 1/4-inch jack headphone output and 1/8-inch jack auxiliary input are useful additions for home practising, but don't be fooled into thinking

The success of the Tiny Terror led to an industry-wide lunchbox amp craze



The Jim Root Terror has two power modes, and eight- and 16-ohm speaker outputs

that the diminutive Micro Terror couldn't be a serious option for live performance.

Orange's specially-designed eight-inch speaker-loaded PPC108 cabinets (£59 each) can be used in conjunction with the Micro Terror for cute mini-stack bedroom or studio thrills, but for the stage you'll likely require something somewhat beefier as far as cabs are concerned. The amplifier's eight-ohm minimum impedance output will safely drive eight- or 16-ohm cabs, but needs to be matched with an eight-ohm load to deliver the full 20 watts.

Sounds

As fearsome as the Jim Root head appears, when it's time to fire up and plug in, we're drawn initially to the Micro Terror. Can an amplifier this physically small really deliver the kind of juicy crunch upon which Orange built its reputation?

Before we answer that question, it's worth noting that an amp head this light can get very mobile, very quickly, even when equipped with non-slip



The Micro Terror has headphone and auxiliary-input capabilities, but sounds best when cranked up on stage or in a studio

rubber feet. With little more than a careless tug of your guitar lead, the unit can be dragged off the top of a speaker cabinet or desk. For live use we'd recommend using tape or Velcro to secure the Micro Terror in place. In addition, although the supplied 15-volt DC mains 'wall wart' adaptor works perfectly, it's not as

With the volume and gain controls working hard, we're struck by how unexpectedly loud the Micro Terror is

readily replaceable as a regular kettle lead, so you may want to consider obtaining a backup for regular live use.

Once stationary, with the volume and gain controls working hard, we're struck by how unexpectedly loud this thing is. Fans of classic rock guitar raunch will be in their element as this tiniest of Terrors pumps out a ferocious crunch with no shortage of character. For fans of Led Zeppelin, AC/DC or even Oasis, there's a whole lot to love here. While the PPC108 cab might seem a little boxy in isolation, for studio recording, it's just the ticket for a Dave Davies-style garage-rock bark, with none of the boomy bottom end that you might usually need to EQ out when mixing.

Through a more substantial cabinet, there's no shortage of low end, and this translates into even bigger versions of the sounds we've already described, opening the door to everything from a rich Keith Richards-style breaking up rhythm chime right through to stoner rock. You might struggle to get pristine cleans out of the Micro Terror, however: it really does like to rock.

Despite its incredibly compact size, this is an amp that's most at home on stage or

in a soundproof studio. It just sounds better with the volume working harder and the headphone output is a little harsh for sustained solo practice sessions.

Turning our attentions to the Jim Root head and cab, predictably there's even more filth on tap. Didn't think you could play heavy metal with a regular single-coil Telecaster bridge pickup? Think again. It's such a big throaty drive sound that for alt-rock and hard rock, single-coils work remarkably well and open up a wealth of bluesier tones with judicious use of the amp's onboard EQ and your guitar's volume control. Despite the livery, one-dimensional this ain't.

Switching to a guitar with humbuckers takes things into modern metal territory and you can really hear the immediate response of those Voice Of The World speakers keeping things tight and punchy, even with the massive bottom-end character of a seven-string or baritone. For maximum articulation, we'd recommend resisting the urge to wind the gain right up, as there's more ferocity and definition to be had in the two-to-three o'clock region. Seriously meaty.

The 15-watt setting is where it's at for the stage but the





The Micro Terror's labelled control panel is easier to take in at a glance

For less than the price of a decent overdrive pedal, you get a physically small but sonically huge amplifier

seven-watt mode introduces a slightly more compressed tonality that's easier to control in the studio. That said, both power selections record very well. One slight reservation about the design is that as cool as the 'pics only' front panel is, without words or numbers as a guide, making adjustments to your sound can initially be a little confusing, especially under stage lighting – but this is easily solved with stickers if need be.

Verdict

At £99, it's hard to bet against the Micro Terror being another winner for Orange. For less than the price of a decent overdrive pedal, you get a physically small but sonically huge amplifier with more than enough power for the kind of gigs that most of us are confronted with. If a single channel doesn't provide enough flexibility for you, it's still hard not to recommend; it's tough to think of a better and more compact back-up for your regular gigging amp.

The black livery and Slipknot association will doubtless leave many of you presuming that the Jim Root Terror is purely an amplifier for metalheads, but there's much more to it than that. If you play aggressive

alternative rock, punk or are the type of straight-up rock player for whom a clean channel is an unnecessary luxury then definitely check this out. It packs a seriously satisfying crunch that outperforms many more expensive high-gain heads. **G**

The Bottom Line

Orange Signature #4 Jim Root Terror

We like: A varied selection of great sounds for rock fans – it's not just for metalheads

We dislike: The livery may put non-metalheads off; 'Pics only' decals can confuse in the heat of battle

Guitarist says: A versatile addition to the Terror range with no shortage of dirt

Orange Micro Terror

We like: Outrageous value for money; classic Orange rock tones; really comes to life at volume; small enough to sneak past your other half

We dislike: Harsh-sounding headphone output

Guitarist says: For just £99, this is impossible for us to not recommend



Orange Signature #4 Jim Root Terror

PRICE: £439

ORIGIN: China

TYPE: Single-channel all-valve amplifier head

OUTPUT: 15 and seven watts switchable power modes

VALVES: 2 x EL84 (power amp), 3 x ECC83/12AX7 (preamp), 1 x ECC81/12AT7 (FX loop)

DIMENSIONS: 305 (w) x 190 (h) x 155mm (d)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 5.65/12.45

CONTROLS: Volume, bass, middle, treble, gain

CONNECTIONS: 1/4-inch jack instrument input, 1 x 16- and 2 x 8-ohm speaker outputs, FX send and return

OPTIONS: PPC212 cabinet (£367) featuring 2 x 12-inch Voice Of The World speakers

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Orange Micro Terror

PRICE: £99

ORIGIN: China

TYPE: Single-channel hybrid amplifier head

OUTPUT: 20 watts into 4 ohms

VALVES: 1 x ECC83/12AX7 (preamp)

DIMENSIONS: 165 (w) x 135 (h) x 92mm (d)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 0.85/1.87

CONTROLS: Volume, tone, gain

CONNECTIONS: 1/4-inch jack instrument input, 1/4-inch jack headphone output, 1/8-inch jack auxiliary input, 1/4-inch jack 4-ohm minimum speaker output

OPTIONS: PPC108 1 x 8 speaker cabinet (£59)



Test results

Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

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