



PEDALBOARD

MANUFACTURER
THORPYFX

MODEL
PULSE DOPPLER

PRICE
£264

CONTACT
WWW.THORPYFX.COM



Pulse Doppler

Turn up the rate knob of this all-analogue phaser to quicken your Pulse

Words Trevor Curwen Photography Olly Curtis

Adrian Thorpe's latest venture is an analogue phase-shifting pedal, designed in conjunction with Dan Coggins, formerly of Lovetone and Dinosaur. Dan was behind Lovetone's much sought-after Doppelganger phaser/vibrato from the 1990s, which surely donated some of its DNA to this new project. The pair's idea was to create a dream phaser pedal to deliver some of the effects heard on classic records, but also take things further still. The Pulse Doppler is based around a four-stage, two-notch phaser design, but comes with a set of controls for an extended range of sounds with variations on phasing, vibrato and tremolo.

IN USE

Besides the standard bypass switch, you get another footswitch that instantly toggles

between phasing and vibrato/pulsing effects by adding/removing dry signal. When incorporating dry signal, the Blend knob sets the dry/wet ratio with a 50:50 mix at noon, which produces the deepest notch. There's milder phasing to the left, moving towards vibrato on the right.

As standard on many modulation pedals, you get Rate and Depth controls, but the Depth knob here works closely in conjunction with a Manual knob that sets the notch filter frequencies. Basically, the Manual knob has an effect over a particular arc of its movement that varies with the Depth setting, having less control as the Depth control is advanced. With any set Depth, you can move the Manual knob in its effective arc to dial in the 'sweet spot' strongest effect or more subtle variations of it – not just phasing with an obvious

sweep or wobble, but also that which offers a sense of altered tonality.

Resonance is added by the Enhance knob, which feeds back increasing amounts of phase-shifted output signal to the phase-shifting notch filter path input. This increases the depth of the two frequency notches, the result being an increased 'wow' effect.

More variation is provided by a pair of toggle switches. The Dual switch inverts the notches so they are either in sync or move in opposition to one another for a different flavour. All the action is easy to see as each notch has its own red LED that pulses at the set rate. A further three-way switch offers the alternate tonalities provided by having the straight and phase-shifted signal in phase for the fullest sound, or by inverting the phase

01. VIB/PHASE FOOTSWITCH

This removes the dry signal from the mix output, moving from phasing effects (combined wet and dry signal) to vibrato/pulse sounds that are wet only

02. RED LEDS

These represent the two notches. They pulse in sync with the rate you set and their brightness also increases with Depth

03. MANUAL & DEPTH KNOBS

These two work in conjunction: juxtaposition of the two will define the potency of your effect

04. DUAL SWITCH

Your choice of the notches being modulated in sync (Dual) or moving in opposition in a figure-of-eight style

05. 3-WAY TOGGLE SWITCH

Here's a gateway to some altered tonalities. You can have dry and phase-shifted sounds in phase or out of phase, or select Pulse for fewer low frequencies

06. WET & DRY OUTPUTS

Use the Wet output in a standard mono signal chain, but if you use both you can send Wet to one amp and Dry to another for a wide sound



Tech Spec

ORIGIN: UK

TYPE: Phaser pedal

FEATURES: Buffered bypass

CONTROLS: Enhance, Manual, Depth, Blend, Rate, Dual switch, Invert/Pulse/Normal switch, Vib/Phase footswitch, Bypass footswitch

CONNECTIONS: Standard input, standard outputs (Dry & Wet)

POWER: 9V DC adaptor (not supplied)

DIMENSIONS: 100 (w) x 129 (d) x 54mm (h)

Guitarist CHOICE

9/10

and adding an element of hollowness. Its middle setting, Pulse, removes low-frequency content from the phased signal, so it acts as a modulated high-pass filter for an altogether leaner sound.

SOUNDS

In A/B tests to see how the Pulse Doppler fared in recreating some classic vintage phaser sounds, we found the pedal had a brighter tonality than our 70s vintage pedals, but we were able to dial in the appropriate values to mimic the phasing action of our MXR Phase 90 and Electro-Harmonix Small Stone. Uni-Vibe sounds were likewise attainable as well as rotary speaker-style shadings.

While classic vintage sounds are one thing and important to many of us, the extended parameter range in the Pulse

Doppler also makes it a fine asset in the creation of new variations: a wide range of creation with a variety of sound that slots in perfectly with modern signal chains, and, when you reduce or fully remove the dry sound, variations that encompass vibrato, tremolo and sequencer-style on/off rhythmic stutters. There's a plethora of these to embrace, from fatter pulsing vibe effects to choppy helicopter blade sounds, and the sort of Vox Repeat Percussion effects found in Thorpy's previous Chain Home pedal.

The fact is there's serious complexity going on under the hood here because each and every knob and switch interacts with the others to deliver a nuanced range of sounds. In just playing about, you will discover effects that you'd love to recall later on, many of them relying on precise

placement of the knobs and switches. It's an all-analogue pedal, though, so no presets. You'll have to rely on the analogue method of remembering them – a pencil and a paper template.

VERDICT

The Pulse Doppler has a spacious sound in mono, but if you have a rig to handle it, you can send wet and dry signals to two separate destinations for a wider sound by using both rear-panel output sockets. Either way, it's a massively versatile pedal that demands exploration. **G**

PROS Compact size; solid ThorpyFX build quality; versatile range of sounds; Vib/Phase footswitch

CONS Lack of presets means you'll have to draw templates to remember settings