



1 Mr Black Tunnel Ambience Echoverb
£139



2 Mr Black Deluxe Plus Spring Reverb
£139

Electro-Harmonix
Mel 9
£170



3



4 MXR M300 Reverb
£187

Studio Stomp Boxes

Here at *FM* we're big fans of using pedals in the studio as a source of affordable and inspiring hands-on effects. Let's take a look at some recent studio-friendly stomp box tools...



5 **Electro-Harmonix Lester K**
£139

1 Under his Mr Black brand, Oregon-based pedal designer Jack Deville has released a string of impressive compact pedals in recent years, with a particular penchant for reverbs and delays. The Echoverb is a multi-tap modulated echo and reverb pedal. It doesn't have the broad range of something like, say, Strymon's excellent El Capistan, featuring only three controls – Level, Decay and Span (delay time). The sound is lovely and authentically retro, however, so as a one-size-fits-all echo effects box, it's a winner.

www.mrblackpedals.com

VERDICT 7.9

2 The Deluxe Plus replicates the combination of reverb and tremolo most commonly associated with classic Fender guitar amps. It's a sound that instantly brings to mind vintage Surf Rock guitar, but it adds a lovely quality to almost anything you put through it; we could see this being a great tool for adding a bit of ambience and character to a synth lead, for example. There aren't masses of tone shaping parameters here – just intensity, reverb level and speed knobs – but the results are still impressive.

www.mrblackpedals.com

VERDICT 8.1

3 The Mel 9 Tape Replay Machine is a pedal that takes an input signal – it's primarily designed for guitar, but works nicely with a clean-ish keyboard sound too – and converts into a Mellotron emulation. There are nine sounds on offer, covering a broad range of knowingly inaccurate, gorgeously retro 'orchestral' tones. The technology works impressively well, tracking the input sound well

across a broad frequency range (EHX say it will work as low as the A string of a bass guitar). Attack and Sustain controls help create those classic swelling string sounds, while independent Effect and Dry outputs make it easy to dial in the sound alongside the original signal. A very cool studio tool at a good price.

www.ehx.com

VERDICT 9.1

4 This compact little pedal features emulations of six different varieties of reverb. These range from a straightforward room verb through to plate and spring varieties, via a delay-driven Epic setting and a modulated reverb mode. All six modes sound gorgeous – with glistening highs dialled in and out to taste via the Tone control. Connect up an expression pedal and you can morph between two different reverb settings too, which is a great touch.

www.jimdunlop.com

VERDICT 9.5

5 The Lester K is a rotary speaker emulation designed for keyboard players (EHX also have a Lester G model for guitarists, which adds a built-in compressor). It works in both stereo and mono, with adjustable fast and slow modes for tailoring the sound. The sound is full and gorgeously authentic, instantly adding a classic feel to organ or keyboard sounds, and great for adding width and movement to static synth pads. A built-in tape overdrive emulation adds a nice bit of crunch too. There's also a Speed switch, which allows the creation of speed-up/slow-down effects.

www.ehx.com

VERDICT 8.9

FM VERDICT



The Studio Essential: MXR M300 With six high-quality reverb effects in one tiny, well-priced package, this will prove to be a great little tool to have around the studio.



The Retro Wonder: EHX Mel 9 Whether you like the string machine sound is a matter of taste, but this is a winner for adding some retro magic to your tracks.