

PIGTRONIX FAT DRIVE **£115**

Pigging out on fat tones

JUST five minutes spent on Pigtronix's website will show you that the company is all about one thing: 'Futuristic Analogue Technology', or FAT for short. Being that this is the FAT Drive, then, we ought to assume that this stylish little overdrive will do everything it takes to match that ambitious philosophy. And boy, does it. From the first moment you switch the pedal on and start playing around with the gain levels, you can't but notice that it always retains your amp's original character. Take a vintage-voiced amp to sonic destruction and it'll still sound like *your* amp.

The drive sounds themselves offer a lot of scope for just about any genre, covering mild break-up

to raunchy crunches and searing leads. The More toggle ups things further still, giving the gain stage a serious kick up the backside for even more scope than before. The tone control serves as a low pass filter, perfect for shaping the high end and overall character of the drive. Turn it all the way up, though, and it disengages entirely, allowing the raw tone to shine through. This can be a mistake in extreme conditions, but it's great to have the option there, and it just goes to show that the FAT Drive strikes a clever balance.

It's a smart, modern and intuitive pedal, with a great set of classic and contemporary tones. Best of all, this boutique quality comes in at a sensible price.

Alun Lower



AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Analogue overdrive
CONTROLS: Volume, gain, tone, Hi/lo gain mode toggle
SOCKETS: Input, output, power
BYPASS: True bypass
POWER: PSU (included)
CONTACT: Music Track 01767 313447
www.pigtronix.com

SUMMARY	FEATURES				
	SOUND QUALITY				
	VALUE FOR MONEY				
	BUILD QUALITY				
	USEABILITY				
OVERALL RATING		★★★★★			

CARL MARTIN CLASSIC OPTICAL ENVELOPE **£99**

Play that funky music

AT first glance, newcomers would be forgiven for thinking that the controls on this funky little pedal look a little bit confusing. The reality is that each of the controls is reassuringly simple, distinct and interactive.

The tone control is obvious enough and tames the higher frequencies, while the drive control dictates how sensitive the effect is to your picking attack. The bandwidth of the sweep itself is adjusted via the Q control. On lower settings the wah is wide and less aggressive, but when pushed up offers a more immediate and aggressive sound. The level control keeps your signal in line with that of your amplifier, and then there's the select switch, which alternates

between three presets. The high and band pass settings give you a sharper or deeper voice to work from, and the low pass takes this a little further and is also designed to work well with bass guitars. All the tones on offer really are very good, with rich low-end snarls and crisp, funky highs covering a lot of different applications.

At £99, you may think you'd be better off with an actual wah pedal. A valid argument, but an optical filter can react more quickly (and accurately) to your playing technique than rocking your foot back and forth. If that appeals to you, then quality becomes important and this unit deserves some serious consideration.

Alun Lower



AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Envelope filter
CONTROLS: Tone, drive, Q, level, preset selector
SOCKETS: Input, output, power
BYPASS: High integrity buffered
POWER: Battery, PSU (optional)
CONTACT: First Line Distribution Ltd
01626 853876 www.firstlinemusic.co.uk

SUMMARY	FEATURES				
	SOUND QUALITY				
	VALUE FOR MONEY				
	BUILD QUALITY				
	USEABILITY				
OVERALL RATING		★★★★★			