

JULY 2008

REPEAT PERFORMANCE : MXR CARBON COPY ANALOG DELAY
BY PAUL RIARIO

The innovation of the bucket brigade delay circuit in 1969 made compact, stageworthy analog delay pedals a reality and allowed guitarists to retire their bulky and unreliable magnetic tape echo units. Although bucket brigades were eventually replaced by digital signal processors, suffice to say that—like skinny ties and Donnie and Marie

Osmond—the analog delay has made a comeback. Nearly every music manufacturer is currently releasing its own take on the analog delay, and for good reason: most guitar players cherish the soft, lo-fi sound quality produced from these units. Fortunately, MXR, who have been making some of the most popular and innovative stomp boxes, has jumped on the bandwagon. The company's Carbon Copy Analog Delay pedal is the brainchild of MXR senior engineer Bob Cedro, and its design is noteworthy for the company: it's MXR's first delay pedal in nearly 20 years. What's more, it offers 600ms

of analog delay time in a compact unit the size of MXR's Phase 90 pedal.

FEATURES : Ironically, given its name, the Carbon Copy is not an exact copy, or even an update, of MXR's vintage AC-powered stomp box from the Seventies. For starters, the unit can be powered by a single nine-volt battery or AC adapter and features true-bypass switching, two bright-blue LEDs that indicate when the delay or mod effect is engaged, and a glitzy green sparkle paint job. There are the standard controls for Regen (number of repeats), Mix (wet-to-dry ratio) and Delay (delay time). The twist is the tiny mod on/off switch, which adds a subtle vibrato to the delay signal for some understated dimension. The mod effect is preset from the factory, but its width and speed can be adjusted via internal controls, which are accessible by unscrewing the back of the unit.

PERFORMANCE : The Carbon Copy is simple to use: plug in, tweak the knobs and you're rewarded with a glorious, organic delay tone. No doubt, the Carbon Copy summons a darker quality in its delay repeats, but hey, that's why we like analog delays: they tame the brightness from most amps. Triggering the Mod switch will also add a lush background to your overall guitar sound without overwhelming it. Granted, 600ms is not a lot of delay by modern standards, but it's more than most analog delays offer. If anything, the Carbon Copy excels at short bursts of delay, along with washed out and slap back sounds. If you need more delay than that, you're just showing off.

THE BOTTOM LINE : If you've never experimented with an analog delay before, the Carbon Copy would be a worthy place to start exploring. I've heard many analog delays, and this one performs as well as units twice its price. Besides, once you've tried it, you'll want more than one.

PRO COMPACT; LONGER DELAY TIME ADDS VERSATILITY;
LUSH ANALOG SOUNDS
CON NONE



SEPTEMBER 2008

BUDDY LOVE : DUNLOP BG-95 BUDDY GUY SIGNATURE WAH
BY ERIC KIRKLAND

Buddy Guy is one of the original wild men of the guitar, a true living link between modern rock and Delta blues. This Grammy Award-winning Muddy Waters disciple, former Chess Records artist and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee is the man who served as Hendrix's primary influence and who Clapton once called "the best guitar player alive." Guy's credentials also include recognition as one of the first blues players to recognize the wah's potential and master it as a vocal instrument. His new Dunlop BG-95 Cry Baby Signature Wah was one of the most talked about wah pedals at the January 2008 NAMM show, and after months of anticipation, I have finally had a chance to give it a thorough test.

FEATURES : One look at those polka dots and you know whose wah this is.

Hearing it tells you just as much—after all, Dunlop has built custom Cry Baby wahs for Buddy since the late Eighties. As part of the custom mods, Dunlop developed a special circuit that combats the nastiest of Chicago's well-known Radio Frequency Interference (RFI). This is so effective that Dunlop now employs it as a standard part of all Cry Baby circuits. The wah's meaty tone and long throw is designed around a Dunlop exclusive red Fasel inductor, a Hot Potz potentiometer and a set of midrange expanding resistor values. A sidemounted "toe" switch allows players to find their own favorite midrange peaks with either the howling Buddy Guy mode or a bottom-rich Deep setting.

PERFORMANCE : The combination of an extremely wide midrange and a long sweep results in a wah with absolutely no "dead" spots. The BG-95 would be compatible with all kinds of tones, from spanking clean to excessive high-gain. Bass notes are dense and full, and the highs are round rather than piercing or noisy. The quack is strong but less exaggerated than the Hendrix wah's sharp snap. In the Buddy Guy setting, the wah makes its most exciting tones through an airy upper midrange. It sounds more like a long moaning "waaah" than a baby's head-splitting cry. Deep mode uses thick low mids to create a throaty language of "wow" and "whoa" sounds, which gives low strings and detuned guitars a fresh voice.

THE BOTTOM LINE : Buddy Guy's fans are likely to find that this wah's glowing tones and motif satisfies their quest for the dream wah, but rockers and metalheads are also well advised to sample this wah's chunky tone. This is one of those exceptional instruments that offers something for everyone.



PRO VERSATILE AND SMOOTH; DUAL WAH SETTINGS
CON LEDS CONFUSINGLY STAY LIT WHEN WAH IS BYPASSED

DUNLOP IN REVIEW

GUITAR PLAYER

MAY 2008

**GEAR ROUNDUP : MXR M169 CARBON COPY ANALOG DELAY
BY GUITAR PLAYER STAFF**

The Carbon Copy (\$254 retail/\$149 street) offers Regen, Mix, and Delay controls, as well as two of the most blindingly bright LEDs—one for on/off status, and the other for a surfacemounted Modulation button that adds warble to the pedal's repeats—you're likely to encounter. Inside the Carbon Copy's immaculate green-sparkle enclosure are two mini pots that control the Modulation's Width and Speed. Flaunting 600ms of delay time and a mono output, the Carbon Copy excels at yielding soupy, burnished repeats—the raison d'être of analog delay. I was more than satisfied with every sound, from subtle slap to long trails of cascading repeats, as its natural, organic-sounding layers fattened up rhythm and lead lines exquisitely. The Modulation function can be used to really smear the already hazy delays. The internal trimpots are thoughtful, albeit powerful tools for expanding the Carbon Copy's freaky factor, however, those little suckers are small. I had to tear my toolbox apart in order to find a screwdriver that could fit them. Still, the Carbon Copy is a great sounding, well-constructed analog delay with a bit of a twist owing to its Modulation control. And it's offered at a price that's a steal for an analog unit. Well done!



JULY 2008

**GEAR ROUNDUP : MXR CLASSIC 108 FUZZ
BY ART THOMPSON**

Sporting a similar turquoise green hammer finish as Dunlop's Jimi Hendrix Fuzz Face, the Classic 108 Fuzz (\$216 retail/\$119 street) is essentially a 'Face that has been updated with a different enclosure (one that features a handy battery hatch), a bypass LED (the circuit is also true bypass), and a selectable buffering circuit that, among other things, nixes the weirdnesses that can occur when using the Jimi-approved wah-into-Fuzz Face configuration. To test this, we ran a vintage-style Moollon wah into the Classic 108 using both the buffered and unbuffered settings, and the differences were pretty startling. The wah sounded so much clearer and more present when the Classic 108's buffer circuit was active (a bright blue LED illuminates to tell you its status) that it would seem senseless to use it otherwise. And, when just running into an amp by itself, the Classic 108 also sounded a tad more robust with the buffer on—and this is a very beefy sounding fuzz to begin with. It has all the distortion range and dynamic coolness of a good Fuzz Face, allowing you to control the effect level via your guitar's volume knob. Bottom line: If you don't need the circular housing to fulfill your Fuzz Face cravings, the Classic 108 is clearly the better mousetrap.



Dunlop

DUNLOP IN REVIEW

VINTAGE GUITAR

AUGUST 2008

NEW DUNLOP TRIO : MXR CARBON COPY, '74 PHASE 90 AND BUDDY GUY SIGNATURE WAH
BY PHIL FESER

Legendary pedal builder MXR/Dunlop recently introduced a sweet trio of effects; something new from its Custom Shop in the form of the Carbon Copy analog delay, something old in the form of a nuts-on reissue of the '74 script logo Phase 90, and something with a legendary-artist twist in the form of the Buddy Guy signature wah. The Carbon Copy analog delay uses MXR's standard 43/8" x 23/8" x 11/4" heavy duty die-cast chassis with a very cool emerald-green metalflake enamel finish, true-bypass stomp switch with blue status LED, chassis-mounted 1/4" in/out jacks, 9-volt adaptor jack, controls for Regeneration (repeats), Mix, and Delay, as well as a Mod (modulation) button, which adds a subtle pitch shift to the delayed signal. It's speed and width are tweaked by way of an internal mini-screwdriver pot accessible from the bottom when the cover is off. Both in front of and through the effects loop of a combo amp, the Carbon Copy's repeats are classic low-fidelity – dark without being muddy; analog without being too analog. From short, slap-back echoes to its maximum delay (600 milliseconds) its voicing is very musical, especially with the Mod button engaged, giving the repeats aslight chorus effect. The modulating effect becomes more noticeable on the short-to-medium delays with the Mod turned up; on longer delay times it acts like a tape flutter. With analog pedals, unwanted noise is a common concern. The Carbon Copy is fairly quiet, producing just a little white noise when run in front of the amp, and even less through the effects loop unless its Mix control is turned way up. The '74 Phase 90 is an exact recreation of MXR senior engineer Bob Cedro's personal 1974 script-logo Phase 90 and features a hand wired PC board

with select resistor and hand-matched FETs, all in the classic pumpkin orange chassis with black script logo. Its features, components, and controls are accurate to the original and include a single control (for Speed), non-true-bypass switch with no LED, chassis-mounted Switchcraft 1/4" in/out jacks, and battery-only operation. In front of a tube combo amp, the '74 Phase 90 produced great results – a thick, rich buttery phase-shifting sound that doesn't over-color the guitar/amp's natural sound. At 10 o'clock, the Speed control offers a deep, liquid Van Halen-esque effect. Roll it up to 3 o'clock and behold its very usable Leslie-like sound. The Buddy Guy signature Crybaby Wah is housed in Dunlop's standard wah chassis, but dressed up considerably with Buddy Guy's trademark polka-dot finish, a Fasel inductor, Filter switch with LED indicator, bypass footswitch with LED indicator, and a treadle imprinted with Buddy Guy's signature. The side-mounted Filter switch (which can be activated with the foot) offers two voicings, labeled "BG" and "Deep." In Deep mode, the pedal produces a thick, throaty sound with a smooth sweep, while in BG mode the tone is classic Clyde McCoy – sweet, crisp, and sharp. The unit's dual status LEDs (one on each side) are convenient. The Mode switch is also sidemounted and

can easily be switched mid song using only the foot, which is a cool feature and allows you to go from a nice, funky wah in BG mode quickly to Deep mode for a more in-your-face wah. All three of these units are solid additions to the MXR/Dunlop family and offer "boutique" pedal tones, features, and vibe from one of the biggest of the big boys.

