

KEELEY ELECTRONICS

FILAMENTS

REVIEW BY **NICK RAMBO**

STREET PRICE **\$189.00**



I don't know why I doubted Robert Keeley. But when I first caught wind of his namesake company's newest high gain release, the Filaments, I questioned what business he had making a "metal" pedal. It's Keeley, I thought. This is the guy who built his reputation on the back of compressors and boost pedals.

But was I wrong—this thing is a titan. And for that I must say: Sorry Robert.

TRIPLE THREAT

From a gain standpoint, the Filaments just seethes.

It's got gain and then some, thanks to a trio of gain stages, but it's not overdone. There's a tendency with some (lesser quality) high gain pedals to sound like a can of bees when you wind them up—but that's a pitfall the Filaments avoids entirely.

And to top it off, you can dial it back to a far more open gain structure—one that shirks the "chugga chugga" tightness in favor of a more old-school grind—but more on that a bit later.

LIGHT IT UP

Before we get too far, I want to talk about the

satisfying responsiveness found in every control on this pedal—and there are certainly a lot of controls to choose from. I have a certain affinity for feature-rich pedals, but when you get into a standard size box with six knobs and three toggles, experience had taught me to expect some drawbacks.

Stunningly though, that just isn't the case with the Filaments. Each knob and switch has such an obvious and thoughtful intentionality to its function that exploring the depths of each one is tweaker's delight.

Perhaps then, it should come as no surprise that the Filaments is Keeley's most flexible tone shaping pedal. It has a myriad of ways to tweak the sound, which is especially important when it comes to matching your distortion to the kind of music you want to play.

If you want that modern metal sound I mentioned earlier, simply roll the Bass off a tad, crank the Body knob, engage the Bright and Boost toggles, and dial up the gain to find yourself in djent heaven. Or if you're looking for something less intense, first roll back the volume and then engage the Crunch toggle (there's a significant volume spike when engaging Crunch mode). Then turn off the Boost and Bright switches, roll the Body and Gain knobs back and BOOM! You've got the classic hard rock tones of days gone by.

From there, you can tweak the EQ to your heart's content. The Bright switch

adds a very pleasant top end clarity—and between that, the dedicated Treble knob and Presence control, I'm sure you'll find an upper range that fits your setup perfectly.

And the bottom is mastered by a tag team duo of the Body and Bass knobs. Use those to lock in the perfect amount of low-end kick.

Combine all these controls to find just the right kind of grind for what you do best.

GO BIG OR DON'T

I don't have a metalhead-approved rig anymore. Gone are my days of Mesa half stacks and downtuned Les Pauls. But I still get that itch from time to time. And I have to be honest: the Filaments scratched it in the most satisfying of ways. It turned my portable little one-trip-into-the-gig rig into a monster. And if it can do that to what I'm playing, I'm sure it can do it for you, too.

WHAT WE LIKE

If you're looking for a

pedal that can cover all your high gain sounds, this is it. That's as simple as I can say it. From sizzling to soulful, there's an absurd amount of range inside the Filaments.

CONCERNS

A dedicated midrange control would've been nice. You have the ability to sculpt the mids with the other controls, but I did miss being able to specifically put the mids where I wanted them.

