

KEELEY ELECTRONICS

DYNATREM DYNAMIC TREMOLO

REVIEW BY **FLETCHER STEWART**

STREET PRICE **\$199**



PLEASE DO TOUCH... I SHAKE SO MUCH

Robert Keeley has come so far since his early modfather days. Recently, he and his team have been cranking out some top shelf original circuits. The new Keeley pedals dish out stellar tones and comprehensive control, while maintaining compact housing for prime pedalboard real estate. The delicious new DynaTrem is no exception and easily my favorite to date.

On the face of the unit, the crimson and gold color scheme and tube radio grillcloth graphics exude pure class. Luckily, the tones

match the tux. With a mere four dials and a three-way toggle switch, one can tweak out the tremolo gamut with a smorgasbord of sinewy waveforms and speeds that range from choppy to chewy and everything in between. What's more is the ability to conduct the rate and depth with pick-attack for an organic-electric relationship that is pure dynamic dopamine. It is addictive, inspirational and as dynamic as the name suggests. Let's dig a little deeper and find those slinky sine and square wave worms.

PRIMORDIAL SOUP CAN CONDUCTIONS

The tri-sectional heart of the DynaTrem pumps from the Mode switch. Reading from left to right, one can choose to conduct with his or her pick attack, the rate or depth of the modulations. The third mode reveals a swirling soupy harmonic tremolo and a wet, lip-smacking vintage-vibe reverb that can be attenuated by the Shape/Reverb dial. This pedal can be thought of as a sort of pre-'70s multi-effects box. The onboard level control can even goose the preamp section of an unwieldy

clean tube amp into crunch territory.

Controlling the Rate of the selectable ramp up, sine, ramp down and square waveforms is a completely unique experience to each setting. My favorite is the choppy squarewaves that can be unleashed by smacking a chord after a light fingerpicking passage. The tone is as pegged and choppy as hippo teeth masticating an unsuspecting river bather. Aggressive minor chords are my territorial tone behavior of choice. Controlling the Depth with touch is equally thrilling. This is useful for singing guitarists who wish to multitask without the added labor of an expression pedal. Tickle the strings for a moody verse with some subtle undulations and punctuate the vocal gaps with shipwreck of intense crashing sinewaves. Last but not least, the Harmonic Tremolo mode is a veritable oil spill of thick modulation that smears the lines of two-stage phaser, vibrato and luminescent harmonic throb.

It is hard to take my fingers off this pulse setting. It is just so alive.

WHAT WE LIKE

Vintage looks and tones to match, compact-yet-comprehensive control, touch dynamics and absolutely stunning tones make for a serious contender for best tremolo pedal to date. Adding to this is a level boost that can go beyond the utilitarian function of perceived tremolo volume loss compensation. Then, cap off the deal with a vintage amp-like reverb that can be used to flavor the harmonic sonic soup, and Keeley's best dish is served piping hot. This is a must for tremolo freaks and has great value for money and pedalboard space.

CONCERNS

Because of the touch dynamic aspect to the function of the DynaTrem, it seems it was designed to run in front of the amp and dirt effects. The only thing I could think of to add to this toneful box would be a loop to patch in an overdrive after the envelope, but before the tremolo and reverb. This might comprise the small size and overcomplicate things, so I will not look a gift horse in the mouth and just be happy that Keeley threw in all the extras.