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GUITAR
WORLD

LORD OF THE RINGS

Electro-Harmonix Ring Thing

Save your favorite settings in nine preset locations.



SPECS

Hold down the preset/tune footswitch to tune the ring modulator to the note you're playing.

* BY CHRIS GILL

IF YOU'VE EVER tried a ring modulator and thought that its crazy, atonal, metallic whapadang just wasn't for you, do not turn this page. The new Ring Thing pedal from Electro-Harmonix is much more than the sum (and difference) of its carrier and incoming signals. Yes, it is a ring modulator, but it also gives you a wide range of control over the effect, allowing you to create chorus, vibrato, tremolo, polyphonic pitch transposition, detuning, whammy and more, and all in addition to unique ring modulation tones and harmonies.

Unlike most ring modulators, the Ring Thing gives you a choice of four modes that employ either frequency or pitch-shift modulation, selectable carrier waveforms, a sweepable filter, preset memory and optional manual expression control. In addition, EHX has outfitted it with a tuneable modulator and single-sideband modulation, where only one band is present, making for less clangorous tones.

FEATURES

ALTHOUGH THE RING Thing is an incredibly sophisticated processor, the pedal's layout and controls are stomp-box simple. The heart of the pedal is the white mode/preset button. Press-

LIST PRICE \$279.00

MANUFACTURER

Electro-Harmonix,

ehx.com

CONTROLS Blend, wave, filter/rate, fine/depth, coarse, mode/preset

FOOTSWITCHES

Preset/tune, bypass

INPUTS Instrument, modulation, expression pedal (all 1/4-inch)

OUTPUTS Mono/left, right (all 1/4-inch)

MODES Ring Modulation, Upper Band Modulation, Lower Band Modulation and Pitch Shift

OTHER Nine preset locations; nine-volt adapter included

ing down on it scrolls through the four modes (Ring Modulation, Upper Band Modulation, Lower Band Modulation and Pitch Shift), and turning it lets you select among the nine presets and manual setting. You can also scroll through presets with the footswitch on the pedal's lower-left corner. Holding down the footswitch for about a second tunes the modulator to whatever single note you play, but don't try playing chords while performing this function, as it will only confuse the unit.

Five control knobs—blend, wave, filter/rate, fine/depth and coarse—allow you to tweak different parameters depending on which mode is selected. The blend control always provides a balance between dry and wet signals. The wave control lets you choose from square, sine, ramp up, ramp down and triangle waveforms, and it can be used to crossfade between waveforms. The filter/rate knob functions as either a low-pass-filter cutoff or modulation rate controller, and the fine/depth control adjusts the modulation frequency or the pitch in semitones. As for the coarse control, it can be used to either sweep frequencies or dial in pitch shifting over a +/-2-octave range.

The Ring Thing's pair of audio outputs can be configured for mono or stereo effects. The inputs comprise a standard instrument input, a modula-

tion input for using external oscillation sources, and an expression pedal input that lets you manually control the frequency of the ring mod effects or the coarse pitch of the pitch-shifting effect.

The pedal is housed in an ultra-sturdy case with heavy-duty jacks and footswitches (with true bypass), smooth-feeling knobs, and colorful LEDs that glow brightly even in direct sunlight. The pedal is powered by a nine-volt adapter (included) and does not run on batteries.

PERFORMANCE

IF YOU LOVE wacky, atonal ring mod effects, the Ring Thing's tones are as good as it gets, especially if you use an optional expression pedal to mess with the frequency while you play. But if you want ring-mod-style tones that remain in key, the Ring Thing has the unique ability to tune the modulator to any single note, providing irresistible characteristic metallic clangs that don't clash with your melodies. And unlike many ring modulators, the Ring Thing is dead quiet and transparent.

The Upper Band and Lower Band modes emphasize the ring modulation effects in upper and lower frequencies, respectively. The Lower Band mode can greatly enhance a guitar's bass output while the Upper Band mode gives the guitar more shimmer and shine, greatly extending and enhancing the guitar's normal range. These modes are also great for dialing in huge-sounding tremolo, vibrato and rotary speaker effects that make typical modulation effects sound flat and one-dimensional.

The Pitch Shift mode is especially satisfying. Its polyphonic pitch-shifting abilities allow the pedal to transform a regular guitar to a baritone or bass, while at more subtle detuned settings it can generate thick, luscious chorus effects. The Ring Thing also produces whammy functions when an expression pedal is connected to it.

THE BOTTOM LINE

AN INCREDIBLY VERSATILE and useful effect, the Ring Thing creates a wide variety of pro-quality sounds, from weird and unworldly to refined and beautiful. **SC**

•PRO	•CON
UNIQUE RING MOD AND PITCH SHIFT EFFECTS • PRESET MEMORY • EASY TO USE	YOU'LL WISH IT STORED MORE THAN NINE PRESETS

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