



# Vintage Guitar<sup>®</sup> Gear Reviews

magazine



## TECH 21 BOOST CHORUS & ROTO CHOIR

Price: \$245 (Boost Chorus); \$295

(RotoChoir).

Info: tech21nyc.com.

the secret's out... Mess with the Boost Chorus and you'll find lots of classic chorus textures, from Alex Lifeson on "Xanadu" or "The Trees" to Andy Summers on early Police LPs, as well as Fripp and Belew in *Discipline*-era King Crimson.

The Multi-Voice will see a lot of action. It adds layers of chorus for a thicker, richer sound. Frankly, one could leave it on constantly because it sounds so good. It's a blast to use with the Boost Chorus, producing everything from authentic retro tones to weird, fast-Speed settings from outer space.

Tech 21's Roto Choir aims to recreate the classic sounds of the Leslie rotating-speaker cabinet. Forty years ago, in the days before affordable phase shifters and chorus boxes, one way to get swirly guitar tones was to use a Leslie – a huge cabinet with a rotating speaker originally used for organs. Some players, however, like Eric Clapton ("Badge"), Stevie Ray Vaughan ("Cold Shot"), and Steve Howe ("And You and I"), all got great Leslie sounds on their guitars, notably for rhythm parts and cool melodies. For a few years, it was mandatory gear for the Brit-rocker on the go.

The Roto Choir is simple to use. Its key function is the Fast/Slow footswitch, which is used to speed up or ramp down the sound of the simulated speaker. Stomp on it a few times until you find the sweet spot. A few settings nailed the British guitar sound of the post-psychedelic age, bringing to mind names like Harrison, Winwood, Mason, Gilmour, Frampton, and more. The Roto Choir is very accurate.

On both pedals, the company adds its "buffered bypass," which it says makes the pedals quieter and retains signal in a chain. Both will provide hours of tweaking pleasure. – **Pete Prown VG**

## Mondo Modulations

### Tech 21 Boost Chorus & Roto Choir

**S**ure, you can get basic chorus and rotary-simulation pedals, but the pedal nuts at Tech 21 wanted more. With the Boost Chorus and Roto Choir series, the company wanted to create versatile pedals that replicate classics (and Leslie cabinets) from the '60s and '70s.

The Boost Chorus is a rugged box that offers simulations of the E-H Small Clone, MXR Micro Chorus, Boss CE-1 and CE-2, and TC Electronics units. Operation is simple – plug in and start twiddlin'. Controls include Mix, Tone, Speed, Pre-Delay, and Level and Depth, as well as a Multi-Voice button.

The Pre-Delay sets chorus delay from 0 to 50 milliseconds, imitating a range of "bucket brigade" circuits from a 512-stage to 1,024-stage and beyond. The analog Tone circuit gives an '80s chorus sound when turned up, while reducing it yields a darker sound. The Level control, which is also analog, adds volume when you need to make up a little gain with the pedal engaged. Mix is 100 percent analog, while other circuits are digital (to trigger time-delay effects).

If you're like most guitarists, you'll skip to page seven of the instruction

booklet, where there are illustrations of knob settings. Cooler still, there are separate fast and slow examples for the Boss CE, TC, and Small Clone simulations. It takes just a few minutes to get a feel for the controls and their functions. Pre-Delay is a boatload of fun, as it can dial in a slapback echo-like effect. If you ever wondered how Pat Metheny gets his signature tone, the Boost Chorus' Pre-Delay will make you smack your head in joyous wonder. Add in thicker echo and a smidge extra chorus from other pedals, and – voila! – you're in Methenyville. Sorry Pat,