



Finhol Accutronics Spring Reverb

Here's a no-nonsense solution for anyone who needs classic spring reverb sounds

PRICE £134 CONTACT www.thomann.de

Accutronics spring reverbs (formerly produced by the reverb division of The Hammond Organ Company and now by Accu Bell Sound Inc) have been at the heart of many classic guitar amps since the early 1960s. The electromechanical design gives a very particular sound, one that's associated with every genre of popular music from classic pop to country and rock. Unlike contemporary digital reverbs, that

it's a 'more' or 'less' knob. Maximum reverb time is three seconds. The unit comes with a 9V power supply.

In use

Adding the right amount of reverb to your sound is like adding the secret ingredient to your cooking – but what's the right amount? For added presence, you need just a hint. For a rich, watery 60s vibe, move the control further towards its maximum setting. The

The right amount of spring can really put a guitar in its own acoustic niche

rely on the sampling of physical spaces, a metal coil spring is used to delay the signal and create an effect that sounds like room reflections. Accutronics units give a particularly musical character.

This Finhol unit contains an Accutronics spring and the necessary analogue circuitry. If you want to get a vintage sound from a contemporary amp, or are lucky enough to own a vintage non-reverb model, it's a practical solution.

This is definitely a no-nonsense device. You'll even need to plug an external footswitch in if you need an on/off option. It's large by the standard of most pedals, but it has to be to contain the mechanism. However, it's a lot smaller than a vintage external unit, such as the Colorsound Supa Reverb. The die-cast aluminium box is very solid and the single white control knob isn't going to confuse anyone; basically,

control itself is very responsive and smooth, so you can easily sculpt your guitar sound in relation to a band or a recorded mix. One of the advantages of spring reverb is that it's an emulation – so it doesn't clash with the room or hall reverbs you may be using to define vocal or drum space. Indeed, the right amount of spring can really put a guitar sound in its own acoustic niche. And this Finhol will give you all those Fleetwood Mac *Albatross* tones, too. However, as this is a relatively short spring (as they go), kicking the box doesn't give you that fake surf sound. **ML**

Guitar VERDICT

A straightforward, simple-to-use spring reverb that does what it says on the tin. The sound is classy, and smoother than many vintage units.

8/10



Finhol Blues Bass Board

Want some bass support for your gigs? This option won't drink the rider...

PRICE £270 CONTACT www.thomann.de

While organ players will be familiar with bass pedals, and acoustic guitarists may have encountered stompboxes that amplify a tapping foot, this Blues Bass Board is designed to give the solo player some basic bass support. And, as the name implies, it's designed primarily for use by 12-bar players.

The unit has a curiously classy retro hi-fi vibe to it, thanks to the use of solid oiled walnut for the three sensors and control unit. These are set onto a thick aluminium base plate. There's a notched rotary key selector, and once you set the tonic, this is assigned to the left-hand sensor.

The subdominant appears on the middle sensor and the dominant on the right. However, you will need to get your head around the fact that in Germany (and many other countries – including Poland, Denmark and Sweden), the chromatic scale is written using B for B flat and H for B! If the unit develops international popularity, perhaps Finhol will consider reprinting the top panel.

For a 21st-century device, the Blues Bass Board is notably old-school; there's no MIDI connectivity and the unit offers just three bass sounds, selectable with a mini-toggle switch: acoustic bass, standard electric bass and fretless bass. A second mini-toggle changes the play mode – and you can set this to either 1/4, 1/2 or 1/1 notes – in practice, this allows you to tap continuously and the bass will sound

every beat, every second beat or on every fourth beat. As well as DC voltage, input and audio output, the unit also features a trigger output, which allows you to add a Finhol Auto Stomp Player pedal. This gives you various drum sounds and combinations, allowing you to slave a complete rhythm section to your foot.

In use

This is a pedal that takes a bit of getting used to! Standing or sitting on a fairly high stool feels the most comfortable. Once you've worked out how to do this without falling over, the sensors prove to be accurate and reliable and you can have a lot of fun.

However, there are some obvious limitations; the sensors aren't pressure sensitive, so you can't really nuance the performance – and while you can cover a widely varied repertoire with just three notes, lines are somewhat limited. Despite this, the sampled bass sounds are all rich, resonant and offer the appropriate timbre. While it's not aimed specifically at bass players, the unit does suggest it will bring to the table some intriguing possibilities for extending your technique. **ML**

Guitar VERDICT

The Blues Bass Board is a quirky, but likeable bit of kit that's designed for a very specific market – and as such the limitations aren't really an issue.

7/10