



39 Stompboxes

Strut Their Stuff

TESTED BY THE GUITAR PLAYER STAFF

THE DESIRE TO CREATE SMALL, BATTERY-POWERED audio circuits that can radically change the sound of an electric guitar has inspired stompbox makers since the early 1960s. The pioneering brainiacs who invented such primordial effects as the Maestro Fuzz-Tone (Nashville studio engineer Glen Snotty) and the Electro-Harmonix LPB-1 booster (Mike Matthews) set the stage for what would become a huge stompbox market in the 1970s and 1980s. Effects pedals went out of style for a while as players "graduated" to more sophisticated rack systems in the '90s. But the love affair with racks didn't last for a lot of players, many of whom came back to stompboxes after realizing pedals often sounded better and were certainly way easier to use. Effects pedals are





Joemeek floorQ

Despite its name, the floorQ (\$249 retail/\$199 street) is a compressor not an equalizer. ("I just like saying 'floorQ,'" quips Joemeek's Alan Hyatt). In fact, it's essentially the same optical compressor found in the company's twinQ and threeQ studio boxes, built into a pedal for non-studio use, particularly by guitarists. Controls for Attack, Release, Slope, and Compress serve up everything from a cool shimmer to whacky pumping and breathing effects, and a tad of squeeze enlivens any guitar tone so much you'll want to leave the compressor on constantly. On the other hand, the 20dB of gain boost on tap can drive the floorQ's Class-A preamp into delectable crunch and even "Revolution"-like distortion, especially when used with a tube amp, so you might also opt to use it as an overdrive or boost. It sounds good—it is good, and it gets an Editors' Pick. —Barry Cleveland

KUDOS Versatile, studio-quality compression. Killer overdrive.

CONCERNS None.

CONTACT Joemeek, (310) 323-9050; joemeek.com

Lizard Leg Effects Flying Dragon

The Flying Dragon (\$169 direct) is a clean booster that's designed to be completely transparent—i.e., it doesn't boost or cut any particular part of the frequency spectrum. You can place the Flying Dragon ahead of your other effects to work as a line-driver/buffer (especially useful when driving long lengths of cable), or you can use it last in line before your amp as a volume booster to help your solos stand out. Used by itself, the Flying Dragon is also great for eliciting ballsy distortion from an amp that's set for a grinding rhythm sound. The Dragon's Boost control has a lot of range, so finding a level that works for your particular rig and playing style is just a matter of dialing it until you find the setting that makes your clean tones sound fuller and more present, and your overdriven tones assume some fire-breathing attitude. —Art Thompson

KUDOS Clean, quiet signal boost.

CONCERNS None.

CONTACT Lizard Leg Effects, (225) 938-2521; lizardleffects.com

