

J. ROCKETT Tranquilizer

BY YOEL KREISLER



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this pedal.

Most of the classic first-generation phasers—like the MXR Phase 90, Electro-Harmonix Small Stone, and Mu-Tron Phasor—were less than subtle. But relative subtlety was precisely what made the Phase 90's less celebrated cousin, the two-stage Phase 45, appealing when it was released in the mid '70s. It's also what makes J. Rockett's very Phase 45-like Tranquilizer one of the nicest phasers I've played in quite some time.

Modulation Metamorphosis

As its four knobs suggest, the Tranquilizer is much more than a clone of the super-simple, one-knob Phase 45. In fact, categorizing the Tranquilizer as simply a phaser undersells its versatility. It's more akin to a Uni-Vibe in many ways—primarily because of the addition

most pronounced effects are within a pretty narrow range between noon and 3 o'clock. Still, it's easy to hear how this control would be handy when using the Tranquilizer with fuzz and other gain effects. The fat control, meanwhile, enables you to fine-tune the low-end response. It's helpful when working the Tranquilizer into a band mix or arrangement, or when you're building a tone recipe with multiple effects.

When working with clean tones, the Tranquilizer delivers everything I lie awake at night wishing for in a phaser. It's not too resonant or whistle-y, and it's got a gorgeous, throbbing, undulating quality that doesn't overwhelm the fundamental tone of your guitar and pickups. Dirty tones are also a beautiful match. Running before a vintage Real Tube Overdrive, it



a pedal that adapts readily to shifting musical settings and changes on your pedalboard. And the ability to pan between phase and vibrato enables you to shape unique and complex modulation sounds to suit a song or drive a riff. Above all, the Tranquilizer manages the difficult trick of meshing with your guitar tone instead of just sitting on top of it. Taken together, these qualities make the Tranquilizer a great modulation unit.

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of vibrato and the ability to use each effect independently or blend them. Even if you're not a big vibrato fan, the Tranquilizer's vibrato is quite enjoyable to use. And the way it blends seamlessly with the phase effect creates textures that are a joy to sprinkle on clean tones.

Another feature that sets this pedal apart from other phasers is the focus control, which is essentially an external bias control. It enables you to fine-tune the range of sweep in the phase or vibrato sound. J. Rockett says it's the key to dialing in the best Leslie and Uni-Vibe sounds. But it can be subtle, and the

delivers the kind of dark thick-molasses throb that will make a Trower fan's hair stand on end. The phased signal doesn't dance around the distortion. Instead it seems to *enter* it—enhancing the overdrive tones without adding or highlighting dissonances.

The Verdict

Working from a classic formula, J. Rockett has created a kind of Uni-Vibe/Phase 45 hybrid modulation machine of exceptional versatility. The inclusion of tone and bias (focus) controls, which are sometimes subtle, make the Tranquilizer

RATINGS

\$199 street
rockettpedals.com

Tones	★★★★
Ease of Use	★★★★☆
Build/Design	★★★★☆
Value	★★★★☆

PROS Incredibly deep phase sounds that meld wonderfully with cleans and dirt. Musical and expressive, with a nice low-end whomp missing from too many phasers.

CONS Focus control has a bit of a learning curve and sometimes seems like it would be better as an internal trim pot—but is this where the magic happens.