

ALEXANDER PEDALS

RADICAL DELAY

REVIEW BY **NICK RAMBO**

STREET PRICE **\$189.99**



The '80s: A decade that introduced us to MTV, made leg warmers a thing and taught us the most important rule: don't ever feed a gremlin after midnight.

But the '80s also brought us the clinically clean digital delay—so perhaps we can overlook the ridiculous hairstyles just long enough to thank our lucky stars for that.

The new Radical Delay from Alexander Pedals re-imagines the sounds of the era, serving up 900

milliseconds of pristine digital repeats with a few modern twists.

GREAT TONES

The Radical Delay looks and sounds like a killer delay pedal, but under the surface it's also a chorus, vibrato, pitch shifter and synthy glitch engine.

Allow me to explain.

The Radical features four knobs. The first three controls are pretty standard—delay time, mix and feedback—and the fourth knob, marked Tweak,

makes a unique adjustment in each of the three modes, all accessible via the three-way toggle.

The first mode, Mod, adds some delicious modulation to the repeats. At 12 o'clock on the Tweak knob, there is no modulation at all—only pure, unadulterated digital goodness. Move the knob to the right to add a luscious chorus to the mix and to the left for a fast vibrato that gets pretty darn warbly at the maximum setting. Some might find Glitch, the second mode, a little out there, but

if you've been looking for something unexpected to add a little dimension to your delay sound—this is it. It's sort of a cross between a lo-fi filter and a bitcrushed videogame sound, but it's very awesome in certain applications.

And if you're at all familiar with Mode 6 on the Boss PS-3 Digital Pitch Shifter/Delay, then you'll be right at home with the third mode of the Radical Delay, called Bend. What's totally rad about this mode—sorry this '80s thing is getting to me—is that you can perfectly recreate the ascending “dream sequence” music from your favorite '80s sitcom or movie.

But as I mentioned earlier, this pedal is much more than a simple delay. When you turn the Time knob all the way down, the Radical Delay takes on a whole new vibe. In Mod mode, it becomes a lush chorus or standalone vibrato. Glitch mode turns into a “robot machine” and Bend mode gives you a variety of pitch-shifting options. Very slick.

DOING GOOD

Alexander pedals are handmade in Raleigh, North Carolina by Matthew Farrow. If that name sounds familiar, you might know Farrow from his other company, Disaster Area Designs. After successfully launching a complete line of MIDI controllers and pedalboard gadgets, he wanted to offer a pedal brand that focused on more conventional designs—and one that honored the memory of his little brother.

In 1987, Alexander Farrow died as the result of a form of cancer called neuroblastoma. He was just seven years old.

So for every Alexander pedal purchased, \$5 goes to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in hopes of one day ending childhood cancer. (Farrow is also a regular participant in the annual Circuits to Cure Cancer drive that also benefits St. Jude's.

WHAT WE LIKE

The Radical Delay is what it claims to be—a blissful reimagining of the crystal-clear tones of the 1980s with a few imaginatively modern twists. But the real clincher here is how good you can feel knowing you helped make the world a better place by buying a guitar pedal. And what better excuse is there than that? Great tone is one thing, but doing good is where it's at.

CONCERNS

There's not a whole lot not to like about the Radical Delay. But if I were going to nitpick, I'd point out a particular lack of functionality. Blame it on the form factor, but delay technology has come a long way since 1980 and I want more control. Tap tempo, modulation speed and depth, a tone control and an external expression option to go nuts on the Glitch mode with.