

# TONE IN PROGRESS THIRD HAND

MULTI-EFFECTS BE DAMNED – SOMETIMES ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS TWIST A KNOB. SO AT THE RISK OF ANOTHER GROSS ENTENDRE, MICK TAYLOR GETS A HELPING HAND

**Have we gone stark raving mad?** Here is a £95 pedal that produces no sound whatsoever. It has no inputs, no outputs and not a battery compartment in sight – what's going on?

The Tone In Progress Third Hand is a mechanical device that you attach to a pot on an effects pedal, to make changes without having to take your hands off the guitar. It's a design that first saw the light of the day via the Electro Harmonix Hot Foot of the 1970s, a much-loved relic, albeit beset with some mechanical shortcomings. So what does this new device bring to the party?

## TWIST ME, TURN ME

The Third Hand comprises a solid metal chassis with an equally sturdy metal pedal, which is topped with coarse sandpaper/griptape so your foot won't slip off. The pedal pivots on a steel shaft with hard-compound plastic bushings, meaning it's not going to wear out in a hurry.

Inside, a reinforced rubber band runs around a wheel under the pedal, then up to another underneath the rotating pot at the front. This is where you attach the metal connecting cable that runs to your external effects pedal. Before you do, it's important to make sure the rocker pedal is fully toe-down, and that the respective pot is all the way clockwise, so you have the maximum setting at the toe-down position. Once you've done this, just be careful when going fully heel-down, as the Third Hand is likely to have more travel than your pot. If you slam it heel-down, you may damage any part of the chain, so if you're likely to be using the Third Hand with one specific pedal, it might be an idea to fit some kind of spacer/rubber stop to prevent it from turning too far. Hardly a tricky adjustment to make, though.

Connected up, the Third Hand opens up whole new dimensions from your current pedals. You can manipulate delay times, or use it with

rotary speaker simulators, chorus, vibrato, tremolo... pretty much the gamut of dynamic and modulation pedals. In addition, it's surprisingly liberating

There are a couple of practical issues, however. The rocker pedal is relatively short, so it's all too easy to foul the turning mechanism and connecting cable with your toe. Also, the reinforced band that connects the pedal and the turning mechanism looks like it could slip off at any minute, as there's no detent in the wheel on which it sits.

## CONCLUSION

The Tone In Progress Third Hand is causing more excitement in the GB offices than any number of electronic devices of late. It has a hunter-gatherer appeal that calls out to your more basic instincts as a guitar player, something all-too-easily lost in a surfeit of digital bells and whistles.

You can't throw it on the floor and jump up and down on it, because the overall design requires a little mechanical sympathy. Treated thus, there's endless fun to be had with the Third Hand – it's great for careful live use, and verging on essential for tone hounds in the studio: we love it. **GB**



**GBINFO**

**TONE IN PROGRESS THIRD HAND**

PRICE: £95

BUILT IN: USA

TYPE: Manual, foot-operated pot twister

FEATURES: Rocker pedal, omnidirectional connector

DIMENSIONS: 250(l) x 115(w) x 80(h) mm

POWER: None required (except your foot!)

WEIGHT: 1.2kg

CONTACT: Sounds Great Music

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**GBOPINION**

**TONE IN PROGRESS THIRD HAND**

**GOLD STARS**

- ★ Unlocks huge potential from ordinary pedals
- ★ You'll never stop smiling at it

**BLACK MARKS**

- Turning mechanism easy to foul with your foot

**GBRATING**

★★★★☆

to have on-the-fly control of a distortion or overdrive level when connected to a suitable filth box; the transition from cleaner passages to outright slam has rarely been so smooth.



Sometimes the simplest ideas are the best, and they don't come simple.