



Not Just Another Tremolo

The Pigtronix Tremvelope

Pigtronix has a reputation for creating highly tweakable stompboxes that exhibit a high build-quality and swank looks. Ever creative, designers David Koltai and Howard Davis have continued their fruitful partnership with yet another pedal to entice guitarists, an envelope-controlled tremolo pedal named the Tremvelope.

The Tremvelope is artfully encased in a hand-painted, medium-sized housing. Control knobs are for Sensitivity, which controls how hard you must play to open the envelope, followed by standard tremolo controls for Depth, and Speed. Below are switches for Acceleration, which manages how the speed of the trem is affected by your playing, and Waveform, which selects hard or soft trem tones. The pedal has basic input/output jacks, plus a stereo out, a trigger input, a vol/pan input to use an expression pedal (as either a volume or pan device), and finally a DC jack. The pedal cannot be powered by batteries, but is supplied with its own 18-volt power supply.

For our tests, we plugged the Tremvelope into a '65 Deluxe Reverb, along with an ES-335 and a blond '67 Tele. First, we set up a standard trem tone using only the Depth and Speed knobs set to a sine waveform. The Pigtronix exhibited classic trem tones as on a Fender Deluxe amp, but to a much more controllable degree. Additionally, the Waveform's Sine/Ramp settings allowed us to tailor the color

of the trem much more than a classic blackface amp ever could. Hard chop was there by dialing in the Sine, while smoother, Fender-style dwells with a tweak of the Ramp setting. Solely as a tremolo pedal, the Tremvelope excels, and will quell most players' temptations to use an amp's onboard circuit.

The Envelope footswitch helps reveal the more complex aspects of Davis' and Koltai's design. In this mode, the player's touch/attack controls the speed and depth of the effect. We began with the sensitivity around 12 o'clock, with low Speed and Depth settings. Low settings here gave the Envelope the maximum range to change the speed and depth with the corresponding toggles set to positive. With this setting, as we played harder, speed and depth increased. Spinning up the Speed control and setting the Speed toggle to negative gave the trem more depth, but slowed its speed as we played harder.

To manipulate more of the unit's features, we plugged a bass into its trigger input. This allows the bassist to control the opening and closing of the envelope (one could use any type of audio source here to control the envelope's effect on the trem).

PIGTRONIX TREMVELOPE

Price: \$249.

Info: pigtronix.com.

Next, we plugged an expression pedal into the Speed input jack. With it, we could easily manage the speed of the effect, though the envelope effect was less pronounced.

Finally, we plugged the expression pedal into the Vol/Pan, which made the expression pedal function as a pan

control (with both outputs used) and a volume control (if only the stereo out is used). Using the unit as a volume control involves using only the stereo out, and using the standard output works backward; toe is off, heel is full volume. While these features may be complicated, they're the stuff hardcore stompbox users drool over.

Even without its way-out features, the Pigtronix Tremvelope is a fantastic tremolo pedal. Add the Envelope section and, to a lesser extent, the speed input, and you have a great circuit that allows players to tweak to their hearts' content.

The Tremvelope rises above the mundane. Innovative and ear-catching, its ability to use it as a volume or pan showcases the designers' imagination. — **Zac Childs VG**

