

comfortable U-shaped neck profile. The lightweight bodies and slotted headstocks give the instruments a balanced feel. All of the Eastwood instruments we've reviewed boasted excellent workmanship, with clean fretwork, tight neck joints, flawless finishes, and high-quality/well-fitted components. The EEB-1 and EUB-1 are no exception.

Through an Ampeg B200-R 1x15" 200-watt combo, the center-mounted humbucking pickup and 34"-scale helped both basses produce classic,

thick electric-bass tones with no extraneous noise and a lot of output. Rolling the Tone control all the way back on the EEB-1 revealed a killer old-school sound with clear, punchy midrange and chunky low-end response, especially when you get aggressive with the picking fingers. While both basses were strung with .040 to .100 D'Addario roundwounds, a set of flatwounds or tapewounds would certainly add vintage flavor of the tone – and likely push the EUB-1 into "upright tone" territory. Given

they sport only one pickup and passive controls, the Eastwoods don't offer a ton of tonal versatility. But they do a fantastic job of creating rock-solid tone, voiced for playing in the pocket.

The Eastwood EEB-1 and EUB-1 basses are more great examples of how Eastwood is striving to market quality, affordable instruments with a cool 1950s/'60s vibe. Both boast excellent workmanship and solid, usable gigging tones with gobs of retro appeal. – *Phil Feser*

Taking Soul to New Levels

The BBE Soul Vibe

THE ORIGINAL SHIN-EI UNIVIBE became hugely famous after Jimi Hendrix used it with Band of Gypsys (and at Woodstock). Later practitioners like Frank Marino and especially Robin Trower used the Univibe "rotating speaker" effect in a number of songs. Ask an experienced player to name the songs that typify the sound of the Univibe, they'll likely cite Hendrix's "Machine Gun" and Trower's "Day of the Eagle."

The Univibe was not particularly well-built and had a reputation for being unreliable in performance environments. In the '80s, a number of companies began to issue variations – most at prices that were out of reach of the average player who would otherwise like to dabble with its tone. Later, as the effect became more prominent, other companies offered variations and the fun became more affordable.

Contrary to popular belief, the Univibe effect is *not* akin to chorus, but rather it is a phase-shifting device that emulates a rotating speaker like those found in a Hammond organ Leslie speaker. Today, the Univibe name is owned by effects builder Jim Dunlop.

One of the more noteworthy modern variations is BBE's Soul Vibe, a well-made unit with an LED

indicator, non-slip rubber bottom, controls for Speed and Intensity, and true-bypass wiring.

With a Fender Custom Shop Stratocaster fed into a 1981 Marshall JCM800 50-watt combo and the Soul Vibe switched to its "Machine Gun" preset (as described in the owners manual), the unit offers up a little *too much* wall-rattling effect; rolling back the Intensity to about half brings the effect closer to what you heard when Hendrix played the Fillmore, though it noticeably cuts treble response. Roll up the Speed knob slightly and jam the riff

from Trower's "Bridge of Sighs," and the Soul Vibe *nails* the tone. In both instances, this setup sounds *very* close to the original, and the blue indicator light pulses with the speed of the setting – a useful feature in a live setting, especially.

Plugging in a Les Paul Junior is a revelation; who would have guessed a Gibson through a rotating speaker effect? Okay, Frank Marino knew, but he's apparently the only one. In this case, the P-90 works very well with the Speed rolled back and the Intensity at about three-quarters. In this setting, it sounds halfway between chorus and phase-shifting. Switching the unit off reveals no degradation at all in tone. Hey, this could be a groundbreaking setup for some budding musician out there!

The Soul Vibe is a worthy entrant to the market. It's easy to use, sounds very close to the original, and unlike a vintage Univibe, is made of high-strength steel and other high-quality components. – *Eric C. Shoaf*



BBE SOUL VIBE

Price: \$129.99

Contact: BBE Sound, Inc., 5381 Production Drive, Huntington Beach, CA 92649; phone (714)897-6766; bbesound.com.



GIBSON SLASH MODEL, GA-42 RVT

The Gibson Custom "Slash" Inspired By VOS (Vintage Original Spec) Les Paul combines individual design features with Slash's personal touches. Gibson's new GA-42RVT is a hand-wired/hand-built Class A amplifier that uses five 12AX7 tubes in the preamp, two 6L6GC power tubes, metal-film resistors, DC power filaments, and has tube-driven reverb and tremolo. Its Pentode/Triode Switch allows for operational output of 30 or 15 watts. It uses two 12" Eminence Legend Speakers and is finished in two-tone Vintage Brown and Tan Tolex. Check them out at gibson.com.



EMG 707TW

EMG's 707TW uses the company's exclusive triple coil arrangement and dual internal preamps for two pickups in one, it employs Alnico magnets, a 9-volt dual active preamp, push/pull Volume/Tone controls. It can be hooked to the company's accessories, such as the SPC Presence Control, EXG Expander, or PA2 Preamp Booster. Read more at emgpickups.com.



LINE6 MICRO SPIDER

The Line6 Micro Spider is a battery-powered guitar amp with four Spider III amp models, a new acoustic model, six Smart Control FX (with reverb, chorus, tap delay and more) and a chromatic tuner, a POD 2.0-style direct output, microphone input, and dedicated trim knob. Got to line6.com.

G&L BLONDIE

G&L Guitars' new Blondie has a pearloid pickguard, pearloid G&L/Schaller machine heads and matching cover on the rear cavity. It uses a two-piece swamp ash body, hard rock maple neck, G&L Dual Fulcrum bridge, alnico V vintage wound single-coil pickups, five-way pickup selector switch and PTB system. See it at glguitars.com.