

FIVE THINGS EVERY WORSHIP GUITARIST
NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT ELECTRIC GUITAR EFFECTS

| CASEY CORUM |

FIVE THINGS EVERY WORSHIP ELECTRIC GUITARIST SHOULD KNOW ABOUT EFFECTS

The subject of electric guitar effects is incredibly broad. The variety of effects - from the "all-in-one" Line 6 POD to the latest boutique overdrive from some company you've never heard of - can make it very easy to get lost in all the options available. Beyond the individual effects come all the possible combinations of those effects.

Here are the 5 things every worship electric guitarist needs to know about effects:

BEWARE OF THE MULTI-EFFECTS UNIT

Multi-effects units such as the Line 6 POD or M-series pedals present a compelling argument. They provide a broad sonic palette of effects and amp modeling at an affordable price. That said, so many options at your disposal can quickly lead you to over-effected tone and too much pedal pushing. It also bypasses the education process into how each effect works on its own. If you are going the multi-effects route, start by stripping each sound back to its component pieces. Take the time to learn the characteristics of each effect and each variation of that effect. Learn why each effect does what it does. This leads us to our second point.

GO SLOWLY

As you start to incorporate effects, go slowly and be intentional about it. As you add each new effect, take the time to explore the parameters that make the effect work. As you familiarize yourself with each new effect individually, it will be much easier to create more interesting sounds as you start to combine various effects together. A good place to start is with a quality overdrive pedal such as an Ibanez Tube Screamer or the like.

GO SLOWLY

From there you could move on to a tremolo pedal or perhaps a simple delay pedal. Read up on guitar players you admire and find out what is on their pedal boards. There are no rules to which sonic direction to head. If you take your time and do your research, you will be better equipped to make good decisions both in your purchases and in your sonic choices as you play with your worship team.

MAKE IT EASY TO ACCESS YOUR "BREAD AND BUTTER" TONES

Whether you are using a set of pedals or a multi-effects unit, make it easy to find a basic list of tones and effects. Once you have the basics down you can then start to add new sounds and tones to your repertoire. Here's a list of "bread and butter" tones every worship guitarist should have at the ready:

MAKE IT EASY TO ACCESS YOUR "BREAD AND BUTTER" TONES

Clean/basic tone
A touch of overdrive (to give a little "break up" when hit hard) and a little reverb

Lead boost
A second overdrive level or clean boost for single note work like leads and motifs

Tremolo
Especially useful in ballads and bluesy songs

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

There is so much information available online related to electric guitar effects. Google your favorite guitarists and try to emulate their setup. Also, YouTube is an incredible resource for demoing guitar pedals. YouTube can also be a great resource for observing how different playing techniques interact with certain effects or chains of effects. On top of studying the types of effects, also explore the "signature" pedal for each type of effect. For instance, most overdrive pedals are some variation of the Ibanez Tube Screamer. Each effect type has one or more "signature" pedals. Take the time to learn what they sound like.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Another aspect to research is the order in which effects generally are chained. While there are many approaches to "pedal order" there are some great rules of thumb to follow. Again, research your favorite guitarists in this regard and order your pedals accordingly. Do your homework.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Here's a good starting point from Robert Keeley:
Which Chain Of Effect Pedals Makes Life Easy?

W: Wah
C: Compressor
O: Overdrive
E: EQ
P: Pitch
M: Modulation
L: Levels
E: Echo

STUDY GENRE SPECIFIC TONES

Every genre of music has a basic approach to effects and amp tones. Take the time to study the various ways each genre uses effects and amp tones. Strive to authentically emulate each genre's unique approach.

STUDY GENRE SPECIFIC TONES

Here's a basic list to get you started:

Country - cleaner tones, compression, typically no delay, maybe a touch of reverb, pretty straight forward, Fender-style amps

Modern rock (think U2) - overdrive, delay, generally more effected sounds, Vox-style amps

Metal/alternative/grunge - distortion, high gain, Marshall or Mesa Boogie-style amps

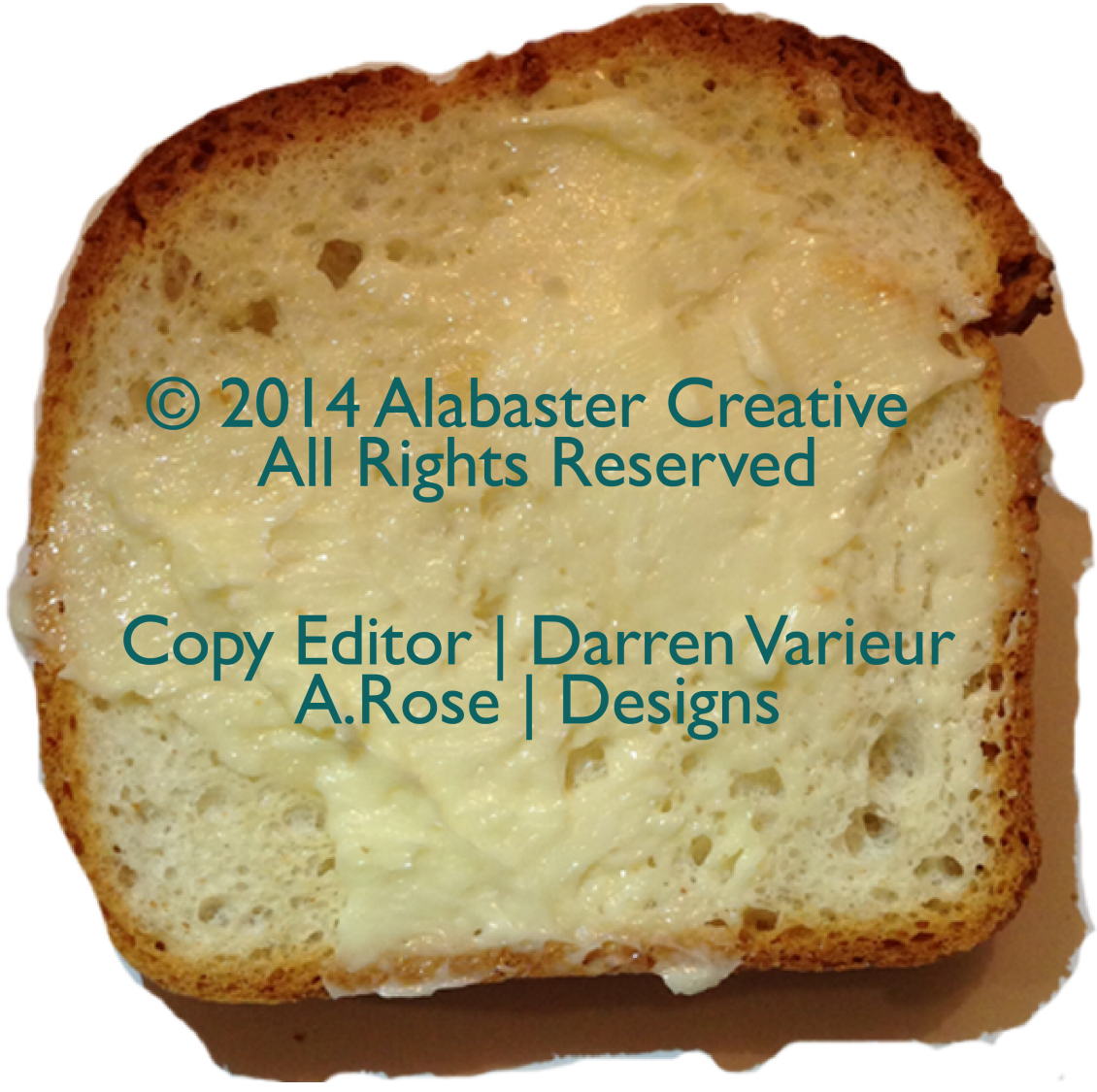
STUDY GENRE SPECIFIC TONES

Blues - overdrive, low gain, maybe a touch of tremolo, spring reverb, boost for solos, wah occasionally, Fender-style amps

Indie rock - runs the gamut between dreamy effected tones to very clean, to high gain, tends to be very band-specific

R&B/funk/soul/gospel - very clean, almost no drive, even DI electric sound, compression

Classic rock - warm tube amp overdrive, amp turned up for more gain, Fender, Vox and Marshall-style amps



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