# STOMPBOX FEVER

## MXR FLANGER

Whether implemented with surgical precision—such as Edward Van Halen's jet swooshes on "Unchained"—or slathered on nearly every note (Pat Travers, I'm looking at *you*), flanging is a formidable effect. Personally, I've always given flanging the same respect I give hot red peppers. Used judiciously, both can add a wonderful zing to whatever they're sprinkled on. But if you use too much, you've ruined everything, and, frankly, I start to cry.

Thankfully, the MXR M-117R Flanger ($250 retail/street N/A), an updated reissue of MXR's classic '80s unit, is capable of some subtle, sleight-of-hand textures, as well as some more whacked-out perversions that should make any sonic sicko as giddy as a pre-teen girl. Powered via two 9-volt batteries or the supplied 18-volt adapter, the MXR Flanger is built like a brick—albeit a silvery metal-flake brick that offers Manual, Width, Speed, and Regeneration controls. Running the pedal in front of a Fender Twin Reverb, I was able to conjure everything from a metallic-sounding space-age vibrato to a slow, swirling modulation that was syrupy enough to make you rethink ever using a chorus pedal again. Of course, I was also able to dial-in all of the weird, semi-ring modulation madness that any good flanger delivers, as well as some seriously wrong clanks that sounded like an alien steel-drum ensemble. But the thing about the MXR Flanger is that it does all of the above superbly and *quietly*. Running in front of my cranked 50-watt Marshall, I was expecting the sounds of a wind tunnel the minute I kicked the pedal on. But thanks to a revamped circuit, which sports a compander, the unit produces a minimal amount of hissy background junk. So if you're simply looking for another shade of subtle modulation, or an over-the-top noisemaker, or both, the MXR Flanger undoubtedly has your number. —*Darrin Fox*




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**KUDOS**
A ruggedly built flanger that yields everything from delicate modulation to twisted tones.

**CONCERNS**
None.

**CONTACT**
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## HUH?

An abbreviation of compressor/expander, a compander, is a noise-reduction device that uses a compressor at the start of the signal to reduce its dynamic range so a higher average signal can be sent through a noisy device—in this case, an effect. The signal is then sent to an expander to restore the original dynamic range, making louder signals more prominent, and pushing softer signals—such as noise, hiss, etc.—into the background.



PHOTO: PATRICK W