

Wolfram Martin Simpson & Michael Messer slides **£250 each**

Probably the most expensive slides in the world...

CONTACT: Wolfram Slides **PHONE:** 07939 244176 **WEB:** www.wolframslides.com

If you take your slide guitar playing seriously, like Martin Simpson and Michael Messer, you want the best, right? Well, slides don't get much better than these UK-made Wolframs. Made from solid tungsten carbide, both have the same mirror finish, but unlike brass or stainless steel they won't mark or become 'scratchy' in use – the material is just too damn hard. It's a hugely complex manufacturing process: the material starts as a powder and is sintered at 1,400 degrees centigrade before being machined with diamond-tipped tools and finally polished with a

diamond paste. They're made one at a time – a process that takes around four weeks. All of a sudden, the asking price makes a little more sense...

In Use

Like the styles of Simpson and Messer, their slides are very different. Simpson's is very heavy, thicker-walled with a tapered internal bore, and designed primarily for acoustic. Used on your pinkie, it takes some series adjustment over even a similarly dimensioned stainless steel slide. Messer's is half the weight, thinner-walled (and more difficult to

manufacture), and designed for his ring finger. But it's the relative mass of both that allows a much lower action/lighter string gauge use and a hallmark 'liquid' tonality that sustains for days.

Verdict

We've amassed quite a collection of glass, ceramic, brass, chromed steel, aluminium and stainless steel slides, but these two change the game. If you're serious about slide, well... we've never played a better one. **[DB]**



GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

Guitarist says: You might think these are daft: £250 for a slide? So did we... until we used them

HardWire Supernatural Ambient Reverb **£149**

DigiTech ramps up the atmosphere with a new 'verb

CONTACT: Sound Technology **PHONE:** 01462 480000 **WEB:** www.digitech.com

Although it's been available exclusively from American retailer Pro Guitar Shop since 2012, the Supernatural has only just been unleashed upon the UK. Its seven presets utilise authentic Lexicon algorithms, and although these settings include spring and plate modes, huge soundscapes are this pedal's speciality. The reverbs are controlled via mix, liveliness and decay knobs, which are mounted onto a weighty metal enclosure with stereo ins and outs, plus an internal bypass trails on/off switch.

Sounds

Dive straight into the Supernatural's pitch-shifted

Shimmer mode, and you'll have no problem nailing the ambient vibe, with a slightly detuned trail that gives each note a haunting halo. Meanwhile, the Shine and Supernova settings add modulation for extra sheen, and although hardcore reverb fans may miss the tweakability of similar effects from Eventide and Strymon units, they're very usable, well dialled-in voices.

Likewise, the phased Pherb and chorus'd Plate Mod – in the wrong hands, these have the potential to sound overly processed, but each effect's intensity can be controlled via interaction between the mix and liveliness controls, which helps to tame – or enhance – the

wilder aspects of the 'verbs. What's more, the plate and spring settings are perfectly serviceable, too; they're not what you'd buy this pedal for, but they expand its flexibility.

Verdict

Any player who longs for the soundtrack-worthy reverbs of more expensive processors should check the Supernatural out. It's not going to replace your amp's spring reverb, but for post-rock and ambient players, it could become a pedalboard lynchpin. **[MB]**



GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

Guitarist says: A to-the-point reverb that will take players of an atmospheric disposition to whole new levels of ambience