

DUNLOP

JOHN PETRUCCI

CRY BABY WAH

REVIEW BY **ERIC TISCHLER**

STREET PRICE **\$199.99**



John Petrucci is a prog metal guitarist who's famous for his chops, so I just assumed he and I have nothing in common, but I was wrong: apparently, we both love to tweak our gear until it's totally dialed in and then we never touch it. Again. How do I know this? Because I watched the promotional video for Petrucci's signature Cry Baby wah pedal from Dunlop, during which he explained how he and his tech meticulously found the sweet spots in his rack mount Cry Baby and then left it undisturbed, gig after gig, session after session. So, when Dunlop came to

Petrucci to help design a new Cry Baby wah, he was able to give them a lot of pointers on how to voice it. However, this pedal—the JP95, which is probably a better name than Cry Baby Petrucci (although that name and accusation appears on the toe and pedal base)—can speak to the Petrucci in all of us, as internal trimpots allow everyone to be as exacting as he and I are.

When the JP95 arrived, the first thing that struck me is that it's built for the apocalypse—specifically, the zombie apocalypse. By my estimation, this thing weighs about 14 pounds and could

easily be used to bash in the skulls of the living or the dead. It's also pretty elegant looking in chrome and black.

"...the high end dipped and then suddenly peaked again. Cool!"

Once activated, the JP95 continued to set itself apart from a stock Cry Baby with its surprisingly vocal EQ curve. The sweep is relatively modest: no piercing highs, and the lows are full but seemingly not as exaggerated as one might find on a regular Cry Baby. For those who are unfamiliar with Petrucci's music with

Dream Theater, the sweep is reminiscent of the range Clapton worked in when he was with Cream.

I took the base plate off and was greeted with six trimpots affecting EQ bands at 3.2 KHz, 1.6 KHz, 800 Hz, 400 Hz, 200 Hz and 100 Hz, as well as a pot to adjust the pedal's output. I cranked up the 3.2 KHz pot and was immediately greeted with the more extreme top end I know and love from the stock Cry Baby model. Interestingly, the leap to that point in the sweep was more dramatic than what one finds in a traditional Cry Baby. Playing lead, I was able to get the high-end response I expect when playing a Cry Baby, but when sweeping the pedal quickly while playing chords, the effect was almost like a staccato tremolo due to the crossover where the high end dipped and then suddenly peaked again. Cool! Boosting at 1.6 KHz evened out the sweep, but it was clear that the JP95 can be dialed in to offer a lot more than classic Cry Baby tones.

A boost at 800 Hz offered a gnarly, aggressive voicing that was reminiscent of Mick Ronson, and bringing up the pot at 400 Hz I found the traditional Cry Baby midrange. Restoring the trimpots to their original positions and then rolling back 200 Hz, I found myself able to approximate the classic Cry Baby sweep while avoiding the extremes that Petrucci dialed out of his own rig. Bottom line: whatever you play, if you need a wah pedal, John Petrucci's signature Cry Baby has something to offer you.

WHAT WE LIKE

A variety of customizable wah tones in a bomb-proof enclosure.

CONCERNS

The inevitable rubber feet—when will someone invent a wah pedal that's pedalboard-friendly?!

