

FIRST PLAY



**CRAZY TUBE CIRCUITS  
UNOBTANIUM**  
£249

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**WHAT IS IT?** Dual drive pedal  
channelling Dumble amp and  
Klon pedal sounds



# Double Act

For a double dose of fabled guitar tones, Crazy Tube Circuits puts the Dumble and Klon flavours together on your 'board

Words Trevor Curwen Photography Olly Curtis

1. Use the ODS/SSS switch to toggle between the sound of a Dumble Overdrive Special (red LED) or a Steel String Singer (green LED)
2. The Emphasis knob is a pre-drive EQ to control presence and bottom-end response, while the Tone knob tweaks the EQ at the output
3. The Stock/Mod switch gives you a choice of stock clipping/compression or enhanced gain and headroom/output as you turn up the gain knob

**A**mong all the rare gear that goes for silly money and deserves the 'unobtanium' moniker, an original Klon Centaur and a Dumble amp are prime contenders. So how about a dual-footswitch drive pedal (for under 300 quid) that aims to deliver the tonal essence of both?

On the left side you get the D-style sounds, and on the right there's the K-type. Normal signal flow is the K feeding the D, but there's a send and return loop for routing flexibility, inserting other pedals between the two, or having them as independent effects via a switcher. The K-type side is said to be an accurate recreation of the original circuit with the same germanium diodes, but you do get a couple of toggle-switched variations: a choice of true bypass or the original's buffered bypass; and either stock circuitry or a more open-sounding modification that offers more output and less compression. The D-style side gives you a toggle-switched choice of two Dumble amps – the Overdrive Special (Robben Ford, Larry Carlton) or the cleaner glassier tones of the Steel String Singer (SRV). If you wish to be able to footswitch between the two, there's an external footswitch jack to which you can add CTC's dinky little XT switcher.

The Klon-like cloning here is of high quality and does exactly what you'd expect, delivering classy transparent clean boost and overdrive to elevate your tone to the next level. While we obviously don't have a real Dumble for comparison, the D-type sounds offer the typical flavour of a defined low-end, fulsome midrange and sweet top with variations via an Emphasis knob that adjusts the EQ before the drive section and can really push the presence. There's also a Tone knob for the high-end at the output. You'll find some characterful cleans here offering an instant upgrade on your tone, but many players will gravitate to the rich yet articulate drive tones, which have a dynamic sensitivity that makes them a joy to play through. Both sides work great individually; the K giving the D a boost works spectacularly well.

## Verdict

The Unobtanium is a cool concept providing practical and reasonably priced access to sounds that have achieved mythical status. At its core, it's a versatile dual-drive pedal that will provide classy enhancement for your amp with the flexibility of operation that runs from a transparent boost to full-fat overdrive. **G**



## CRAZY TUBE CIRCUITS UNOBTANIUM

**PRICE:** £249  
**ORIGIN:** Greece  
**TYPE:** Drive pedal  
**FEATURES:** True bypass  
**CONTROLS:** (Amp) Volume, Gain, Tone, Emphasis, ODS/SSS switch, Bypass footswitch, internal EQ and Volume Boost trimmers; (Drive) Volume, Gain, Treble, Buffer/True switch, Stock/Mod switch, Bypass footswitch  
**CONNECTIONS:** Standard input, standard output, standard send, standard return, standard footswitch jack  
**POWER:** 9V DC adaptor (not supplied)  
**DIMENSIONS:** 122 (w) x 95 (d) x 53mm (h)

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**PROS** Two sought-after sounds in one pedal; effects loop; external footswitching facility; compact size for a twin footswitch pedal

**CONS** Nothing really



## THE RIVALS

We can't recall another pedal that specifically bundles Dumble and Klon sounds together, but one dual-drive that offers K-style voicing is the Ceriatone Horse Breaker (£199), which pairs that with a Marshall Bluesbreaker clone. On the theme of 'boost/drive plus amp' dual pedals, the Carl Martin PlexiRanger (£139) offers Marshall 'Plexi' sounds with a Rangemaster-style boost, and CTC's own Crossfire (£195) partners a TS-style drive with Fender 'black-panel' tones. If you want to do the K and D thing with two pedals, you won't go far wrong by trying a pair of J Rockett pedals – the Archer Ikon (£199) and The Dude V2 (£199).



The PlexiRanger offers Brit-amp flavoured drive and a booster in one