



Joe Grein (left), Kate Donahue, and Scarlet Star Featherfoot reviewing artwork for a pedal.

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Celestial Effects

By Ward Meeker

One of the newer entries in the effects market has roots in the electronics industry going back four decades.

Celestial Effects is the offspring of Thermalogic, a company founded by Lou Grein in 1971 (and currently managed by his son, Joe) that has, since its inception, specialized in the design and manufacture of temperature controls and sensors used in ways ranging from Pizza Hut ovens to Amtrak railcars to military HVAC systems, along with various common household applications.

In the mid 1980s, Grein hired Domenic Mancini to work in his factory. A talented electronics designer, Mancini was also an experienced musician who spent his evenings and weekends designing and modifying tube amps, effects pedals, and guitars for other players in the Boston area. He earned a reputation as a tone

guru and was constantly being told by customers he should get into the effects business.

We recently asked Grein to tell us the whole story.

So, did Domenic play a role in getting Thermalogic into the effects business?

Yes. In 2009, Dom approached me about the possibility of Thermalogic getting into the manufacturing and marketing of guitar effects. As we had the infrastructure to mass-produce circuit boards, it was a no-brainer. We also had the personnel to make it work, including Scarlet Star Featherfoot, who came up with the name Celestial Effects, and graphic artist Kathleen Donahue, who designed the Celestial logo and is responsible for the artwork on the pedals.



How many pedals did you offer, initially?

Our first line is the Zodiac Series, which is 12 analog-based pedals. The first four hit the market in February, 2011 – the Taurus Blues Overdrive, Virgo Rock Overdrive, Scorpio Super Boost, and the Capricorn Rock Distortion. In April, 2011, we added the Aquarius Fuzz, and in October we'll introduce the Gemini Vibrato/Reverb/Tremolo.

blogs, e-zines, forum discussions, and independent builders that has opened the eyes of guitarists to the possibility of achieving their signature tone via a stompbox. When I was growing up in the '80s, there were only a handful of effects manufacturers – some good, some bad.

The industry is ripe for effects builders to tinker and share designs with guitarists searching for their tone, which we find changes on a daily basis! Yes, there is a lot of misinformation out there regarding tone, but it only feeds guitarists' willingness to experiment with effects and share their thoughts and findings.

Joe, what else do you have in the works?

In 2013, we will launch a custom-products division, which will be geared to the serious guitarist looking for their a pedal array built specifically to their desired specs. Additionally, we'll be releasing various pedalboards with integrated power supplies for anywhere from four to 24 pedals. We are looking to target this end of the business to the serious touring and recording artist.

Beyond that, we'll be releasing various series of pedals with themes that tie in with the Celestial name, and also plan to expand into other types of effects for vocals and the like. VG

