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[www.native-instruments.com/studiodrummer](http://www.native-instruments.com/studiodrummer)



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# PreSonus' new Smaller size. Lower price. Even big

**W**hy settle for a mixer that just mixes when you can have a finely integrated system that gives you total control over your performance, your sound, and your recordings.

Our new StudioLive™ 16.0.2 is designed for bands, ensembles, and solo musicians who want it all in a small package that they can control right from the stage.

## The most portable digital desk you can control from a MIDI footpedal.

Think of the possibilities.

With the tap of a tootsie, recall over all volume settings, effects settings and assignments, and global mixer Scenes, including individual channel levels and all 130 Fat Channel signal processors.

## The third PreSonus desk you can control from a laptop.

There's a reason we have one of the largest software engineering staffs of any mixer manufacturer: so we can deliver intuitive, seamlessly integrated control and recording software.

Naturally, the 16.0.2 comes with **Virtual StudioLive™ (VSL)**. Plug in a FireWire-equipped Mac® or PC and quickly drop entire Scenes to the desk for instant recall of all channel, effects, and

graphic EQ settings. Or save unlimited settings *from* the mixer. Share presets with friends via email, IM, or disk swap. Fine-tune Fat Channel and graphic equaliser settings with a rich graphic user interface.



StudioLive 16.0.2 Overview video  
[www.presonus.com/vid109](http://www.presonus.com/vid109)



## Control the StudioLive 16.0.2 from multiple iPad's.

Anywhere in the venue is "front of house" after you download **StudioLive Remote** free from the Apple App Store. Onstage musicians can adjust their own aux mixes; when you



Laptop control with Virtual StudioLive™

do the math, multiple iPads and StudioLive Remote are

cheaper than most "personal monitor systems" and do a lot more. This is an elegant app with separate Channel, Aux, and Fat Channel screens — and it even displays real-time channel levels.

## Record everything. Play it back for virtual soundchecks.

Record all individual tracks, auxes, and a stereo mix with two clicks, using **Capture 1.1**. You can even insert markers between songs and export them individually, instead of as one ginormous file.



2-click multi-track recording with Capture™

Open your live recording directly into Studio One Artist DAW and tweak the performance to your heart's content (or record directly into Studio One).

Besides delivering custom-mixed backing tracks, the StudioLive 16.0.2's bidirectional FireWire interface lets you do "virtual soundchecks" to ring out your P.A. and monitors *before* the rest of the band even arrives.

## Recording and production software that's not a third-party afterthought.

Capture offers simple cut-and-paste editing tools but for really sculpting your recordings, we've included **Studio One Artist™ 1.6**.

Created by veteran digital audio workstation programmers, it's easier to use and way more powerful than anything that ships with competitors' desks. A one-window GUI and drag-and-drop functionality frees you from tedious pull-downs and pop-ups so you can focus on creating music.

Studio One Artist comes with twenty-five 32-bit plug-ins and over 4 GB of third-party goodies such as Native Instruments™ Kore Player and Toontrack™ EZDrummer Lite.

## Software aside, StudioLive 16.0.2 is an awesome piece of hardware.

Although smaller than its 4-bus siblings, the 16.0.2 has the same highly-respected PreSonus sonic DNA.

**XMAX™** Class A microphone preamplifiers that can render the finest musical details with ear-boxing dynamic range and a noise floor somewhere near the core of the earth.

**Jet PLL™** digital synchronization for better stereo separation and clearer, more transparent audio.



StudioLive 24.4.2



StudioLive 16.4.2

NEW StudioLive 16.0.2





# StudioLive™ 16.0.2 System. Greater possibilities.

- 16-input digital mixer with 12 XMAX™ Class A microphone preamplifiers & 4 aux mixes
- 16-in / 16-out FireWire digital recording interface (24-bit, 48 kHz)
- Fat Channel effects section, assignable to channels, mains, & auxes • 22 high-pass filters • 24 expanders • 24 compressors • 24 limiters • 24 three-band semi-parametric EQs • 12 phase inverters
- Dual 32-bit digital effects processors (reverb & delay)
- Control via MIDI with optional footswitch
- Control from a FireWire-connected Mac® or PC laptop with included Virtual StudioLive (aka VSL)
- Wireless control with StudioLive Remote iPad® app thru VSL
- Scene automation with up to 80 global mixer Scenes & 99 Fat Channel presets
- Two-click recording via Capture 1.1 software (included)
- Studio One Artist recording & production software with unlimited tracks & 4 GB of extra resources (included)
- Comprehensive Talkback section for live & studio use
- High-def A/D conversion with 118 dB dynamic range
- Built for years of heavy use, with rugged, steel chassis & military-grade buttons
- 60 mm wear-resistant faders
- Optional rack mount

## It's flat-out easy to use.

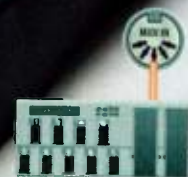
We didn't invent small-format digital consoles. We just rescued them from geekdom by getting rid of all that infuriating complexity (like bank switching; nasty, nested menus; and the like).

Critical controls like Mute and Solo have color-coded buttons. Each Fat Channel signal processor—such as downward expander, compressor, and 3-band semi-parametric EQ — has its own set of hands-on controls. Or adjust all critical functions from your laptop (VSL) or iPad (StudioLive Remote).

## The more you know, the more you'll want one.

Check out the StudioLive 16.0.2 overview video (see the express URL and QR code symbol at the start of this ad), visit our Web site for an excruciating amount of detail, or visit a PreSonus dealer and get your hands on one today.

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## High-definition analog-to-digital

converters with a whopping 118dB dynamic range to perfectly digitize the most brutal heavy metal drummer or screaming vocalist.

The same attention to detail goes for build quality, too. The StudioLive 16.0.2 has a flex-free, solid-metal chassis; sealed rotary encoders; and military-grade buttons and faders that can withstand years of bar smoke and road dust.



The woman behind the iPad: Ashley Creekbaum, PreSonus International Inside Sales

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In stores Sept. 1, 2011

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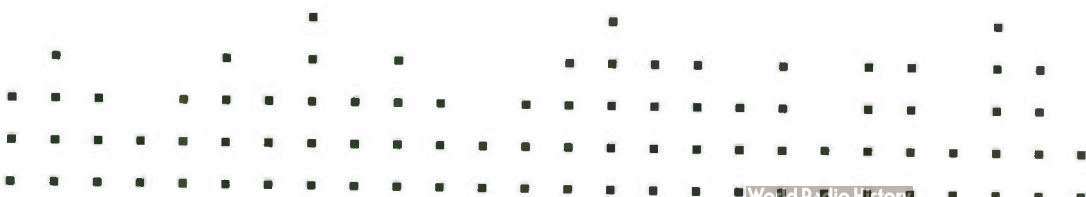
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# Warm and Fuzzy... Introducing the PowerPre™

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- 3-position VOX control adds extra shimmer on voice and fattens up guitar tracks
- Recessed 48V switch with LED that lets you know when phantom power is active
- Front panel mic input is conveniently placed for efficient desk-top production
- Omniport (rear panel) is set with instrument input for tracking guitar or bass
- The PowerPre is ideally suited for use with the Radial Workhorse. Together, they can bring warmth to your digital tracks while putting the fun and excitement of real-world analogue processing at your finger tips.



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(U2, Bob Dylan, Peter Gabriel)

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(Lucinda Williams, U2, Bill Frisell)

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~ John Rzeznik  
(GooGoo Dolls)

"Radial makes products no one else has thought to make and builds them better than anyone else can."  
~ Adrian Belew  
(King Crimson, Frank Zappa)

"I have grown to trust Radial products like no other company I know."  
~ Steve Stevens  
(Billy Idol, Top Gun soundtrack)

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# zoom



insight

## Put On Your Game Face

Are you playing gigs, and getting paid? Then you're officially in show business—the key word being *show*. And for musicians, it's all about the music, right? Well, not really.

You know that you need to play your best, whether you're in front of ten people or 10,000 people. But putting on a thrilling show means also perfecting the nonmusical aspects of your performance: what you look like onstage, what you do between songs, how you interact with the audience.

Most good stage habits are no-brainers: Tune silently. Memorize your set list. Minimize the time between songs. Make eye contact with the audience. It's difficult to have self-awareness here, so ask friends for constructive criticism. Watch videos of yourself onstage.

This month, we'll give you tons of ideas for polishing your stage presentation. In "Size Up Your Show" on page 98, we'll show you

how a little honest self-evaluation can take your performance to the next level. And our "Stage Lighting Primer" on page 94 offers simple tips for adding visual impact to your show. Need more gigs in the first place? In "Embracing Versatility" on page 72, first-call touring musicians share advice for making the leap from being a good musician to being a good, *marketable* musician.

So be real, be spontaneous, but be prepared. See you at the gig!



**SARAH JONES**  
EDITOR  
[sjones@musicplayer.com](mailto:sjones@musicplayer.com)

# COMMUNITY

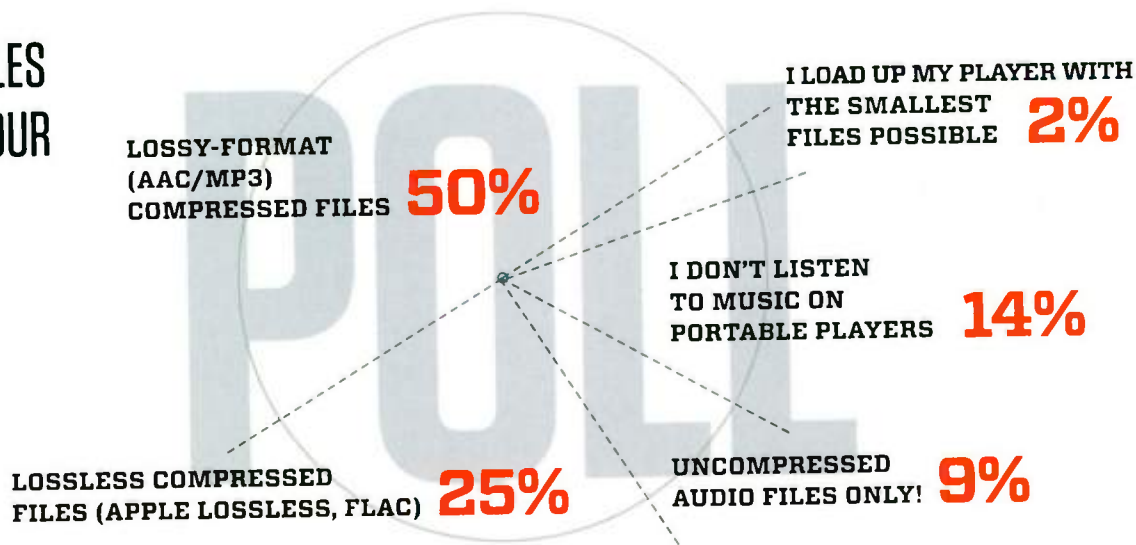
**"I AM NOT AFRAID.  
F\*\*K SAFETY.  
I ROCK ON PURPOSE  
ALL THE TIME."**

*Artist Amanda Palmer, on  
[blog.amandapalmer.net](http://blog.amandapalmer.net), November 11, 2010*

(Want more Amanda Palmer?  
See our interview on page 28.)

## The Electronic Musician Poll

### WHAT TYPE OF AUDIO FILES DO YOU LISTEN TO ON YOUR PORTABLE DEVICE?





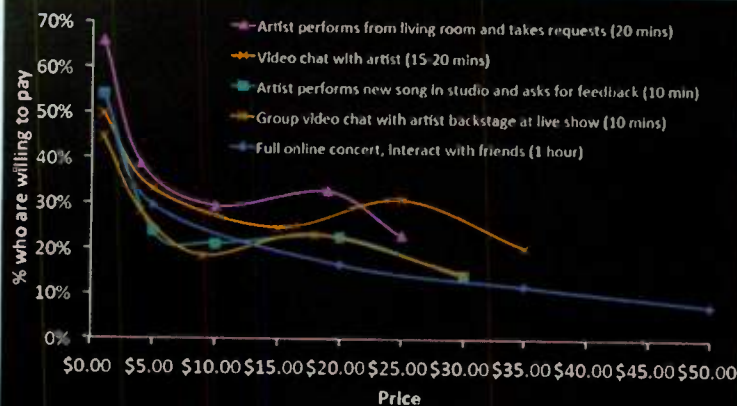
## Gadget Geek

Carrying around a lot of USB devices? When it comes to security, it's better to be safe than sorry. Improve your data peace of mind with Music Computing's LokBOX ([musiccomputing.com/lokbox](http://musiccomputing.com/lokbox)). This tough little steel vault houses a USB 2.0 hub for use with up to four USB devices, and can be equipped with an optional 500GB SSD Hybrid hard drive for data storage. An included 15,000lb-tested security cable locks the unit to any support structure for added security. Starting at \$99.



## T-Funk All Star

SNOOP DOGG poses with his custom Telefunken wireless stage mic, featuring his name in chrome with special jeweled dressing and distinctive engraving. The Telefunken Custom Shop adapted the microphone with a custom-finished Shure UR-2 transmitter, with Telefunken M80-WH capsule. "The early version of the Snoop Dogg mic was inadequately constructed and the massive bling interfered with the wireless transmission," explained Telefunken artist liaison Jason Scheuner. "Our Custom Shop designed a new, rugged version featuring our M80-WH dynamic capsule to provide flawless wireless integrity."



## BUZZ

### Higher Price Equals Higher Demand?

It's true that fans will sometimes buy more of a product if it costs more—luxury cars and perfume come to mind. But music performances?

A recent Harvard Business School study demonstrated that music fans showed a greater interest in certain higher-priced performances from their favorite artists, even though the "product" itself was unchanged, according to a report shared with *Digital Music News*. It's unclear from the initial findings, however, whether the trends illustrated at left correlate to the degree of interactivity or the uniqueness of the experience.



## BY THE NUMBERS

### RICHEST ROCKERS

The top-earning artists of 2011, according to *Forbes* magazine.



**1. U2 \$195 million**

**2. Bon Jovi \$125 million**

**3. Elton John \$100 million**

**4. Lady Gaga \$90 million**

**5. Michael Buble \$70 million**

**6. Paul McCartney \$67 million**

**7. The Black Eyed Peas \$61 million**

**8. The Eagles \$60 million**



**9. Justin Bieber \$53 million**

**10. Dave Matthews Band \$51 million**



FEEDBACK

## IS GIVING YOUR MUSIC AWAY AN EFFECTIVE MARKETING TOOL? HOW MUCH DO YOU GIVE AWAY?



**Chris Roy**

I'd prefer to give away a song or two, or alternate versions/remixes, or a "teaser EP," in exchange for an email address, becoming a Facebook fan, or similar.



**Philip Henery**

Yes, I do think it is effective in the beginning and at specific phases/stages of building the career. I've given away 2-3 songs to 7-song EPs to 20-track mixtapes. Takes persistence, some strategy, and a good dose of luck.



**Marcelo Paganini**

I post live gigs on YouTube; I have almost 22,000 video views there and 138,000 plays on MySpace, but if I ask some of my friends to buy my song on iTunes, they never answer; I keep wondering why.



**Alex Westner**

All of it!

## YOUR TAKE

### What's your most creative recording technique using a single microphone?

Here's our favorite reader response. Paul Rusinko wins a Blue Microphones Spark microphone. Thanks, Paul!

MOST OF the time, using a single microphone in a situation is based on a technical limitation—running out of tracks, interface limitations, etc. There's one instance where I've had a lot of success using one microphone on a piano. I picked this idea up from a fellow classmate at Full Sail University a few years ago while we were working on our final projects. You can take any old mic (preferably an OLD one), wrap it in plastic, then place it in a bucket of water on the backside of a piano, a foot or two away. Yes, a bucket of water and an electrically charged microphone! You'd better be very careful as to how well you seal it in its plastic bag. I've found this to be the best way to get an old, haunting, very vintage piano tone without actually having a 60-year-old mic and corresponding pre's.

PAUL RUSINKO  
FOURTH FLOOR PRODUCTIONS  
ORLANDO, FL

[Editor's note—Try this at your own risk!]

Send *Electronic Musician* Your Stories, Win Gear! Talk to us! Share your tips with *Electronic Musician*, and we'll print our favorite in an upcoming issue. And if we choose your letter, you'll win sweet gear! This month, we're giving away an Audio-Technica AT2035 large-diaphragm cardioid condenser mic with switchable 80Hz highpass filter and 10dB pad. Contest open to U.S. residents age 18 and over.

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION: **WHAT IS YOUR MOST UNUSUAL "ALTERNATIVE" PERCUSSION INSTRUMENT?**

Send your answers to [ElectronicMusician@musicplayer.com](mailto:ElectronicMusician@musicplayer.com).







## DIG MY RIG

INNER PORTAL is a Seattle-based studio with more than 10 years of experience providing mastering and mixdown services for electronic musicians around the world. DAWs include Audiofile's Wave Editor and Logic Pro, with plug-ins from Voxengo, DMG Audio, Fabfilter, Sonalksis, and PSP Audio. Monitoring is handled by RME convertors feeding Event Opal monitors, with acoustic treatment from GIK Acoustics and Auralex. When not working on other people's material, I write electronic downtempo music with a combination of Elektron hardware, Ableton Live with the APC40, and Spectrasonic's Omnisphere controlled by the Omni TR iOS app.

**Tarekith**  
Seattle, WA

## ask!

There are so many options with DAWs when running effects. When should I insert an effect in an individual track, and when would it work better as an FX channel (bus)? I've also read that it's not a good idea to run effects on the master (out) channel. Is this true, and why?

**EJ GAUNA**  
DALLAS, TX  
VIA EMAIL

Effects use CPU power, so if, for example, you want reverb on several tracks, you can put a single, CPU-hungry convolution reverb in a bus and send varying amounts of signal from each channel to it. This also gives a more realistic sound, because all of the sounds feel like they're in the same "room." Tempo-synced delay is another common bus effect, and some people even use distortion for dialing in a little "grit" on multiple channels. On the other hand,

you'd likely use an amp sim or tremolo on an individual track and not other tracks, making them candidates for insert effects.

As to master effects, the issue is that these effects will be "baked into" your final stereo mix. If you then take the track to a mastering engineer, he or she will be constrained by the effects you added. Suppose you added dynamics to "squash" the sound; you won't be able to "unsquash" it, and if you really *do* want a squashed sound, the

mastering engineer probably has better tools that will do the job with more transparency.

One option is to mix with compression, EQ, or whatever in the master bus sounds good to you, and export a stereo mix. Then bypass the effects, and export another mix. This is the one you give to the mastering engineer to master—but also provide the other one and say, "We want it to sound like this . . . only better!"

THE EDITORS



In Logic Pro, the left track (guitar) has an amp sim insert effect and the bus in the middle includes reverb, while the output (right) has a limiter instantiated.









**GREEN DAY STORMS SOCAL  
IRVINE, CA  
AUGUST 31, 2010**

Nearly 25 years into their career, Green Day keeps proving that they can still remain true to their scrappy punk roots, arena-rock-style. Last fall, the Oakland-based power trio—touring in support of their 2009 smash hit album, *21st Century Breakdown*—played a three-hour set to a sold-out crowd of more than 15,000 at the Irvine Meadows/Verizon Amphitheatre; the larger-than-life stage spectacle featured an expanded touring lineup (a six-piece act that included sax, keyboards, and accordion), extreme pyrotechnics, and one leap of faith off the drum riser.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE JENNINGS



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# Renaissance Man

*On **Black and White America**, singer/multi-instrumentalist/producer/arranger Lenny Kravitz draws recording inspiration from classic techniques, a blend of vintage and modern gear, and laid-back Caribbean living*

**BY BLAIR JACKSON**







Kravitz in GTS' control room, which features a restored Helios console and a REDD 37 desk from Abbey Road Studios.



**A**bout a year and a half ago—in early 2010—there was considerable chatter in the ether about Lenny Kravitz’s beautiful new recording studio in the Bahamas and the progress being made toward completing his eagerly-awaited ninth album, which at that point was to be titled either *Funk* or *Negrophilia*. The studio, Gregory Town Sound, on the remote but beautiful island of Eleuthera (50 miles east of the Bahamas’ capital city, Nassau) did get up and running, but the album never materialized. Instead, in August, Atlantic/Roadrunner Records released a completely different album—a wonderfully eclectic 16-song disc called *Black and White America*. What happened?

“I just went in a different direction,” the ever-genial Kravitz says casually. “I began writing all these songs that had nothing to do with what was going to be on that record. When the creative spirit kicks in and I start really getting into it, I have to look at that and say, ‘Okay, why is this coming out of me right now?’ There were a few songs that kind of popped up that way—‘Black and White America,’ ‘Push,’ ‘Super Love,’ and one other. And I had to think about it for a minute, and then I decided to go in this other direction. And I’m glad I did because I’m extremely happy with the album that I made. That other album is going to come out at some point. It’s a really interesting record. But it just wasn’t what I was supposed to do at that moment.”

“I had just finished hooking up my new studio,” he continues, “and that definitely affected it, too. When I started putting the gear in the place, it sounded so amazing, it inspired what was coming out.”

Kravitz is no stranger to personal recording spaces—as he puts it, “I’ve been through this many times before,” in several different locales, from Miami to New York. But without question Gregory Town Sound is his coolest and most tricked-out studio yet. The 1,800-square-foot space actually started out as a garage adjoining a house he planned to build on his waterfront property: “I built the garage first to have a place to store things, and also to see how the builder did before I built the house, but then I decided to turn it into a studio. I laid it out and you never know exactly how it’s going to come out. The math may say it’s going to sound great, but until you put a drum kit in there and start playing, you don’t know for sure.”

Kravitz hired Miami studio designer and acoustician Ross Alexander (who had also worked on Kravitz’s earlier Roxie Studios in Miami) to work out the sonics for the studio—a 600-square-foot live room and a 400-square-foot control room, plus iso booths (and machine room, bathroom, and lobby). “I was going for a sort of ’70s California studio,” Kravitz says, “wood and cork and stone; that real clean sound. It ended up working amazingly well. It felt really comfortable immediately, and of course it’s



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“I’m pretty adamant about getting the first take, because I like it when it’s, ‘We know what we’re doing, but not really.’ I like that edge.”—Lenny Kravitz

filled with equipment that I’ve gotten through the years and that I’m already comfortable with.”

Since he first burst onto the scene in the late ‘80s, Kravitz has been frequently dubbed a “retro” rocker, both because he wears so many of his musical influences on his sleeve—Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, Stevie Wonder, the Rolling Stones, *et al.*—and because from the outset he embraced analog technology and classic recording techniques. His former engineer, Henry Hirsch, encouraged Kravitz’s own inclinations in that direction and helped him acquire numerous choice pieces of vintage gear, to the point where *Mix* magazine dubbed Gregory Town Sound “Analog Heaven.” (Hirsch now runs Waterfront Studios in Upstate New York and did not work on *Black and White America*.)

The heart of the GTS control room is a restored British-made Helios console once owned by Leon Russell. The room also contains the EMI-designed REDD 37 desk that once resided in Abbey Road Studio 1, as well as a 4-track recorder from that studio; one of several analog Studer and 3M tape machines Kravitz owns. As one might expect, GTS’ outboard collection includes vintage favorites such as API, dbx, Teletronix, EMI, Urei, and Fairchild compressors and/or limiters; racked API and Helios mic pre’s; API, EMI, Pultec, and RCA Mastering EQs; EMT reverb plates, and much

more. The mic closet is stacked with a slew of Neumann, AKG, Electro-Voice, Sennheiser, Shure, Schoeps, RCA, Telefunken, and Sony models.

But the studio also has plenty of more modern pieces, too: Pro Tools HD3 (of course), Antelope Trinity Word Clock, Apogee AD16X and DA16X converters, ATC 25 and 200 monitors (among others), Amels Audio custom mic pre’s, Millennia and GML EQs, Focusrite and Waves limiters, Eventide Ultra Harmonizer, the Lexicon 960 Digital Effects System, and several more recent mics (or new versions of classics) by the likes of Coles, AEA, Audix, and others. The studio was also among the first to use Endless Analog’s CLASP (Closed Loop Analog Signal Processor) system as an interface between analog tape recorders and Pro Tools—its growing number of adherents believe that CLASP allows some of the warmth and depth of analog tape to transfer into the digital realm. So, it’s a blend of old and new, but certainly in the service of the more traditional recording aesthetic that Kravitz favors.

Though Kravitz is justifiably famous for playing most of the instruments on his albums, laying down the lead and background vocals, producing, and at times engineering, he has also historically been eager to share the credit with those who help him in the studio. For *Black and White America*, his “fantastic team” included GTS studio manager and tech Alex Alvarez, his



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# KORG



longtime guitarist and occasional songwriting partner Craig Ross—"he's also a total Pro Tools wiz," Kravitz says—and, stepping into the engineer's slot with this album, Tom "Bone" Edmonds.

Bone is hardly a newcomer in Kravitz's world. After getting his start in the early '70s assisting for Todd Rundgren, then engineering for acts like Rick Derringer, Meat Loaf, Patti Smith, the Isley Brothers, and others, he signed on to be Kravitz's front-of-house engineer beginning in 1989, following the release of Kravitz's stunning debut album, *Let Love Rule*. He held that post through 2005, and also mixed Kravitz's TV appearances, various live tracks that have been released, and also the 1994 video *Alive from Planet Earth*.

Also in '94, Bone and Kravitz hopped on motorcycles and headed down to the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. Bone recalls, "We were down there for a couple of days and Lenny said, 'Get me a Fender Rhodes in the room [at the Maison Dupuy Hotel in the French Quarter] and a bass rig. So I got that gear together. The next day he said, 'Find me a studio.' So I found Sea Saint, [legendary New Orleans producer] Allen Toussaint's place. It was awesome—dark and really funky, very '70s—all the walls were carpeted with red shag carpet! So that's where I recorded what's become known as the *Funk* record."

"It was me, Craig [Ross], and Lenny and we did it straight to tape," he continues. "It was really loose and raw, but it's got such a thick vibe, man. It's like free-funk. It's Lenny being comfortable, Lenny having fun. The music was just flowing; popping out of him. Lenny's horn players came in and played on a few tracks, and Allen Toussaint played piano on a tune. It was really inspired. We did some more work on it toward the end of finishing *Black and White America*, so I'm pretty sure one day everybody will hear it."

Bone had been semi-retired and out of Kravitz's orbit for some time when he got a call in late 2009 asking if he'd like to come down and see Gregory Town Sound. "A week later I was on a plane and we actually cut two tracks right away—"Black and White America" and "Push." We cut those two on the Trident Series 80 he had in there originally, which is now going to be in his home studio in Paris; a great-sounding console. We did that directly to tape on the 3M [recorder with 16-track heads], then striping from the tape into Pro Tools [for editing]."

One of four songs co-credited to Kravitz and Ross, "Black and White America" has a '70s soul vibe to it, with some obvious nods to The Temptations (in the backup vocals and the subtle string arrangement reminiscent of "Papa Was a Rolling Stone"), and a passionate lead vocal that recalls Stevie Wonder in spots. Three horn players, including N'awlins' own

Troy "Trombone Shorty" Andrews, pepper parts of the tune with spirited blasts, and Ross contributes electric guitar, but as usual, Kravitz is really "the band," playing drums, bass, Fender Rhodes, Minimoog, Moog Modular, microkorg, Arp 2600, wind chimes, and congas. Most of the songs on the album are like that, though Kravitz also plays guitar on some, B-3, piano, and Mellotron others, and a bunch more synths, including Prophet 5, Prophet VS, Synton, Oberheim OBXA, and Yamaha CS-80.

"This has more synths than any record I've done," Kravitz says. "I've gotten into collecting them and I was just in the mood. The great thing about a synth, whether it's from the '60s or '70s or '80s, is you can make them sound as futuristic and new as you want, but at the same time they still sound so organic. What I'm looking for in a synth is *character*."

Asked to describe his layering process recording a song like "Black and White America," Kravitz elaborates: "That would have started with Craig playing the main riff—those single notes—and the chords on the chorus, and me playing drums along with it. That's usually what we do. I've already explained the arrangement to him, and I'm usually moving pretty fast because I'm in the moment, so I'm just saying, 'Okay, intro, chorus, verse, bridge, chorus,' and we'll be recording from the start. I'm pretty adamant about getting the first take, because I like it when it's: 'We know what we're doing, but not *really*,'" he chuckles. "I like that edge. Where you know just enough to get through it, but you also get some really nice and interesting mistakes sometimes!"

Are you thinking down the line about the layers it's going to have? "No. I'm just thinking about getting the structure of the song in place," he says. "It's pretty empty to play to—there's no bass, there's no second guitar, there's no keyboard. But that's the way Craig and I have been doing it for years. I may not hear the string arrangement yet, but I'm definitely hearing the song in my head, for the most part. On that song, Craig was playing electric so he was sitting out in the main room looking at me in my booth, and his amp was in another booth."

"With Lenny, it's all about getting the right drum sound at the start," Bone says. "Then he's able to move forward with getting the song done." Bone will use different drum-miking schemes depending on the style of the song: "In Lenny's studio, I can get a plethora of drums sounds with different microphones, different mic placement, and different mic pre's. The same room—ten different drum mic sounds. You can hear it on the record."

Kravitz: "I'm playing the drums; we get the drums take. Then I pick up the bass—I have three or four that I use—in the control room, and we'll record that through an Acoustic 360 amp head that I love. [The

**"The great thing about a synth, whether it's from the '60s or '70s or '80s, is you can make them sound as futuristic and new as you want, but at the same time they still sound so organic."**

**—Lenny Kravitz**



full bass chain, Bone says, is a Sennheiser 421 on the 360, into Helios mic pre, and LA3A and Focusrite compressors.] After the bass, I'll do a scratch vocal and then I'll start to orchestrate: string parts, which I might put down with a sample or a Mellotron, percussion parts, keyboards, synthesizers. With the synths, I'll have a sound in my head I'm looking for and I'll try different things."

Bone says that Kravitz has a real knack for describing the sounds, and notes that though synths are generally cut direct, he'll have them go through an API mic pre, an outboard EQ (such as a Pultec EQP-1A) and an LA-3A, to give the sounds additional color.

Vocals are obviously a key component to Kravitz's sound, and there the chain is a Neumann U47 mic with a 15dB pad, a Helios mic pre, a Sphere graphic EQ, and two limiters—Fairchild 660 and an LA2A. "He'll have the [vocal] hook for the song and boom—he goes in and bangs it out and all the hook backgrounds; harmonies, doubles. Bone says. "He's extremely fast. He hears what he hears and he wants to get it down on tape."

Kravitz continues, "At the end of the day I'll go to my trailer and I've got nice speakers out there, and I just keep listening and listening and listening. And then I hear another part. I come back the next day and work on that. So a lot of it is just hearing things in my head, putting it down, listening, hearing more things, putting them down, listening. . . 'Now I need some congas here.' 'This is a good place for Fender Rhodes.'"

Wait a second. Did he say "trailer"? Yes, he did. The whole time Gregory Town Sound was being built and then work began on the new album, Kravitz was living in an Airstream trailer just steps away from the studio, and he ended up liking the lifestyle so much he decided not build the house he had planned. "What was coming out of me was so satisfying," he says, "I realized that if I built the house, as wonderful as that would be, it would change the dynamic. There was something about this trailer on the beach, no people, the studio in the back, and me going into this little capsule every night that I decorated and made the way I wanted. It's really cozy. There's something to that low-profile living that I don't want to change it. At least not now." Kravitz estimates he's been in the Airstream eight months out of the last two years.

The album was mixed in three stages. It began on the Helios desk at GTS, then shifted to the new studio in Kravitz's Paris home, at that time equipped with "a little baby Toft desk I used as a jukebox, and a lot of my outboard gear—like my Fairchilds and my Helios and API mic pre's," Bone says. "We were basically doing level changes, some panning changes, and some vocals." They also recorded a new song from scratch, "Liquid Jesus."



Engineer Tom "Bone" Edmonds

"We definitely improved the record in Paris, but we vastly improved it when we came back [to the Bahamas] and really dug into it," he adds. "For one thing, we really found the bottom in that studio in a way we hadn't before. Then the last couple of weeks we went through every song with a fine-tooth comb. We did teeny little things with panning, a little bit of EQ here, a little haze of something here and there, and it was amazing how it blossomed."

In the end, the triumvirate nailed down 16 extremely diverse songs that range from the Zep-ish riff-rock of "Come On Get It," to the vaguely Bowie-esque/glam musings of "Rock Star City Life," the catchy, '80s-inspired "Stand," the sexy, old-school funk tune "Super Love," the power ballad "I Can't Be Without You," and the groovin' island/hip-hop number "Boongie Drop," featuring guest rapper Jay-Z and Bahamian MC DJ Military. And that just scratches the surface. With an international tour in the offing—Kravitz has sold more than 35 million records worldwide and may be even more popular outside the U.S.—and all sorts of radio-friendly tunes of the album, he could be mining hits from *Black and White America* for quite some time.

"It's been a great couple of years," Kravitz concludes, "building studios, recording, traveling, touring, back in the studio, Paris, Bahamas. It's been a really creative time period for me—and I got a lot of really great synthesizers in the process," he laughs. ■

**“With Lenny, it’s all about getting the right drum sound at the start. Then he’s able to move forward with getting the song done.”**

**—Tom “Bone” Edmonds**



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 Extended interviews with Lenny Kravitz and Tom "Bone" Edmonds.  
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**LISTEN**

# Amanda Palmer

**An artist on the bleeding edge of DIY survival and prosperity in the digital age**

**BY BUD SCOPPA**

IN CERTAIN ways, Amanda Palmer and Lady Gaga have a lot in common. Each is a provocateur who challenges her fans, defies the conventional role of the writer/performer and makes a living from her art. But while Gaga's albums and tracks sell in the millions, Palmer manages quite well on a tiny fraction of those numbers. And while Gaga has the full resources of the traditional music business going for her, Palmer—formerly signed to Roadrunner Records as half of the Dresden Dolls—now does it all herself. During the past couple of years, this outspoken, opinionated artist has become the poster girl for conducting a rewarding and profitable DIY career in extremely challenging times by personally connecting with her fans—she has 30,000 Twitter followers—who buy music and merch directly from her. In the following Q&A, Palmer reveals the secrets of her success, and explains what you can do to follow in her footsteps.





**“Everyone keeps asking, ‘What is the future of the music industry?’ It’s so obvious to me that this is an ever-morphing, unfinishable business.”**

**It’s been said about you that there’s really no separation between your art and your life. By the same token, I suppose there’s no separation between your art and the marketing of your art.**

Yeah, that line between the art and the putting out of the art becomes increasingly more blurry as time marches on. I was a street performer for six years, and people don’t fully understand what it feels like to stand on the street and know that your rent money is going directly from people’s pockets into a box. That’s as basic as it gets, and it’s how I lived for several years.

**You’re still doing the same balancing act now, just on a more sophisticated level.**

The difficult thing about being an artist is you have to maintain these two functions at all times—and it’s just as true for anyone in the business. You have to make decisions about how to spend your time and energy doing what you actually feel passionate about, and spending your artistic time and energy wisely—and you’ve also got to eat and pay your rent. That’s always been the conundrum of the artist, and nowadays it’s a special brand of conundrum where you’re sitting there in front of your computer and your brain says, “Okay, should I write or should I Twitter? One is going to indirectly market me and be a fun distraction, and one is actually going to create art, but we can’t have one without the other, so what the f\*\*k do I do?” That’s what I see happening with a lot of younger artists, and it requires an extreme kind of self-discipline, especially now that you can basically run a business from your phone. It’s all pretty confusing.

**You’re in the vanguard of a revolution that hasn’t completely coalesced.**

The mistake everyone keeps making is, everyone keeps asking, “What is the future of the music industry? When is this process going to be finished so we can know what the new rules are?” I hear that and I just laugh, because it’s so obvious to me that this is an ever-morphing, unfinishable business. If you’re trying to figure out what the rules are for what someone did six months ago, you’re not paying attention to the right shit. What you should actually be doing is figuring out what is relevant *now*, who is your audience *now*, what tools are they using *now* and what can you do *right now*? F\*\*k what everyone else is doing—that’s a backwards way of thinking. Which isn’t to say you can’t learn from how people have operated, but it’s deluded to think that there is a single answer. There are as many answers as there are artists, and there are as many solutions as there are fans.

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**What's your individual answer?**

Honestly, I make it up as I go along. And I feel like the entire process is a work in process—constantly. And then the big question is, where are the trusted sources? Where are people actually going to find the music that they will hopefully love? Those are the interesting questions. It's going from friend to friend to friend—a filtration system that helps people discover good music. It's becoming a much more level playing field. The Lady Gagas of the world will always exist. People love fashion, they love gossip, they love icons, they love the idea that there is one unifying thing that you can talk about with your mailman and the guy at the water cooler. People need that. But how much relevance will superstars like Lady Gaga have to the *music* people are making? That's a totally different question. I don't think teenagers are buying guitars and writing songs because they picked up *The Fame* and it changed their lives in that particular way.

**Let's bring this down to ground level. Your ability to define yourself as an artist depends not just on creating things that are interesting, but also letting people know that these things exist. And for that you've made use of social media,**

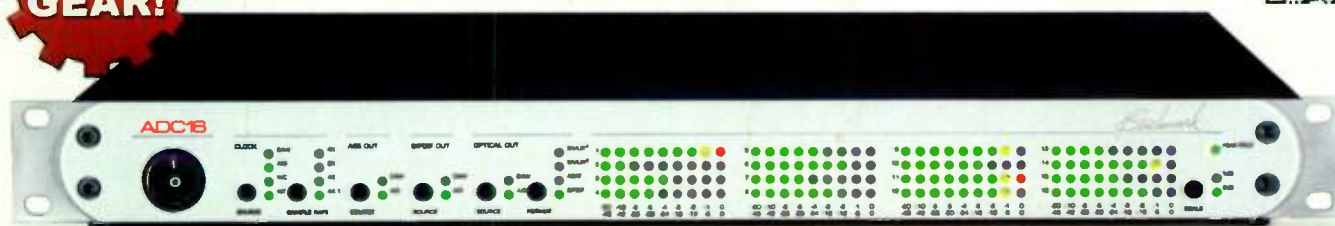
**particularly Twitter. How is what you're doing online applicable to people who are trying to get where you are?**

With social media, your content and your message need to be interesting to begin with. Engineers and producers come to me for advice about Twitter, and I always ask them, "What do you have access to that's unique to you? What do you have access to that may seem totally mundane to you, but is actually really interesting to people? *That's* what you should be Twittering." You need to get some perspective on what your life actually is as viewed by other people, and see your routine as possibly ordinary to you, but extraordinary to other people. In order to work, Twittering needs to be highly personal. A lot of my friends who are writers throw their hands up saying, "Twitter just seems so inane. It just seems so boring." The challenge is how to make it *not* inane and boring. The advice I usually give is, "Share things that make you uncomfortable," because if it makes you uncomfortable to share it, it's probably interesting to someone else. I also advise people to not dwell on the negative. Twitter is a place where it's like being at a party or a bar, and no one wants to stand

**"What do you have access to that may seem totally mundane to you, but is actually really interesting to people? *That's* what you should be Twittering."**

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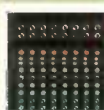
around hanging out with a person who's making bitchy comments about everything—it just gets boring, and people will tune you out.

**Is there any other key component that people in your shoes need to be aware of?**

For musicians, engineers, and producers alike, one piece of advice I can give is, "Don't act like a serious professional. We all know you're just a dude sitting behind a computer." So the more human and conversational a tone you can take, the more people will actually trust what you say. If you have a business tone, it's a real turn-off. What you need to do is just talk to people in real language that is truthful and understandable. The Dresden Dolls have been doing that since day one. And even when we were signed to a major label, I had no interest in the major label communicating to my fans. In fact, I wanted them as far in the background as possible, doing what major labels do well, which is put those pieces of plastic in the stores so that people can buy them, and leave us alone, because we know what we're doing. Our fans don't want to talk to a record label, they want to talk to us, so create a space where we can talk to our fans and then get out.

**Your whole thing seems to be predicated on cutting out the middleman.**

No, just cutting out the *unnecessary* middlemen. For example, the idea that you need physical distribution is becoming questionable. Those sorts of middlemen are gonna hopefully die a natural death, like bad music. But there are a lot of other middlemen who are completely necessary. I mean, I don't sit around doing all this shit by myself; I would go crazy and I wouldn't get any sleep. I have a staff of four people who help me run this business, and they count in that grand sea of middlemen who help me get music to my fans. No artist should have to bear that responsibility alone. The more help you can get, the better, but the help has to really be *help*—not some kind of dictatorship that strips you of your artistry, but a support system that helps you *flourish* as an artist. And then everyone's happy. You're happy, the people helping you are happy and your fans are happy. Hopefully, that's where we're headed. ■



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**“The idea that you need physical distribution is becoming questionable. Those sorts of middlemen are gonna hopefully die a natural death, like bad music.”**



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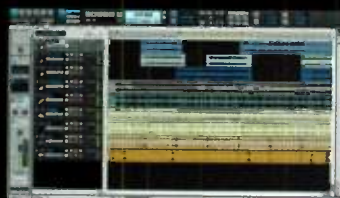
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# The Nightwatchman

Tom Morello Rocks for Justice  
on *World Wide Rebel Songs*

BY BARBARA SCHULTZ

**GUITAR MASTER** Tom Morello started using the stage name “The Nightwatchman” while his band Audioslave was at the height of their popularity. The alias became sort of a mask he would wear, to go out and play the political folk music he was writing on the side.

“On nights off between arena shows,” he explains, I would sign up at coffee houses on open-mic nights. I didn’t want to sign up as Tom Morello, because they’d be demanding that I play [Rage Against the Machine’s] ‘Bulls on Parade’ in front of the latte machine.”

In those days, Morello says, he saw a very clear distinction between “Tom Morello the electric guitar hero, and The Nightwatchman, the dark political folk artist.” But after making a couple of Nightwatchman records with producer Brendan O’Brien (Pearl Jam, Stone Temple Pilots, Incubus) that split started to seem less significant.

“The first time I sang onstage with an electric guitar was in 2008 with Bruce Springsteen with his electric arrangement of [Springsteen’s stark 1995 album] *The Ghost of Tom Joad*. It opened my

eyes to the fact that I could be effective as a singer/songwriter and play a crazy-ass electric Tom Morello guitar solo, and not be afraid of that.”

Songs on the new album emerged over many months, from whatever corners of time Morello could carve out between his band and film-scoring projects, and raising his young family. He writes at home—lyrics before music—capturing his ideas with a cheap computer setup that he adopted fairly recently.

“I basically have the equivalent of a cassette recorder on my computer, where I literally press one button and it records.” Morello says. “I demo all of my songs that way—with no microphone, just the condenser in the computer—to get a framework. All of those demos are done with the only guitar I have in my home, which is an Ibanez Galvador nylon-string acoustic; that’s what I do all my writing on, whether it’s rock riffs or acoustic murder ballads. When the songs transform into arrangements and a record, that happens in the studio.”

A few years ago, with guidance from O'Brien, as well as engineer/mixer Andrew Scheps (U2, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Justin Timberlake, Jay-Z) and engineer/producer Thom Russo (Johnny Cash, Michael Jackson, Eric Clapton), Morello built a private studio on his property, converting a stand-alone guest house into a tracking/rehearsal space, a vocal booth, and control room equipped with Pro Tools, a 32-channel Toft console

and Yamaha NS10 monitors. Engineer Tom Syrowski, who had worked with Morello since the Nightwatchman LP *One Man Revolution*, helped get the facility up and running. Then, when other projects called Syrowski away, Henson Studios staffer Kevin Mills stepped in to track Morello's first projects in the new studio: the Streetsweeper Social Club album (with Boots Riley), and later, *World Wide Rebel Songs*.

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Basic tracking began with Morello playing acoustic rhythm guitar in the booth, and drummer Eric Gardner playing out in the room. "I had the drums situated in the farthest corner away from me," Mills recalls. "In the corner opposite Eric would be the bass [which Morello overdubbed himself later], and then as you might walk from the drums toward me is Tom's electric guitar rig. When Tom played electric live with the band, as he did occasionally, I would blanket around his amp to try to help keep the integrity of his guitar sound and keep as much drum sound out of the mics—get as much isolation as I could in one room."

Mills captured Morello's deep vocals with a Shure SM7 mic, through a Universal Audio LA610 mic preamp, and then straight to Pro Tools. "The SM7 is just a good all-around mic for rock vocalists," Mills says. "Tom has that nice low end to his voice, and the SM7 captures it well."

On electric guitars, Mills used a single SM57, into an API mic pre, and then to an





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API 550 EQ, then through a [Empirical Labs] Distressor—"mostly just for a little make-up gain," he says—and then into Pro Tools.

Morello played his custom "Arm the Homeless" guitar, as well as a stock Stratocaster and another custom model he calls the "Taco Bell Les Paul" because of its fabulous color scheme. Acoustic guitars were the Ibanez and a new Gibson steel-string.

"My main amp," Morello explains, "is a

Marshall 50-watt 2205 channel-switching head from the early '80s; the cabinet is a 4x12 Peavey. This is the main amp on every record and every show I've played since I was in Lock Up—not prison, the band I was in before Rage Against the Machine.

"I bought this amp sort of randomly, around 1988, after my gear had been stolen, I was killing myself trying to get a 'Randy Rhoads' tone out of it and just failing miserably with

this thing. So I spent one solid day in front of it—five hours just in front of the amp with a guitar—and I got it the best I could. I marked the settings, and I made a conscious decision: I'm done. I'm going to concentrate on creativity, imagination, making music, and writing songs. That is going to be my sound, and I'm going to work with it, and it was a very good decision.

"I've never chased gear," Morello continues. "Like when a band gets their first advance [from a label], everybody runs out to Guitar Center to buy out the store. But I've got the same stomp boxes that I had at that same time, plus the DigiTech Whammy pedal, which I think came out around '91; that's the newest pedal effect I have. I concentrate on using that simple setup, and then it's up to me."

That said, mixer Tom Tapley did punch up Morello's acoustic guitars during the mix on the SSL E Series board at Henson Studios (Hollywood). "I would distort the acoustics through Neve preamps and put some 1176s on them, just to give it what I felt was more of an edge," Tapley says. "Tom wants to hear something aggressive, even on the acoustic playing."

Tapley also treated Morello's vocals with a good deal of compression: a Fairchild, UREI LA2A, Pultec EQP1A, and a dbx 160VU. "We definitely want the vocals front-and-center, because Tom has a lot of important stuff to say," Tapley says.

"My twin passions, since I was 15 have been political activism and rock 'n' roll, and it's my job to put my convictions into what I do," Morello says. "Fortunately, I have seen that music does have an immeasurable impact. I get tweets from around the globe about how, in 2011, the Rage Against the Machine record we made in 1992 was informing street protests in Cairo and the union battles in Madison, Wisconsin. I was there on that freezing cold day when there were 100,000 people in the streets [of Madison], playing Nightwatchman songs. That's when you feel how music helps steel the backbone of people who are fighting for justice." ■

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Left to right—Jason Miles, Falu, and DJ Logic.

# Jason Miles and DJ Logic

Collaborating (literally) all over the map with Global Noize

BY BLAIR JACKSON

JASON MILES has enough credits to fill a few careers. For many years, he worked practically non-stop as a first-call synth and keyboard specialist, programmer, and arranger on the New York studio scene, working with the likes of Miles Davis, Luther Vandross, Chaka Khan, Whitney Houston, Grover Washington, Michael Jackson, Marcus Miller, and many others. On his own—actually, with a lot of help from some of his über-talented friends—he also established a bright solo career, with a string of fine albums that touched on everything from jazz to fusion to Brazilian styles, as well as a series of highly original and well-regarded tribute discs honoring Weather Report, Ivan Lins, Grover Washington, and Marvin Gaye. It seems he's always in the thick of something interesting and cool, and both of those adjectives certainly describe his latest passion: an eclectic group called Global Noize,

which finds Miles, turntable phenom and beat-master DJ Logic, Indian singer Falu, and a host of others blending various world music styles with funk and jazz and rock in unpredictable ways.

Global Noize just put out its second album, *Prayer for the Planet* (Lightyear Records), and it's all over the map (literally!), with nods to Brazil, India, the Arab world, and more—with several languages represented—but never straying too far from Miles' beloved jazz/funk terra firma. Most of the songs start with Miles working on his extensive collection of synths at home, laying down basslines, grooves, and atmospheres “and then writing melodies on top of that,” he says. “It has to come down to melody, though it's also about keeping the groove on the floor and making sure people can feel it. I'll send it to Jason [DJ Logic] and he's very quick with understanding



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Eleanora Alberto

the groove. No matter what I have, he'll have something interesting to throw in there. I'm writing chord changes and coming up with arrangements and the structure, but then he'll come in and start adding turntables and effects—Mofa and Kaoss pads—and we blend all this stuff in there and it totally changes the flavor of it. Then we'll start bringing other people in. Maybe Falu will sing on it—she's so amazing—or we'll have guitarists or a sax player; whatever the song calls for. We don't put any limits on it." Reeds player Jay Rodriguez is an important contributor on the album and is also part of the still-evolving Global Noize live ensemble.

Live drums were cut at Bennett Studios in Englewood, NJ (and sometimes combined with loops later); some vocals and guitars were recorded at Shelter Studios in Minneapolis, "and then some people worked in their own places, sent me their tracks, and I put everything together here," Miles notes. The disc was mixed by Goh Hotoda (Madonna, Janet Jackson, Depeche Mode, *et al.*) in Tokyo.

"He's one of the best there is," says Miles. "He's got a great ear for bottom."

Though Miles relies heavily of tried-and-true synths he's favored for years ("I've probably put Minimoog bass on more records than anyone alive," he says with a laugh), he's always looking for new textures to add to his already formidable arsenal: "I do use some Spectrasonics stuff in the computer. I love the Trilian [Total Bass Module] and I love the Stylus [RMX Realtime Groove Module]. I'm using the Prophet 08 [Vintage Synth Explorer], which I truly love, and I'm also using the [Clavia] Nord Electro 2 for different effects. I still program all my own sounds—that's very important for me. I like programming cool shit—that's what gives the sound character, which is *everything* in synths."

Miles' humble aspirations for the group? "We're trying to bring the world together. I truly believe an Indian woman, a black DJ, and a Jewish guy who's got some soul can put something together and resonate a message throughout the world." ■

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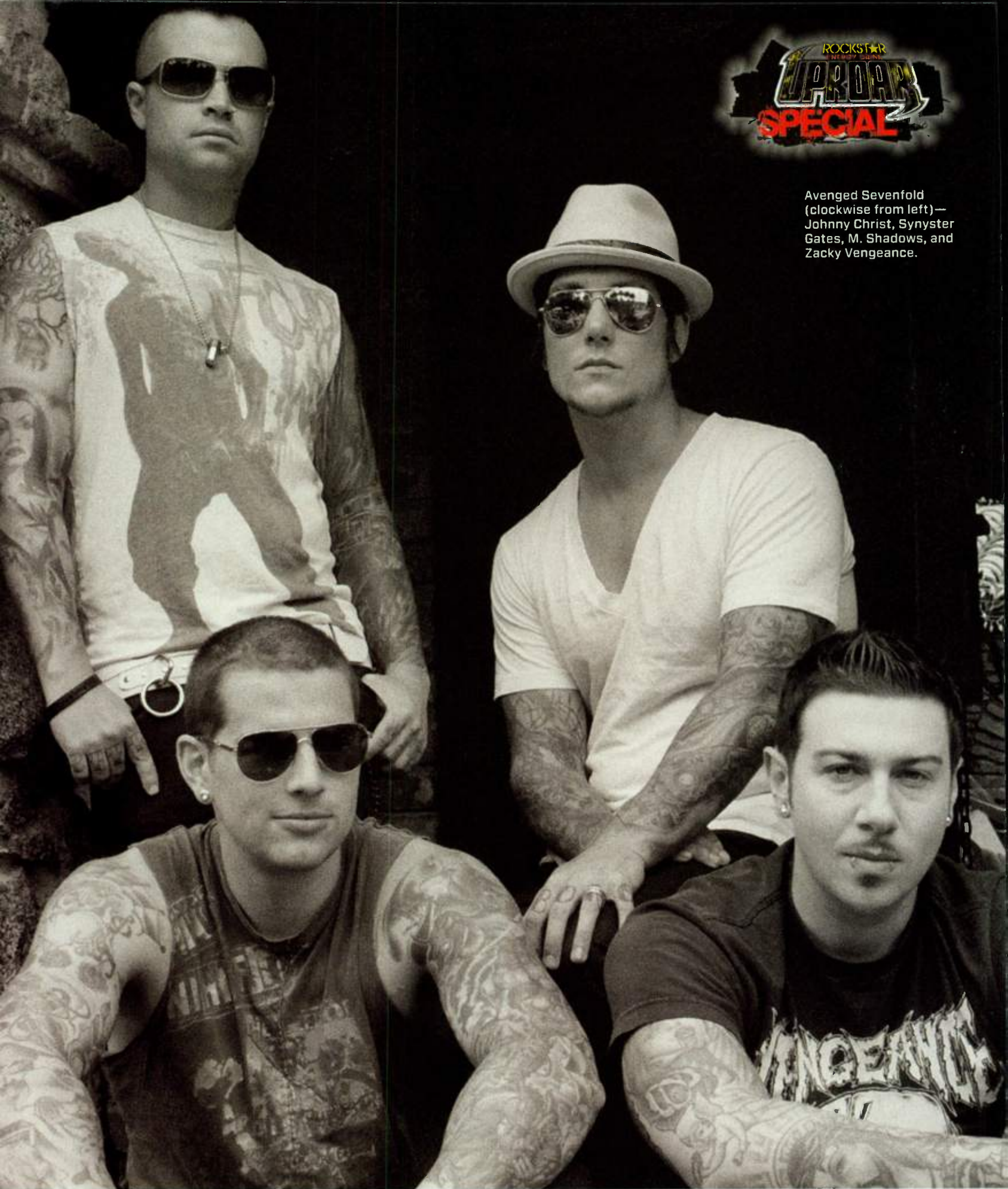


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Avenged Sevenfold  
(clockwise from left)—  
Johnny Christ, Synyster  
Gates, M. Shadows, and  
Zacky Vengeance.





# Rockstar Energy Drink UPROAR Festival 2011



THE BANDS BEHIND THE BEDLAM by Tony Ware

Welcome to our three-part series profiling the artists headlining the Rockstar Energy Drink UPROAR Festival. In this second installment, we feature Avenged Sevenfold, Bullet for My Valentine, and Black Tide. For the complete band lineup, tour dates, and more information, visit [rockstaruproar.com](http://rockstaruproar.com).

## Avenged Sevenfold

Classic Metal On Steroids

SOMETIMES, THINGS just click. For Avenged Sevenfold, it was going into the band's third album, 2005's *City of Evil*, that an understanding of oscillating dynamics, anchored by the introduction of a click track, established the former metalcore band's command of heavy metal's architecture. A prowling, howling stage presence, reinforced by strafing riffs, cemented the ongoing live reputation of the band, which had established its ability to engage crowds with raw emotion when it first surged from Huntington Beach, CA, in 1999.

"In the early days of the band we could connect with crowds, but we really didn't really know anything about what makes a 'good' sound," admits Avenged Sevenfold bassist Johnny Christ. "I remember touring in 2002 and I only had some sort of Crate amp that could do its thing for a couple hundred kids a night, but it didn't work out for much more. As we were working on [2003's] *Waking the Fallen* we got introduced to Bogner amps, Schecter guitars; we could afford a DW [Drum Workshop] kit, so we really started to get different feels and sounds for the songs. Touring between that album and *City of Evil* really helped us sonically, showed us new ways to trim out the fat and structure parts."

Lessons learned, Avenged Sevenfold went into the sessions for *City of Evil*, the band's major-label debut, prepared to go over every song with a fine-tooth comb. The result toned down post-hardcore outbursts and exhibited classical metal's soaring harmonizing. The balance of grit and melody took the band from independent cult favorite and thrust it into the public eye. In the years since, Christ, vocalist M. Shadows, guitarists Zacky Vengeance and Synyster Gates, and drummer James "the Rev" Sullivan evolved through a series of recording experiments and fortified their road-honed virtuosity, culminating in the material on 2009's thematically rich *Nightmare*.

The recording sessions for *City of Evil* proved as grueling as the results were exacting, and for 2007's self-titled full-length Avenged Sevenfold chose to self-produce a more rough-edged album. That experience gave the band a harsh but valuable glimpse into what it takes to troubleshoot sessions. It also allowed for a widening of Avenged Sevenfold's sonic palette. "We did 808 blasts . . . had orchestrated parts that sounded carnivalistic . . . we just set out not to have

someone tell us what we couldn't or shouldn't do, and we went for it as far as we could take it," reflects Christ.

For *Nightmare*, however, the band again brought in an outside voice—Mike Elizondo (Dr. Dre, Fiona Apple)—whom they could vibe with during the writing process. A session bassist as well as producer, Elizondo brought an ear for musicality, as well as suggestions on gear for Christ to explore (such as vintage Fender and Rickenbacker basses alongside his traditional StingRay, as well as a Gallien-Krueger amp). Consideration of arrangements was particularly important as the band had to grapple with the passing of Sullivan just prior to the recording sessions, for which they then brought in Dream Theater drummer Mike Portnoy. Sullivan's passing changed the lyrical focus and weight of the album, while the band stayed resolute on the overall tone intended throughout the six-month writing/demoing process. (The final result has a conceptual strength akin at times to Pink Floyd, Alice Cooper, and Queensrÿche.)

"We wanted *Nightmare* to be as timeless as possible, something like a classic metal record on steroids," says Christ. "We wanted something that sounds new, fresh, but equally massive . . . that has the crispness of modern recordings but that still sounds timeless. It's not like all this really low-end, bass-heavy rock that comes with really big opening kick drums. When it calls for it, sure, we've got huge body, but a lot of the time we wanted a sound like classic thrash . . . like [Metallica's] *The Black Album* but updated with Avenged Sevenfold on top of pianos and horns and keyboard parts and orchestrations of all sorts. It's an album that's panned wide, with a cinematic feel to it, and live it just plays out on a huge, aggressive scale."

Live, Avenged Sevenfold sits all the back line behind the Gothic stage dressings, leaving maximum space for the band to triumphantly connect with the fans, and for "blowing up as much shit as possible," laughs Christ. There have been rumors that Avenged Sevenfold's equally arena-sized sound is augmented by Pro Tools tracks, which Christ denies but considers a complement on how encompassing the band's performance can be. The truth of the matter is that guitars and bass are split between two to three heads, and parts are written with the entire spectrum in mind. Blended back together by the front-of-the-house guys, Avenged Sevenfold makes a *Nightmare* into a cathartic swell. ■



Bullet for My Valentine (left to right)—Matt Tuck, Michael Thomas, Michael Paget, and Jason James.

# Bullet for My Valentine

## Heavy Simplicity

FOR SOME, being in a band is a series of sprints. Welsh quartet Bullet for My Valentine, however, sees it as a marathon. Even though the Cardiff band is commonly tagged as heavily influenced by classic thrash metal, drummer Michael “Moose” Thomas says the group recognizes the difference between heavy and chaotic, and will continue to reinforce its longevity through a reevaluation of its strengths. This philosophy is exhibited on Bullet for My Valentine’s third full-length, *Fever* (released on Jive Records in 2010).

“Before, we just wrote songs that were bold enough, but as we got older and more mature we wanted to refine how we write songs, we wanted to write better songs rather than ones that were just as heavy as we could get,” explains Thomas. “It wasn’t about piling on riffs in one song unless there was a place for them. Our early songs were full of them, but for this album we needed to pull back, show how simple can be heavy.”

Citing a renewed appreciation for bands such as Black Sabbath, Metallica, and Iron Maiden (the latter of whom Bullet for My Valentine has opened for in the past), Thomas sees heavy music swinging away from the downtuned and oppressively heavy era of nu metal. In the case of Bullet for My Valentine, precision is a key operating factor, and something the band has honed on the road and cemented in

the studio. Rather than writing songs for *Fever* in a fractured manner at soundchecks and on tour buses, Bullet for My Valentine waited to take a break from touring, then the band connected with producer Don Gilmore (Linkin Park, Good Charlotte) to record an earnest, straightforward rock record.

“One day, I’d love to put together a collage of cutlery being thrown about, making percussion out of hitting odd objects, the kind of stuff you wouldn’t know was in a record until someone told you,” admits Thomas. “But for this record, it was about being in a big room together, not trying to rush a million miles an hour, so we could write parts that had the most impact.”

With these goals in mind, *Fever* is an album balancing crunched out and clean tones, exhibiting a consistency of tones united in anthemic direction. The tautly gated tempos only twice near ballad territory, but they also don’t approach the same unflagging throttle as certain spikes on 2008’s sophomore release, *Scream Aim Fire*. The choruses, meanwhile, are as rousing as and more melodic than any the metalcore band has conjured. *Fever* is a high-gain amalgam that manages to be Bullet for My Valentine’s most accessible material, and an achievement in harmonized arrangements that promises a consummate stage presentation. ■





Black Tide (left to right)—Austin Diaz, Gabriel Garcia, Steven Spence, and Zakk Sandler.

# Black Tide

## Perfecting Controlled Chaos

PART OF Miami, FL-based quartet Black Tide still can't legally buy a drink, yet the band's controlled chaos has been inspiring crowds to raise their glasses in frenzied celebration for over seven years. Formed in 2003, when all members were well underage, the group has matured significantly in the public eye, taking to the stage for high-profile gigs with OzzFest, Iron Maiden, Avenged Sevenfold, and Bullet for My Valentine, among others. What's compelled all the audiences' sloshed beer and whiskey waved is Black Tide's command of speed metal's dueling melodies (think Metallica, Megadeth, Iron Maiden) and an insistent strut reminiscent of the late '80s Sunset Strip gutters. However, unlike any of the band's Aqua Net-era idols (Guns N' Roses, Skid Row, etc.), Black Tide doesn't let the image precede the music.

"I always want everything to sound better than to look better; I'm the drummer who's only going to spin my sticks if it doesn't affect the sound," says Black Tide's Steven Spence. "And I know we've learned a lot of things over the years that have really helped us tighten up, working with different producers and touring for years straight. There are so many simple lessons, like how important a metronome is, in the studio and live. I want whoever's listening to us to really get a feel for the song the way it was written and intended; I want our performance to be as close as possible to

Justin Borucki

how it is on the album. We don't want the songs to be a mess of tempos."

For the band's sophomore full-length, *Post Mortem* (Interscope Records), Black Tide has worked even further on the band's consistency. "I feel like we are a band; we're not solo musicians," reflects Spence.

The group indulges throatier, more thrashing tendencies, but never erring from precision and melody. Whittling down 50 songs with the input of producers including Josh Wilbur (Lamb of God, Atreyu), Black Tide established the kick of Spence's Pearl Reference kit as the backbone and built up what the band considers both its hardest and poppiest arrangements to date – playing at a variety of speeds and weights, including acoustic inflections and multi-part vocal harmonies. With Spence maintaining a steadfast groove, lead guitarist/vocalist Gabriel Garcia, rhythm guitarist Austin Diaz, and bassist Zakk Sandler are free to deepen the arsenal of epic fret blazes and lyrical impact.

"Tracking in the studio, we've learned the importance of laying back, making sure everything that matters is in place. We're always trying to outdo ourselves," explains Spence. "And live, I think people see how much we've practiced, always worked on improving. Our material, and seeing people attached to it, means a lot to us." ■

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## Hercules and Love Affair

*Blue Songs*

MOSHI MOSHI

AFFAIRS AREN'T meant to last, so it was inevitable that Andy Butler would have to retool after his group's dance-quake debut. With former guest vocalists Antony Hegarty and Nomi Ruiz pursuing their own careers, Butler is still probing the garage disco sound he nailed in 2008, but with much more restraint. That said, deep house rules on *Blue Songs*, from the throbacious "Step Up," with Bloc Party's Kele Okereke, to the Arthur Russell-ish "Answers Come in Dreams," with Aerea Negrot.

BILL MURPHY



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*Pajama Club*

LESTER/REDEYE

Split Enz/Crowded House alumnus Neil Finn collaborated with wife Sharon to form Pajama Club; their self-titled debut is a collection of big rhythms, loops, catchy melodies, eclectic guitar phrasing, and dreamy synth texturing. More beat-oriented than jangly Finn style, much sounds familiar in reference to U2, John Lennon, T-Rex, and others, while remaining fresh and original. The mix is hypnotic, with hints of Finn's past. Check out the enchanting "Golden Child" for a lesson in layering vocal textures.

CRAIG DALTON



**Thundercat**

*The Golden Age of the Apocalypse*

BRAINFEEDER

You've probably heard Thundercat (aka Stephen Bruner) thrashing his bass with Suicidal Tendencies or crafting slinky, sensual grooves with Erykah Badu. His latest work with Flying Lotus extends toward an astral plane where space-jazz, minimalist beats, and oddball but accessible synth melodies morph together into a dreamy, sci-fi sonic stew. Traces of George Duke and Brian Wilson are evident, but Bruner is making his own way with music that actually takes risks in redefining what used to be called fusion.

BILL MURPHY



**William Elliott Whitmore**

*Field Songs*

ANTI

The title of singer/songwriter William Elliott Whitmore's second release for Anti connects him to the Lomax tradition of recording authentic American music at the source. And truly, one song into this brilliant, intense album of new folk songs, and it's clear that Alan Lomax would have been overjoyed to capture Whitmore's music on his family's farm in Lee County, IA. Armed with a banjo, a bass drum, and a voice that channels the late Ted Hawkins, Whitmore is a new blues master.

BARBARA SCHULTZ



**Steve Cropper**

*Dedicated*

429 RECORDS

Memphis guitar great Steve Cropper counts the '50s doo-wop, soul, and proto-rock 'n' roll group the 5 Royales—and particularly songwriter/guitarist Lowman Pauling—among his greatest influences, and on *Dedicated* he gets to show his devotion. This impeccably produced disc finds Cropper, a killer house band and a slew of "name" friends tackling 15 Royales songs. Guest singers include Lucinda Williams, John Popper, Steve Winwood, the magnificent Bettye LaVette, Buddy Miller, Brian May, Delbert McClinton, and Dan Penn.

BLAIR JACKSON



**Nick Lowe**

*The Old Magic*

YEP! R&C

In recent years, the great and underrated Nick Lowe has made albums that live closer to jazz standards than to rock 'n' roll. Listeners who follow him in this direction will be rewarded with deeply moving, personal songs and vocals as intimate and smooth as Fred Astaire (another great, underrated singer). *The Old Magic* features eight smart, lovely Lowe originals (a couple even rock a little) and a few well-chosen covers, including one of Elvis Costello's greatest: "Poisoned Rose."

BARBARA SCHULTZ



**The Rapture**

*In the Grace of Your Love*

DFA RECORDS

The Rapture emerged from San Francisco in 1999 on the post-punk/New Romantic revival's front end, and soon the band's curdling yelps and rubbery low-end fell into the nouveau New York scene—equal parts No Wave skronk, mutant disco dissonance, and Chicago/acid house buoyancy. Three albums later, The Rapture exhibits arich saturation of influences, including polka tech-house, gospel deep house, and Sisqó's "Thong Song." The band favors groove over angularity, dialing in reverberant euphoria to a synth-augmented live strut.

TONY WARE



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In the July 2009 issue of Sound on Sound magazine, features editor, Sam Inglis reviewed 3 of the top online recording studios using one of his songs. Here are some of Sam's conclusions:

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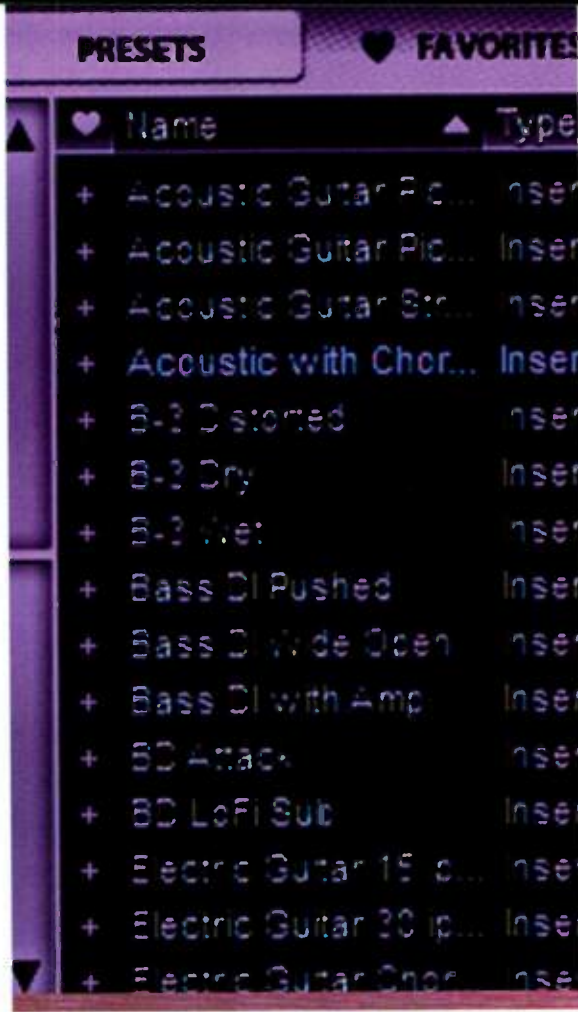
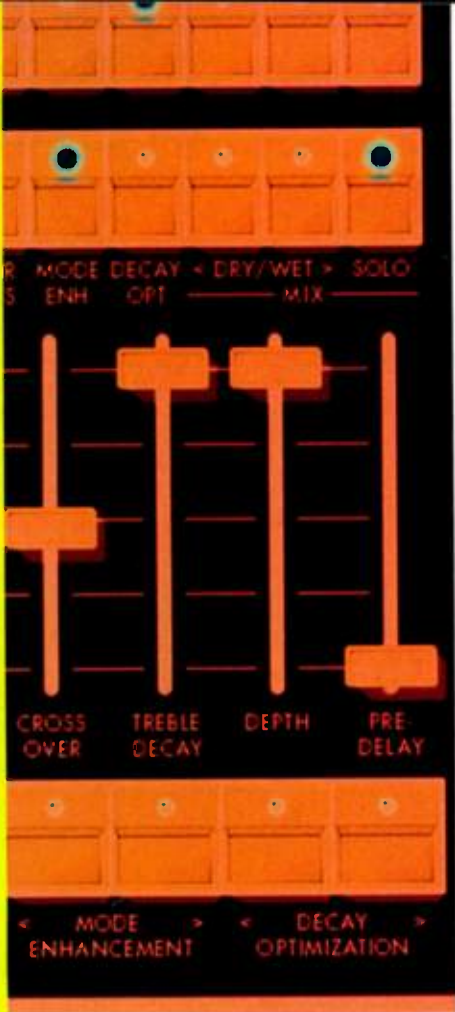
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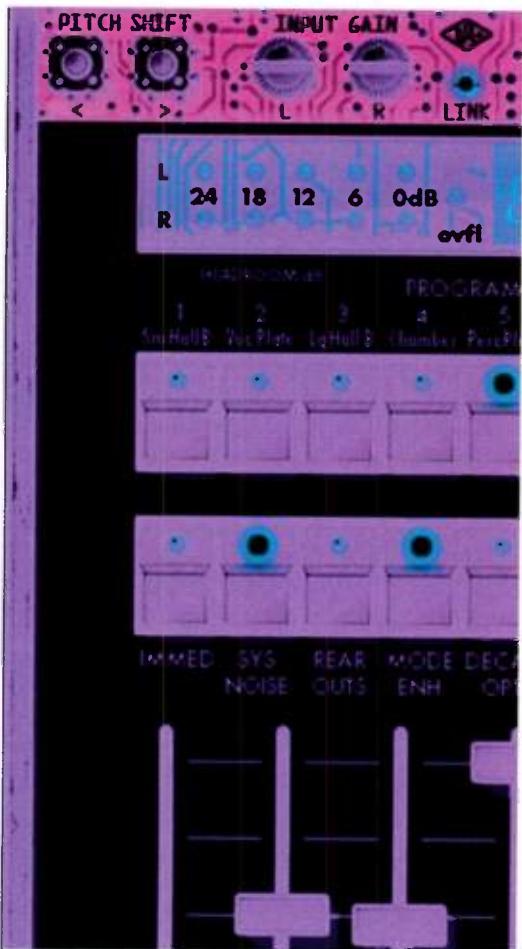






# LUST

ON  
FATTENER™



## Roundup

# Next-Generation Plug-Ins

Spend less time programming, and more time playing

BY CRAIG ANDERTON

WHAT DO you do for an encore after you've produced compressor, EQ, delay, reverb, and other "bread-and-butter" plug-ins? Easy: Get creative, and pay attention to all the musicians out there clamoring for a simpler, faster, more streamlined workflow.

For most of these plug-ins, the key words are *simpler, faster, better*. Sure, some buck the trend—for example, Universal Audio's emulations become more sophisticated with every new project. But compared to the original hardware behemoth, even their plug-in is definitely simpler and faster (and you don't have to comb eBay to find the original, or pay eBay prices).

Waves has reduced some plug-ins to a single knob that morphs among settings,

while Toontrack gives you a ton of presets and a limited number of controls so you can get sounds *fast*. Native Instruments has transformed Guitar Rig into a general-purpose processor that loads unique components, like their trio of cost-effective, vintage compressors—with some "unvintage" features to up the ante. Softube bundles a simple, easy to use junior version of their TSAR-1 reverb if you're in a hurry and don't want to navigate the big brother's interface, while Slate Digital has reduced the incredibly complex task of getting an analog console sound in a digital world to a set of two, easy-to-adjust plug-ins.

Want to play more than program, but don't want to sacrifice sound? Read on.



From top to bottom: The VC 76, VC 2A, and VC 160, each with their expansion panels open, showing the sidechain and wet/dry level controls.

## Native Instruments Vintage Compressors

**A trio of effects covers a wide range of applications**

### The Backstory

Vintage Compressors represents a continuing evolution for Guitar Rig. Introduced originally as an amp/effects sim for guitarists, GR version 4.2 has been transformed into a general-purpose host for processors beyond those geared solely toward guitar—like these three compressors, designed by Softube.

The concept goes one step further with the Guitar Rig 4 Player, a free (yes, free) subset of Guitar Rig that can host

NI's new processors, so you needn't buy anything else to use them. And you get some cool free effects: one amp/cab combo and 13 processors, the full roster of Guitar Rig modifiers (LFO, Envelope, Step Sequencer, Analog Sequencer, and Envelope Follower), and two "tools" I've always found highly valuable—a split module for creating parallel effects, and a crossover that works similarly but creates parallel paths based on frequency.

Note that Vintage Compressors are not standard VST/AU/RTAS plug-ins, but "Guitar Rig plug-ins." However, Guitar Rig supports VST/AU/RTAS, as well as 32- and 64-bit systems natively.

### The Plug(s)

The VC 76, VC 2A, and VC 160 emulate the UA 1176, LA-2A, and dbx 160 respectively. Overkill?

Not necessarily, although you can buy each one individually. Like the originals, the emulations have different characters—from the 2A's smoother sound; to the 76's more clinical, clean vibe; to the 160's versatile, drum-friendly, occasionally over-the-top options. All three have wet/dry controls for parallel compression (a welcome feature, as you don't need to set up your host for parallel paths) and sidechain inputs. The 2A and 160 also include a low-cut parameter for the detector, so you can keep lower frequencies from triggering compression; the VC 2A has a limit/compress switch.

### The Verdict

The VC 160 offers extremely low thresholds and high amounts of compression, so you can do truly heavy-duty squashing as well as more subtle effects. The VC 76 incorporates the famous

**NATIVE INSTRUMENTS VINTAGE COMPRESSORS \$229 (INDIVIDUAL COMPRESSORS \$119 EACH) VST/AU/RTAS**

### STRENGTHS:

Sound quality. Supports sidechaining. Dry/wet controls for parallel compression. The three types complement each other well.

### LIMITATIONS:

Runs only within Guitar Rig, but a free "player" host is available. [native-instruments.com](http://native-instruments.com)

"all buttons" ratio for drastic sounds, while the VC 2A is the smoothest and in some ways, the most "normal" of the three—it's great for bass and vocals.

Sure, there are plenty of compressor plug-ins, including some pretty outstanding emulations. But the sidechain option and dry/wet control add desirable elements that go beyond a standard emulation, the dbx 160 is a little-emulated but way-cool compressor, and when bundled, the three models really do cover all your bases—with excellent sound quality—for about \$77 each.

Undecided? Download the Guitar Rig 4 Player (which you want anyway!), then the compressor demos, and check out some excellent dynamics control for yourself.





**SOFTUBE TSAR-1**  
**\$329 (iLok REQUIRED)**  
**VST3/AU/RTAS**

**STRENGTHS:**

Flexible, useful choice of parameters. Comes bundled with “junior” version for fast setup (same engine, limited controls). True stereo algorithm. Clear interface and documentation.

**LIMITATIONS:**

Nothing significant.  
[softube.com](http://softube.com) (North American distributor: [mvproaudio.com](http://mvproaudio.com))

The user interface encompasses a lot of parameters, but they're all laid out in a logical fashion.

## Softube TSAR-1

True stereo algorithmic reverb with outstanding smoothness

### The Backstory

There are two types of reverb: a real acoustic space . . . and everything else, which is what most studios use. The two “in the box” options are convolution reverb, which loads an impulse of an acoustic space (think sampler), and algorithmic, which models an acoustic space (think synthesizer). Convolution reverbs are more like a photo and are optimized to work with dry sounds, while algorithmic

reverbs are more like a painting and can supplement or complement existing ambience in the material being processed.

To carry the analogy further, if some algorithmic reverbs use fingerpaints and crayons, then the TSAR-1 offers watercolors, fine oils, charcoal, or gouache. I tend to use algorithmic reverbs because I prefer to tailor the space to my specs, rather than work with a relatively fixed space—so I was definitely listening to the TSAR-1 with a critical ear.

### The Plug

To me, the four most important reverb characteristics are smoothness (no “flutter” or periodicity to the sound, unless you want it), realistic early reflections (easier said than

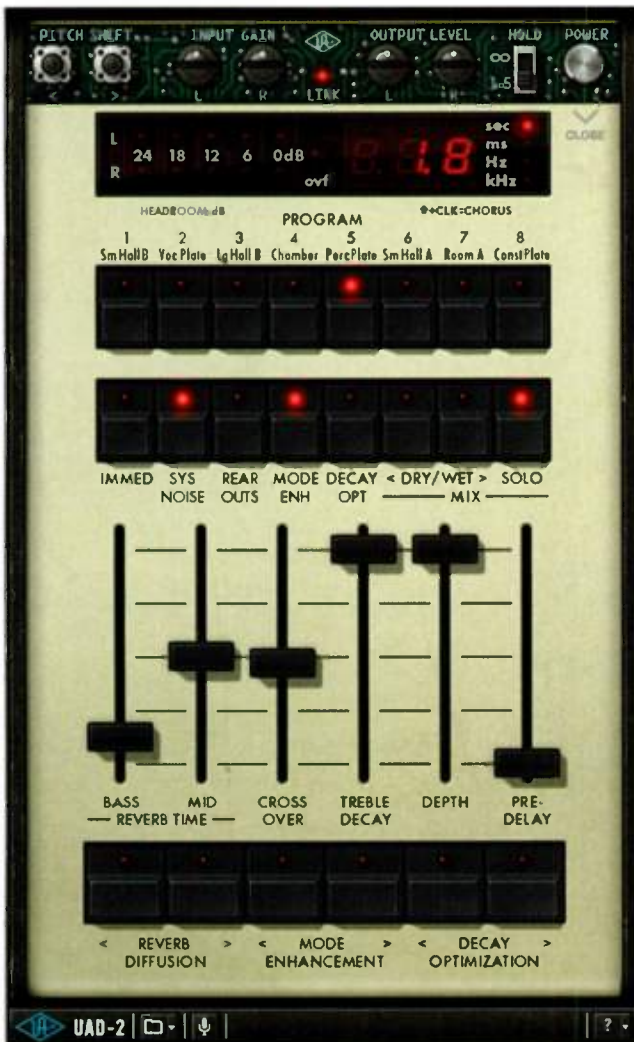
done), diffusion that can go from “marbles-bouncing-on-steel-plate” to ultra-lush, and tone controls for manipulating the bright/dark character. TSAR-1 scores extremely high on all four points. I was particularly impressed with the ability to control early reflections and add room ambience to normally sterile sound sources, like analog electronic drums.

The user interface, which is comprehensive yet invites experimentation thanks to its ease of use, deserves props. But if you don't like tweaking, the presets are excellent. In fact overall, TSAR-1 is a class act—it handles mono or stereo from 44.1 to 192kHz, does true stereo, and even comes bundled with the “little brother” TSAR-1R

reverb. (This uses the same engine, but is designed to get sounds fast and has only three controls—pre-delay, color/tone, and time, a macro that controls multiple parameters.) Even the documentation equals the rest of the package's standards.

### The Verdict

Diaphanous, lush, smooth, transparent—it's as if there's some gnome inside the reverb who sands and polishes the reverb tail before it goes out into the world. The only complaint I could imagine someone having is that it's almost too perfect, like those airbrushed pictures of models that make them look like goddesses instead of humans. But I like goddesses, and this is one seriously gorgeous reverb.



## Universal Audio Lexicon 224

Classic hardware reverb emulation for the UAD-2 platform

### The Backstory

The Lexicon 224 was born 33 years ago. Although digital audio was in its infancy, designer Dave Griesinger squeezed out every possible ounce of performance—and created a trademark sound for '80s music. Although

contemporary digital reverbs tended toward “roughness,” Griesinger used multiple techniques to generate a beautiful reverb that nonetheless mixed in a touch of street-wise character.

I’ve been using Universal Audio’s powered plug-ins for years, and have been consistently impressed with their analog modeling chops. But lately they’ve been concentrating on ever-more-ambitious emulations, like the Manley Massive Passive and Studer A800. For the 224, UA claim to use the same algorithms and basic processor codes as the

In honor of the geek spirit that would spend a year emulating a classic reverb from 1978, this screenshot shows the “top panel” opened up, where you can see additional controls.

original hardware, and emulate the complete signal chain—down to the input transformers and 12-bit gain-stepping converters. Having worked in several 224-equipped studios, its sound has been burned into my brain—so how does the 224 compare?

### The Plug

Short-form, it’s a 224—warts, lush tails, great algorithms, funky pushbutton controls, and all. Any differences relate mostly to eliminating aspects that make no sense today (*i.e.*, with hosts and plug-ins storing presets, the original, cumbersome preset management method was redundant).

The emulation is remarkable, down to the options for adding inherent system noise and reverting the “software” from the final version to a previous version with sound-affecting bugs. But really, those are details that just indicate the engineers at UA are, well, insane. What matters is the sound, and when I close my eyes, I’m taken back to tweaking a track’s reverb in a big studio. There’s that “digital vibe,” yet done so appealingly you can understand why the 224 had such a devoted following. But that’s enough details, because you can download a demo and evaluate the 224 for yourself (assuming you have UAD-2 hardware).

### The Verdict

Reviewing this plug-in while simultaneously checking out the

Softube TSAR-1 was surreal—they’re totally different, yet both make distinctive, personality-laden reverbs. I’d characterize the 224 as conjuring up deep, rich, evocative sounds with a digital edge—yet with a body that approaches analog. I hate to get into cork-sniffing, but the 224 almost demands it: It covers a range from subtle to brash, from smooth to rough, and provides a bridge between the best of what vintage had to offer, filtered through today’s skillful software emulation—so you’re not just getting a 224, you’re getting a perfect 224. And that just about says it all.

**UNIVERSAL AUDIO**  
**LEXICON 224**  
**\$349 (UAD-2**  
**HARDWARE REQUIRED)**  
**VST/AU/RTAS**

#### STRENGTHS:

Extremely accurate emulation retains the 224’s classic characteristics. Covers a wide range of reverb sounds. Much cheaper than eBay!

#### LIMITATIONS:

UAD-2 hardware required.  
uaudio.com





EZmix has sorted the presets based on finding those in Chuck Ainlay's expansion pack. Note the three sliders on the right, and the informational display above them.

## Toontrack EZmix

**Preset-based minimalist plug-in for quick, fast, easy mixes**

### The Backstory

Maybe you're a newbie and don't know how to get pro sounds from a bunch of different plug-ins... or you're a pro who has to finish that audio-for-video project *tonight*, a songwriter who wants to play and not program, or a veteran looking for some fresh sounds to break out of a rut. One word: EZmix.

The EZmix plug-in incorporates multiple effects—compressor, limiter, highpass filter, lowpass filter, “overloud” (combined compressor, EQ, and harmonic generation), 5-band parametric EQ, bit crusher (lo-fi), delay, transient shaper, tape simulator, gate, chorus, reverse reverb, hall reverb, tape delay, filter delay (*i.e.*, the delay timbre can vary), and distortion. These are arranged into

presets that typically have three slider controls: Shape (alters some strategic aspect of the sound, often modifying several parameters like a macro), Blend (sometimes like a wet/dry mix, but more often another macro control), and Level. Want more control? Then you're not the target market.

### The Plug

The clean user interface offers a preset list, the three sliders, a “display” that lists the modules in the preset and what the sliders control, a tab for showing “favorites” presets (including user variations based on slider edits), and a search box for filtering specific criteria—instruments, authors, genres, etc. Several columns list preset type, intended instrument, and the like; you can customize which fields are shown, and sort within given fields.

Although you can't perform significant editing on the 205 included presets, the architecture allows for inexpensive expansion

packs—including ones from veteran engineers Chuck Ainlay and Mark Needham.

### The Verdict

Presets load instantly, facilitating the audition process. The reverb isn't world-class, but overall the effects deliver *major* DSP bang for the buck, and are versatile enough to offer a wide, satisfying range of sounds. However, developing a list of favorites is crucial (particularly if you have expansion packs), as there are *lots* of presets—and some are quite over the top. While they have their uses, you probably wouldn't want to have to step through them every time you look for presets.

EZmix is a major advocate of the trend toward simplification. Although I like tweaking my own presets, EZmix makes it really easy to dial in a sound—some of these I later replaced with custom presets, but many I just kept “as is.” Overall, EZmix offers a unique, valid take on nailing sounds fast, and is nowhere near as limiting as you might think from a superficial look.

**TOONTRACK  
EZMIX  
\$69 (DOWNLOAD  
ONLY), DOWNLOADABLE  
EXPANSION PACKS \$29  
VST/AU/RTAS**

### STRENGTHS:

Wide range of useful presets. Cost-effective. Multiple effects allow for sophisticated presets. “Macro” sliders adjust several parameters simultaneously. Super-fast auditioning.

### LIMITATIONS:

Can't create your own presets. Limited tweaking. Reverb could stand improvement.  
[toontrack.com](http://toontrack.com)



The Virtual Channel “sidecar” shows grouping, where the group controls affect all grouped modules simultaneously. The Virtual MixBus plug-in is toward the left.

## Slate Digital Virtual Console Collection

### Emulations for “in the box” mixing

#### The Backstory

There’s a lot of controversy about mixing in the box, digital summing, and whether analog consoles give a mix more “life.” Actually, there’s nothing wrong with digital summing; it’s accurate and predictable. But analog consoles have idiosyncrasies and nonlinearities that digital doesn’t... but which digital can

theoretically reproduce, given the right algorithms.

#### The Plugs

VCC includes two plug-ins, the Virtual Channel for insertion into individual channels, and the Virtual MixBus for buses. Each offers four different console models (SSL 4000G, Neve 8048, API, and Trident 80B). The only editable parameters (aside from some global settings in Preferences, like “drift”) are Input and Drive on the channels, and Drive on the bus. Note this has nothing to do with console processors like EQ or dynamics; VCC is solely about emulating a mixer’s quantifiable analog characteristics.

VCC has two extremely cool

features. With channel grouping (eight groups total), adjusting one channel makes the same adjustment in other channels. Also, you can “decouple” the modules, so you could have a drum group going through the SSL and background vocals through the Trident—or mix and match bus/channel characteristics.

Do the models sound like the consoles they emulate? Haul them into my studio, give me three months, and I’ll get back to you. The real questions are, can they give your mixes more life, or make it easier to get a good mix.

For any given channel, the effect is subtle, and the differences among models are

**SLATE DIGITAL  
VIRTUAL CONSOLE  
COLLECTION**  
\$249.99  
(iLok 2 REQUIRED)  
WINDOWS VST, MAC  
VST/AU/RTAS

#### STRENGTHS:

Really does enhance “in the box” mixes. Four console emulations. Separate plug-ins for channels and buses. Grouping allows treating individual modules as an integrated mixer.

#### LIMITATIONS:

iLok2 required. No RTAS version for Windows (yet).  
slatedigital.com

subtle as well. VCC comes into its own cumulatively, as you add Virtual Channels to multiple tracks. I loaded VCC into a Sonar X1 project because it has a global effects bypass control; being able to do this kind of A/B test definitely highlighted the differences, which are very much like what analog fans claim—a better soundstage, more definition, and an undefinable “sweeter” sound.

#### The Verdict

I approached VCC with skepticism, because I’ve been able to get good mixes with analog and digital gear—I don’t have an analog fetish, nor do I think that digital is perfect. But after extensive listening tests, there’s no doubt that Slate is on to something. The difference isn’t earth-shattering, but VCC gives that extra 7% that can push a mix up to the next level—perhaps more importantly, it does so effortlessly. You can wrestle vaguely similar results with a fistful of conventional processors, but VCC makes the process painless—and the price is right.





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World Radio History



This collage shows the entire OneKnob line; despite the plug-in's simplicity, each knob does more than just adjust a single parameter.

## Waves OneKnob Series

Simple—yet not simplistic—plug-ins with extreme ease of use

### The Backstory

Waves has taken the “simple is good” trend to its minimalist conclusion with the OneKnob series of seven plug-ins, each

with a dedicated function.

However, the one knob actually controls several parameters “under the hood”—so rather than just doing “more” of something, you’re morphing among multiple, valid settings.

### The Plugs

Driver’s knob goes through multiple overdrive/distortion variations—every knob position is a useful morph. It’s extremely versatile, although the level drops off a bit with the really distorted

settings. I predict we’ll hear this on many drum tracks.

For dynamics, Louder is a very sweet maximizer. It’s great for giving a lift to individual tracks; try it instead of compression with vocals, as well as on buses and individual instruments. Pressure seems more like parallel compression at lighter settings, evolving into a more contemporary, “pumping” sound at higher settings. A switch gives three different characters, presumably by altering how hard the input gets “hit.”

Three OneKnobs are oriented toward tone. Phatter seems to boost mostly in the 80–300Hz range—higher than low bass, but lower than “muddy.” As such, it’s quite effective when you want instant old school drums, an “FM DJ” voice, or to give some authority to bass. Its mirror image, Brighter, does add brightness; but in the middle of the travel the sound seems more like a swept peak, with a shelving-like boost at the high end. In any event, it does more than just a simple treble boost. Filter sounds like a synth lowpass filter, but also adds a switch with four resonance settings.

Finally, Wetter gives reverb, with higher settings increasing decay time and pre-delay.

### The Verdict

Wetter does what it claims, but I think reverb needs serious tweaking for particular applications, which one knob can’t do. Filter is essential if you lack a virtual synth that lets you access its lowpass filter as an

effect; otherwise, it’s redundant. My faves—which are great by any standard—are Driver, for its versatility and distortion quality; Louder, because it’s effective yet transparent; and Pressure, due to its uncanny ability to deliver compression from subtle to dance music madness. Phatter and Brighter can be simulated with EQ to some degree, but they offer a useful and different mojo that goes beyond mere EQ.

Simple? Yes. Simplistic? No—thanks to some clever designs, you can get a lot of mileage out of a single knob.

**WAVES ONEKNOB SERIES**  
\$400 (INDIVIDUAL PLUG-INS \$80); iLOK REQUIRED  
VST/AU/RTAS

#### STRENGTHS:

Fast, easy operation.  
Controls morph among multiple settings, instead of just editing a single parameter.  
Cost-effective. Drive, Louder, and Pressure are outstanding by any standard.

#### LIMITATIONS:

One knob isn’t really enough for reverb.  
waves.com



## Dada Life Sausage Fattener

Squash, distort, compress, and grease your audio

### The Backstory

If you’re into railing against brickwall limiters that destroy

Behind this deceptively simple interface lies a wild pack of turbulent filth monsters.



all dynamics and turn waveforms into sausages, skip ahead—we're dealing with a plug-in *intended* to go beyond dynamic range control, and add both hardcore sausaging and distortion. Think of it as riddling your waveform with the audio equivalent of body piercings.

However, you don't *have* to max it. When applied more subtly (yes, I recognize the irony), you can do tricks like add serious grease to a bus carrying, for example, bass and drums. Sausaging can also work on individual tracks too, like kick drum or electric bass.

### The Plug

The three controls are Fatness, Color, and Gain (trims the output level). However, the sausage gets an angry expression when you turn things way up, so while that may not qualify as a control, it does qualify as

... well, a graphic of an angry sausage. The UI is huge—it takes over your screen—and while amusing, between the distraction of the knobs vibrating when audio passes through the plug (clearly, too much caffeine) and the huge yellow window, it's quite the attention whore.

Mr. Sausage wants to be hit hard. With a suitably strong input signal, zero fatness is roughly unity gain; turning it up to about 20% gives reasonably clean compression. At 30%, there's definite nastiness, so you can only imagine what happens when you kick it up to 100%. Meanwhile, Color makes the sound somewhat brighter as you turn it up, but this isn't conventional tone-control brightness—it's more like a weird wah with no resonance. Nice: All three parameters support VST automation.

### The Verdict

This is not about clean, brickwall dynamics control. What's extremely cool about the Sausage Fattener is that it *celebrates* the act of sausaging, and revels in killing the dynamics in as ruthless, gleeful, and distorted a manner as possible.

If you want some serious sausage grease in your music, you can try to turn a brickwall limiter into a bad boy, or you can simply start off with a bad boy and take it from there. Like a real sausage, you probably don't want to know what's inside this plug-in. But go ahead and use it . . . I promise I won't tell, as long as you don't tell anyone I'm using it, too. ■



**More Online**  
Download plug-in demos and trial versions.  
[emusician.com/september2011](http://emusician.com/september2011)

**DADA LIFE  
SAUSAGE  
FATTENER**  
\$29 (DOWNLOAD ONLY)  
VST/AU

#### STRENGTHS:

Unique approach to squashing dynamics.  
Can push into really nasty distortion if you want.  
Easy to use. Inexpensive.  
High fun factor.

#### LIMITATIONS:

GUI is unnecessarily large. Not for the faint of heart. No RTAS version.  
[dadalife.com/sausagefattener](http://dadalife.com/sausagefattener)

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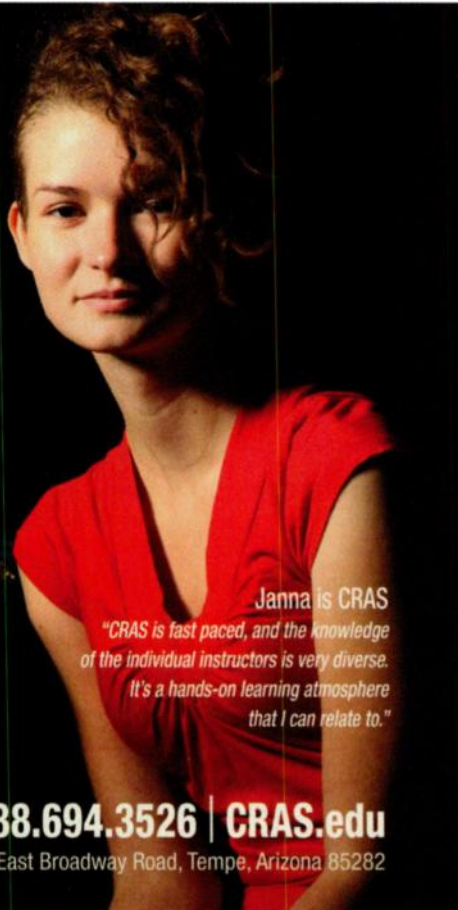
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## Zoom R8

Portable recording, sampling, interfacing, and control

BY CRAIG ANDERTON

I'M INTO portable recording. While I've used many capable products, most had to sacrifice ease of use due to the limited number of controls and compact size. The R8 doesn't fit in a shirt pocket—it's about the size of a closed netbook—but the bigger form factor gets you major functionality and more importantly, serious ease of use.

**The Basics** The R8 records two tracks simultaneously, plays back eight, and includes an internal sampler/drum machine. The drums aren't exactly Toontrack-in-a-box, but more than suitable for creating rhythms—or use the included patterns. You can also string together loops to create a backing track; while of course more tedious than using a computer, it's totally doable. Recording is to an SD/SDHC card (up to 32GB), protected in a recessed, covered compartment.

When you return home, the R8 offers a 2x2 USB 2.0 audio interface (Mac/Windows, 32/64-bit, and runs up to 24/96kHz although the recorder itself tops out at 48kHz), the ability to serve as a card reader for the SD card “solid-state hard drive,” and a Mackie Control-compatible control surface (transport, nine faders, bank select, auto-punch, five assignable function keys, etc.).

**Details** The attention to detail is noteworthy. For example, it's surprising enough that there

are two XLR balanced combo mic/line jacks; one can also switch to an instrument DI input. More surprisingly, there's phantom power—but even *more* surprisingly, you can choose between +24V to save power (works with most mics), or the full +48V if needed. Don't carry mics with you? Use the two built-in mics for capturing ideas.

Curved “fins” along the sides protect the controls, faders, and switches if something lands on the front panel. As to the user interface, I thought I'd see how far I could get without opening the manual. I was able to record, play back, mix, and even assign the internal reverb to an aux send bus. (Speaking of effects, there are 146 effects types and 370 patches, with the limitation that these work only at 44.1kHz.) When I did start digging deeper, the well-organized paper manual documents a logical, consistent operating system that allows for a significant amount of editing. There were no “head-scratch” moments.

The icing on the cake: It doesn't feel cheap. The 40mm sliders have virtually no “wobble,” the navigation buttons give a positive click for tactile feedback, and the velocity-sensitive drum pads have a useable, rubbery feel. The R8 comes with a 2GB SD card (that folds in 500MB of drum loops from Big Fish Audio), Cubase LE 5, 6-foot USB cable, and a non-proprietary AC adapter—you can run the R8 from four AA batteries, USB, or AC power.

Yes, the R8 has impressive specs. Yet the single most important “spec” is how easily you can capture inspirations and make music—and that's where the R8 is outstanding. ■

### SUMMARY

**STRENGTHS:** Exceptional value (typical street price under \$300). Compact and portable. Consistent, friendly operating system. Good sound quality. Multiple functions, including USB 2.0 interface, control surface, recorder, and drum machine/sampler.

**LIMITATIONS:** Effects work only at 44.1kHz. Only one of the two inputs can switch to instrument DI.

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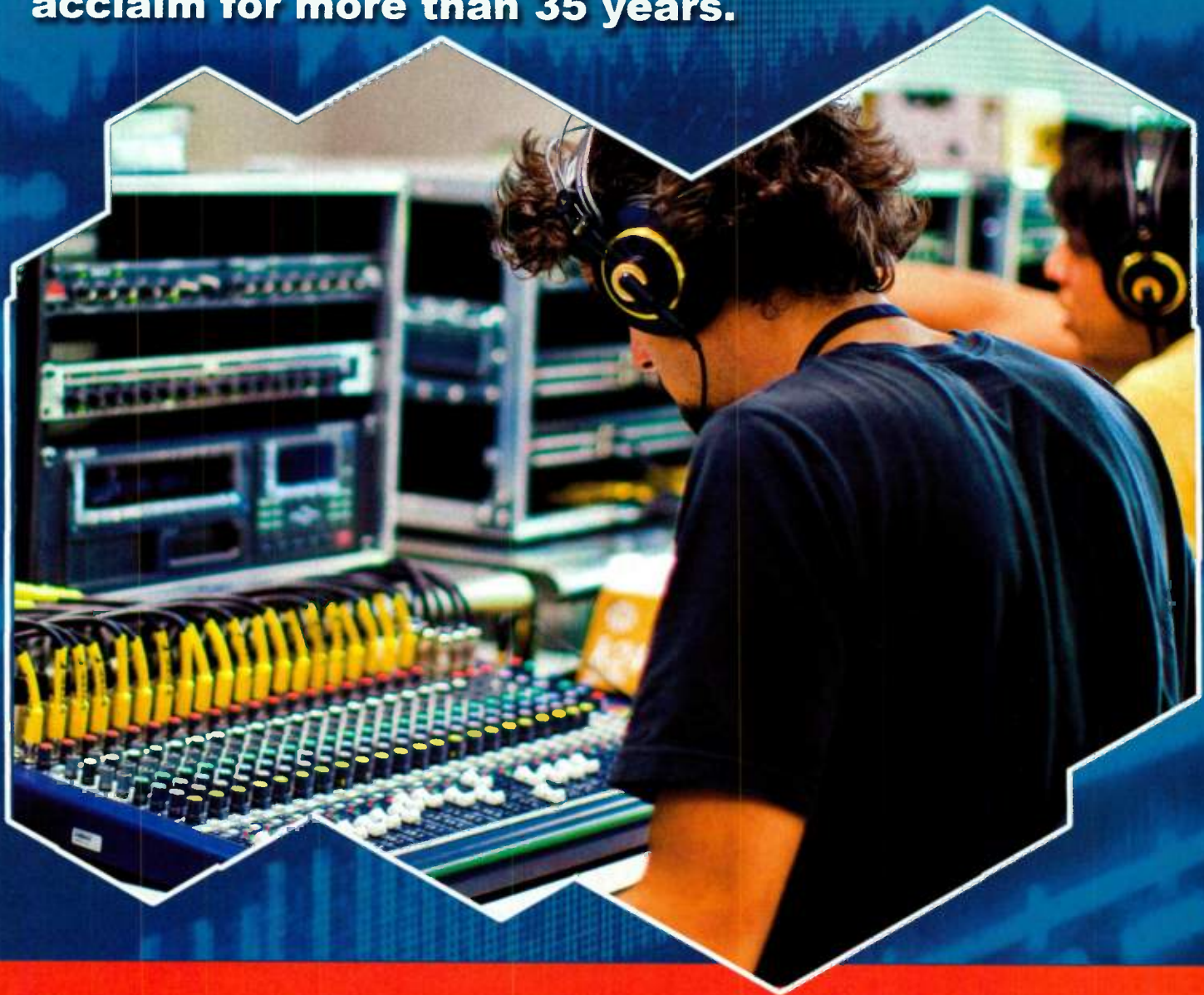
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Fig. 1 70 DVZ Strings lets you control every aspect of the library in real time.

## SUMMARY

**STRENGTHS:** All articulations available instantaneously and operates on only 5 MIDI channels. DVZ technology intelligently divides incoming MIDI into *divisi* between sections and maintains appropriate player counts at all times. Smooth transitions from *legato* to *marcato* and various performance settings. Articulation changes are applied immediately.

**LIMITATIONS:** Technically demanding and requires a standalone PC with a lot of horsepower and fast hard drives.

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audioimpressions.com

# Audio Impressions 70 DVZ Strings

Orchestral library offers advanced realtime control

BY ROB SHROCK

I'VE BEEN fortunate to work with great string orchestras both onstage and in the studio for years now. I also work with all of the major orchestral sample libraries and have the 200-plus tracks in my DAW template to prove it. When 70 DVZ Strings was sent to me for review, I thought there must be a mistake when I read the specs, which claimed that all string articulations were available at all times for each section and the whole library operated on only five MIDI channels and was around 8GB in size. How could that be?

70 DVZ Strings, the brainchild of noted composer Chris Stone, employs an innovative approach toward controlling samples. The DVZ Master Orchestrator application resides on the PC with Kontakt Player and allows the user to

control every aspect of the library in real time from the GUI without having to ever work directly in Kontakt. MIDI is sent from the DAW to DVZ, where it is processed and split into five MIDI streams (Violins I, Violins II, Violas, Cello, Basses) and sent back to your DAW and recorded onto separate MIDI tracks, where it can be further edited. Simultaneously, the channelized audio from Kontakt is also routed to your DAW. The whole system works in real time, in effect allowing you to play on your keyboard and hear the notes come back intelligently split among the various string sections. The effect is quite stunning, especially when you realize that this is happening in real time (see Figure 1).

A single LAN connection over Ethernet is capable of moving the entire MIDI back and forth, as well as the audio stream from Kontakt via either Vienna Ensemble Pro or Audio Impressions' AudioPort Universal software. Setting up a DVZ system properly is not a simple matter; however, the support team at Audio Impressions was very helpful in sorting out the details and getting me up and running. In my case, I was running Logic on a Mac, and eventually settled on using a separate MIDI interface and USB audio



The image shows two professional Shure KSM microphones mounted on boom arms in a recording studio. The microphones are silver and have a distinctive spider shock mount. The background is a wood-paneled wall, and a double bass is visible in the lower left. The lighting is warm and focused on the microphones.

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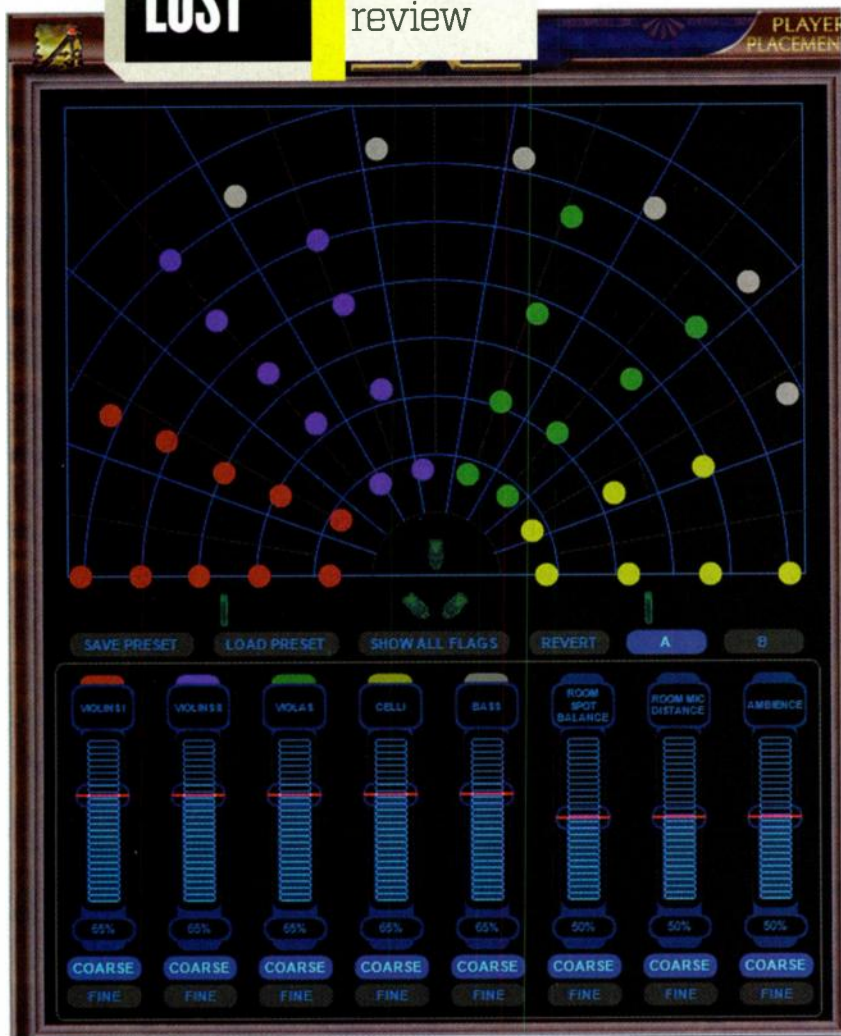
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interface, which is my preferred method for a live performance setting and works equally well in the studio.

One of the main aspects of DVZ is that each “desk” of players is actually a unique set of samples and is recorded by different players. The Master Orchestrator GUI allows you to turn on and off the various desks and build an ensemble of any size you want, from a single player per section all the way up to a 70-piece (18-16-14-12-10) section (see Figure 2). Articulations can be automatically switched among *arco*, *tremolando*, *pizzicato*, “Bartok pizz,” *col legno* and harmonics, and the effect is an immediate change in articulation with no new samples to load. You can use auto-bowing or specifically determine up or down, heel, mid or tip bowing. You can choose open strings, Sul II, Sul III, or Sul IV positions, and all employ different samples that transition seamlessly. *Con sordinos* are also available; however, a modeling approach is used rather than utilizing new samples. The effect is very well-done and believable.

Onscreen sliders allow you to vary performance parameters even further. One of my favorites is modulating between *Sul tasto* (bowing closer to the fingerboard) and *sul pont* (closer to the bridge). As you modulate between the bow positions, the sound changes in real time and sounds completely natural; this feature is not found in many other libraries. The time and pitch between desks can be spread—particularly useful for replicating the inaccuracies of players on fast runs.

All of these performance parameters can be controlled onscreen or assigned to an external MIDI controller in addition to your main keyboard controller’s pedals, wheels, and buttons. For my setup, I used an M-Audio Oxygen 8 for switching between articulations on the fly (see Figure 3). I have spent 25 years performing “strings” live, and I can do things in real time with this system that is simply impossible with any other setup. I can see a whole crop of live musicians using a roadworthy turnkey DVZ system onstage.

Once the main MIDI performance is recorded and channelized, you can also



Fig. 3 An example of an M-Audio Oxygen 8 mapped to 70 DVZ Strings.

Fig. 2 The Master Orchestrator GUI lets you build an ensemble of any size from a single player per section up to a 70-piece section.

edit each section individually, applying all of the above editing features to each section independently. However, one of the strengths of DVZ is that a lot of the work is already done for you if you have your controllers set up well, resulting in much less editing time after the fact.

I tested DVZ on a turnkey AiDAW PC system. Although more expensive than the standalone library, the system is guaranteed to meet the demanding specs and is set up and tested before shipped. The AiDAW also provides all the technical support necessary to get you up and running properly with the rest of your setup, while the standalone library provides an hour of technical support. In my opinion, anyone serious about string playing and recording professionally would be better served with the turnkey system rather than relying on building an appropriate system themselves.

Audio Impressions will be releasing a brass library soon, followed by woodwinds. Additional libraries and refinements to DVZ are also in development. ■



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**HIGHLIGHTS** Combines classic and synthesized drum sounds • can load samples for customized kits • 16 pads • supports AU/VST/RTAS formats • internal sequencer can play eight different four-track patterns, each up to 16 steps long • two envelopes, two LFOs, and 26 effects • comprehensive mixer screen • trial version available  
**TARGET MARKET** Recordists who work “in the box” and need a versatile virtual drum instrument  
**ANALYSIS** Rob Papen is best known for his big-sounding, deep synthesizers, and has applied that expertise to virtual drums.  
**robpapen.com**

**2**  
**Radial Engineering**  
**EXTC 500**  
 500 Series module  
**\$300**

**HIGHLIGHTS** Converts balanced, line-level signal to a guitar-level effects loop signal, then reconverts back to a balanced level • simplifies patching guitar pedals in studio situations • fits API-style 500 Series Lunchbox frames and Radial Workhorse • transformer-coupled output eliminates potential ground loops • phase reverse switch  
**TARGET MARKET** Recording studio engineers and live performers who want to integrate guitar-level effects into conventional audio interfaces or hardware mixers  
**ANALYSIS** Guitar effects have gone way beyond simple fuzzes; the EXTC 500 simplifies integrating them into the world of line-level, balanced signals.  
**radialeng.com**

**3**  
**Gemini**  
**MS-USB**  
 Portable PA  
**\$399.95**

**HIGHLIGHTS** Portable, less than 29 lbs • USB memory port and SD card slot allow direct media file playback • balanced, instrument/mic, and aux (stereo RCA) inputs • built-in 50-watt amp drives enclosed 8” speaker • dual-voltage AC power, or up to 12 hours continuous operation from rechargeable battery  
**TARGET MARKET** Singer-songwriters, ambient musicians, mobile DJs, acts who use backing tracks  
**ANALYSIS** As the live performance industry gets “downsized” to smaller clubs, restaurants, and parties, portable PA systems are increasingly important. Having memory options for direct playback are the MS-USB’s “special sauce.”  
**geminidj.com**

**4**  
**Waves**  
**MPX Master Tape**  
 Emulation plug-in  
**\$300 TDM/\$200 Native**

**HIGHLIGHTS** Models 3M Scotch 206/207 tape saturation running on the Ampex 350 tape transport and 351 tube electronics • adjustable tape speed, bias, flux, wow, flutter, and noise • designed in association with Eddie Kramer • slap and feedback delay • supports TDM/VST/AU/RTAS/AudioSuite formats  
**TARGET MARKET** Recording enthusiasts who want to impart the sound of a vintage analog tape recorder to digital recording projects  
**ANALYSIS** Combining MPX with the HLS Channel and PIE Compressor completes the Olympic Studios recording chain used by Kramer in his recordings of Led Zeppelin, the Rolling Stones, and Jimi Hendrix.  
**waves.com**





**5**  
**Moog Music**  
**MF-108M Cluster Flux**  
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**\$599**

**HIGHLIGHTS** Uses rare, analog bucket-brigade chips • chorus/flanger/vibrato effects • tap tempo • CV and MIDI control • LFO with six waveforms, including sample-and-hold • maximum delay time 50ms • inverting and non-inverting feedback • software editor  
**TARGET MARKET** Guitar players and other musicians who use effects devices, either onstage or in the studio  
**ANALYSIS** The Moogerfooger analog effects look and act like the Moog synth modules that inspired them. The MF-108M brings vintage, analog delay sounds to an effects box—but uses extremely rare parts, so this is a limited production run.  
[moogmusic.com](http://moogmusic.com)

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**TARGET MARKET** DJs who need a small, light, inexpensive portable controller for software-based DJing  
**ANALYSIS** The new generation of laptop-oriented DJ software makes it easier than ever to get into DJing, but a mouse is an ineffective controller compared to a special-purpose controller like the DJ2GO.  
[numark.com](http://numark.com)

**7**  
**Audiofile Engineering**  
**FiRe 2**  
 Field recording app  
**\$5.99**

**HIGHLIGHTS** Advanced editing suite with normalize, looping playback, regions, fades, more • EQ and dynamics effects • iTunes file transfer • supports multiple file formats • SoundCloud and Dropbox integration • input processing presets developed by iZotope • record in background function  
**TARGET MARKET** iPhone 3GS/4, 3rd/4th gen iPod touch, iPad, or iPad 2 users running iOS 4.2 who are into field recording and editing  
**ANALYSIS** FiRe 1 and 1.5 (still available for older iOS devices) established iThings as viable field recorders; version 2 adds multiple features made possible by iOS 4.2.  
[audiofile-engineering.com](http://audiofile-engineering.com)

**8**  
**Avid**  
**Scorch**  
 iPad sheet music app  
**\$7.99**

**HIGHLIGHTS** Transforms Apple's iPad into an interactive score library, music stand, and in-app sheet music store (more than 150,000 titles) • powered by Avid's Sibelius software engine • can transpose, and convert to/from guitar tab • see the score played on the keyboard display, play back music and speed up/slow down  
**TARGET MARKET** Arrangers, students, teachers, session musicians, and others who want a more portable sheet music solution than paper or a laptop  
**ANALYSIS** The iPad continues to make a case for itself as a music platform; Scorch takes advantage of its display, sound capabilities, and portability.  
[sibelius.com](http://sibelius.com)





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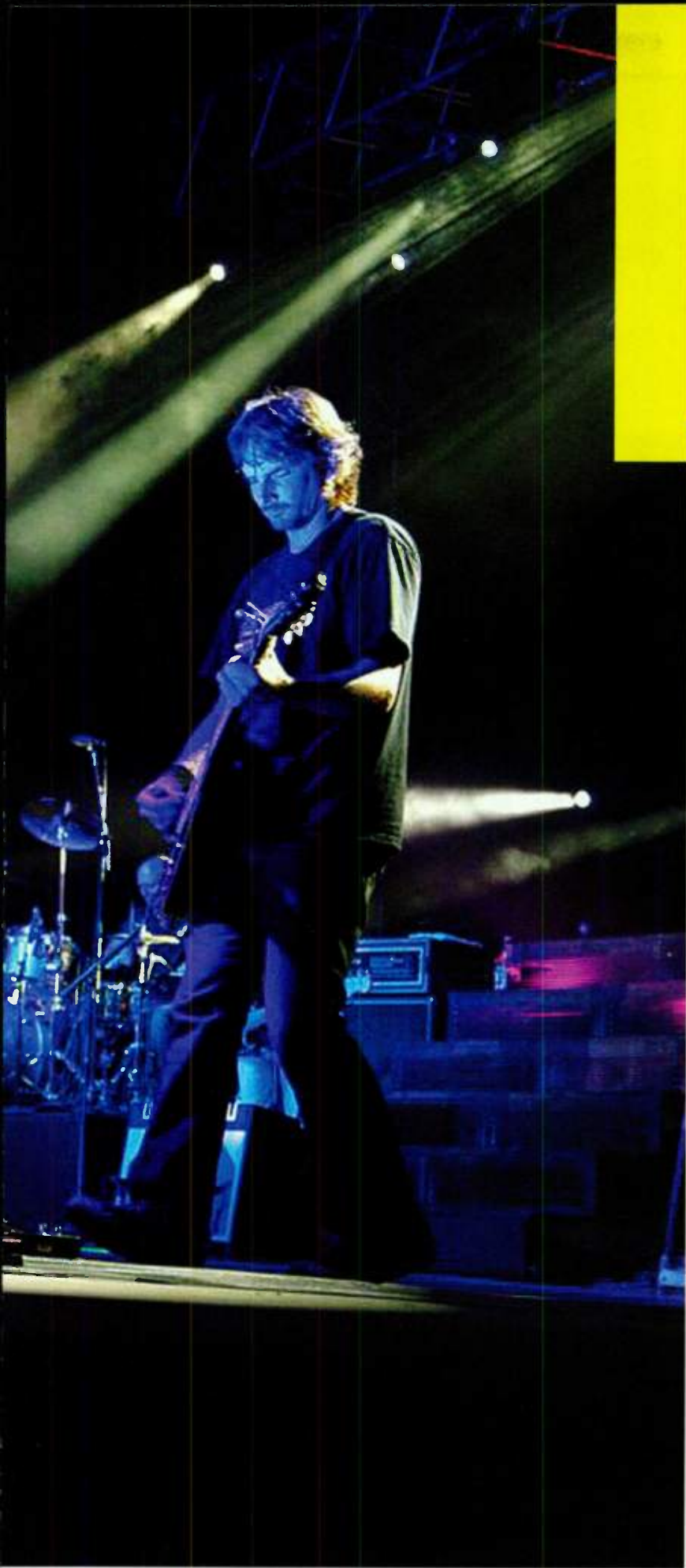
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Guitarist David Steele on stage with country star Gary Allan.





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## Embracing Versatility

Being a marketable musician means broadening your skill set—and your mindset

BY CRAIG DALTON

IT'S OFTEN said that variety is the spice of life. In pursuing a musical career, it can be the difference between earning a big paycheck hitting the road with a major act and sitting in your home studio on Saturday night recording another demo. If you're really excellent at one instrument or style of music, congratulations—but say hello to all of those other fish in the sea that are flashing the same colors as you. One thing that can really make you stand out and get that phone call from that elusive music star's manager is the ability to be fluent at a number of different instruments or genres.



Jon Rauhouse on lap steel.

**If you're really excellent at one instrument or style of music, congratulations—but say hello to all of those other fish in the sea that are flashing the same colors as you.**

However, being good enough to get in through the stage door is not enough to keep you out there on the boards; it also takes having a great attitude and applying style and panache to your role.

Do the math: There are only so many musicians who are ever going to be at that center stage position. We've talked to two pros who you've certainly heard or seen if you are a fan of John Hiatt, Steve Earle, Neko Case, Jakob Dylan, Gary Allan, Billy Bob Thornton, or Lucinda Williams, to name a few. Both of these professionals have years of playing behind them and in front of them, having countless gigs under their belts with a variety of well-known artists in all types of venues and sessions. They share valuable insights on ways to take your career to the next level by breaking out of your musical mold, no matter what instrument or genre of music you play.

Jon Rauhouse is in demand for his unique and pure steel-guitar style, but also plays guitar and banjo with his own act and

is currently playing up to five different instruments in Neko Case's touring band. David Steele is well-known out of Nashville as a great all-around lead guitar player in many styles, and he also plays mandolin and bass at times. Steele has played in styles ranging from the introspective, intimate sound of John Prine, to the country rock of Steve Earle, to his current gig with country star Gary Allan, playing venues as large as stadiums when Allen opens for chart-topping acts such as Kenny Chesney.

"In this day and age, it's kind of hard to make a living being just Poison's bass player," says Rauhouse. "You can't tour constantly just being the same band; you've just got to do a ton of different things." Rauhouse has found his unique approach to steel guitar to be much in demand. "I've been playing steel for 33 years; when I started, there were no learning materials, and it wasn't a cool thing to play," he says. "I've always loved the way it sounds, but I try not to sound like everybody else with





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**“If you need to sound like Slash, you need to have his hammer.”**

—David Steele

it.” Although he started out playing banjo, he later learned guitar, mandolin, and other instruments; he currently plays 6-string and 12-string guitars and Hawaiian guitar with the Neko Case band.

Steele’s gig with Allan is in its sixth year. His discography includes the albums *John Prine Live* and Steve Earle’s *El Corazón*. To stay versatile, Steele has had to learn a variety of performance styles over time, as playing in Prine’s band is much different than, say, Allan’s rocked-up stadium-country approach. Steele has unique experience in making the transitions between musical acts, crediting the writings of early Method acting originator Constantin Stanislavski

as providing guidance in “filling the role.” (Renowned Actor Lee Strasberg developed this famed acting school, teaching such stars as Al Pacino, Uma Thurman, and many others how create the persona and “thought” of a character within themselves. Heady stuff for sure, but remember, the concert stage is show business too.) Although Steele and Rauhouse play different genres of music, a common goal is to *enhance* the music of their bandleader, not inhibit or overpower. “If you’ve got somebody singing like (Neko) Case, there is no need to fill up the space with noise,” says Rauhouse. “Sometimes I’ll go to a session and they’ll want me to play insane amounts of stuff; I try to listen to the song and see what it needs.” Steele credits former John Mellencamp guitarist Larry Crane in helping him understand the transition between an intimate Prine gig and a stadium-rocking concert event like Allan’s. “Your job in that kind of band is to reach the farthest guy away from you at the show; you have to sound and act big,” he explains. As an example, he’s even studied *Frampton Comes Alive* to cop some of Peter Frampton’s trademark approach to larger-than-life guitar: “There’s a lot of emotion that comes from those big rock moments.”

As any experienced musician knows, equipment choice plays a large part of your sound—not only in what you use, but what you *don’t* use. “I don’t use effects pedals between my steel and the amp,” explains Rauhouse. He doesn’t want a digitally enhanced sound, preferring to use technique to manipulate the tonality. He states the two particular instruments he can’t live without on tour are the older of his two MSA Pedal Steels, and a 1930s Slingerland archtop guitar. Musicians performing with a wide range of acts usually tailor their rigs to the style and scope of their gigs; up until becoming part of Gary Allan’s band, Steele’s standard rig was a Stratocaster and old Fender Blackface amp. “I didn’t ever even own a Les Paul,” he says. “It’s a very different approach, gearwise, between playing “Angel From Montgomery” with John Prine and playing a big venue with Allan; I had to get into the Les Paul, the Marshall and all the pedals. If you need to sound like Slash, you need to have his hammer.” This sentiment applies to all musicians: If you need a particular microphone to help you perfectly pair your backing vocal colorations

Jason Creps



# ALL ABOUT THE MUSIC

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David Steele poses in his "machine shop."

to your lead singer's voice, get one. If you're replacing a keyboard player who uses a Fender Rhodes, then by all means be ready to have that instrument or synth patch onstage.

Every one of us as musicians has a comfort zone; you won't evolve beyond that if you don't try to learn something new or experiment with a different approach or instrument. You may even consider adapting your fundamental performance technique to a new musical style. "Playing behind the beat has served me well in the Americana kind of act, but in that bombastic, '80s metal style that country acts have acquired, you have to play out in front of it," says Steele. "You have to embrace the character, become the point guard." Steele says it took a while to get used to playing in the new style, when making the move from the Americana/folk sound to country, stressing that you really have to pay attention to these kinds of style differences, or "the audience will immediately let you know if you're blowing it."

Besides working with Neko Case on

tour, Rauhouse's musical endeavors range from Billy Bob Thornton's Boxmasters rockabilly band to his unique steel-guitar-infused covers of older vocal acts like the Mills Brothers with Seattle singer Rachel Flotard. "Jon is truly a gem, a great talent," states Flotard. He's also been an integral part of Neko Case's development of new songs. "We've been working the songs, and then taking them out on the road in short stints, it's really a genius way to do it to see how the crowd reacts," says Rauhouse.

Both Rauhouse and Steele credit keeping an open mind, paying attention, and studying hard as key to their success as sidemen with a variety of acts—advice that should resonate with any musician, no matter your instrument or genre. Think about all the great players and singers you admire, and you'll most likely find a great amount of versatility in all of them. Robert Plant crooning "Sea Of Love" has a very different sound than him belting out "Whole Lotta Love." John Mayer's transition from teen-





angst ballads to deep blues within the same concert set is truly an exercise in applying a broad swath of musical knowledge. Get inspired by artists like these; branch out, try something new: If you play keys, absorb Dave Brubeck and Deep Purple. If you're playing sax, study Clarence Clemons and Charlie Parker. If guitar is your main instrument, spend some time with a mandolin, a piano, or a harmonica. Whether or not you're a singer, study harmony theory and learn to sing some backing vocals. The more you know, the more you'll be able to adapt a broader approach to your trick bag of musical abilities and the farther you'll be able to go. This philosophy has worked well for both Jon Rauhouse and David Steele. Only a select few are ever going to be that star at the front of the stage under the brightest spotlights; there's a much better opportunity out there to be a successful musician if you can embrace and master versatility at a number of musical skills. It could make you a part of something really great. ■

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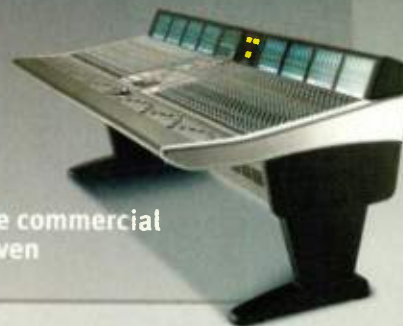


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**Fig. 1** The Waves C4 plug-in can be used as a split-band compressor to make dynamic EQ adjustments.

**Fig. 2** Soundtoys Decapitator is one of several plug-ins that add tone that is unattainable with EQ.



## Mixing the Ultimate Lead Vocal, Part 2

Use effects to shape timbre

BY MICHAEL COOPER

LAST MONTH, I detailed ways to use dynamics processing to park a lead vocal track at the perfect level in a mix—not too loud, not too soft. This month, we'll talk timbre. I'll discuss some fantastic plug-ins that splash on unique color that no equalizer can touch. You'll learn how to use advanced compression techniques to alternately control and hype your singer's tone. But first, I'll shout out a few basic tips.

**Shape with EQ** Sculpting the perfect timbre for your vocal track begins with assessing the track's weakest qualities and correcting them. If the vocal sounds boomy, roll off bass frequencies below 100 or 150Hz with a mild shelving filter. (A 6dB/octave roll-off works well.) Use a high-pass filter with extreme caution to dump rumble or kick-drum bleed; setting the corner frequency too high will make the track sound thin and harsh.

Does the vocal sound muddy but otherwise have a pleasingly deep bottom end? Use a bell-curve (also known as peaking) filter to cut at around 200Hz. Sometimes a vocal will have plenty of bass and articulate highs but still sound too thin. In this case, boosting slightly with a bell-curve filter at around 1kHz can

broaden the sound. Don't overdo it, though, or the track will sound nasal.

Many vocal tracks benefit from having several dB of boost in the 4kHz region—again, with a peaking filter—to make them cut through a dense mix. If consonants are not quite articulate enough, boosting slightly with a shelving filter above 12 or 13kHz should improve intelligibility while also adding a sense of airiness. Tread softly—too much high-frequency boost will increase noise and sibilance and make the track sound brittle.

**Use Split-band Compression** When inexperienced singers croon through a directional mic, they may arbitrarily vary their distance from the mic throughout the song. Due to the mic's bass proximity effect, some phrases will sound more bassy or muddier than others. You could automate varying amounts of EQ cut line-by-line to compensate, but a split-band compressor will get the job done much faster.

The Waves C4 plug-in works great for this purpose (see Figure 1). Set one of the bands to cover a range roughly between 90 and 300Hz. Bypass all the other bands. In extreme cases,



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**Did you do the set up yourself?**

I did. I like doing this sort of thing. I actually got my first job in the industry as part of the crew that built Westlake Recording Studios in Los Angeles.

**What improvements have you noticed?**

The room sounds great! The sound stage is more focused and I noticed a big improvement with a tighter low end. I rarely playback at louder levels but when clients are over it happens. Now it sounds much less congested.

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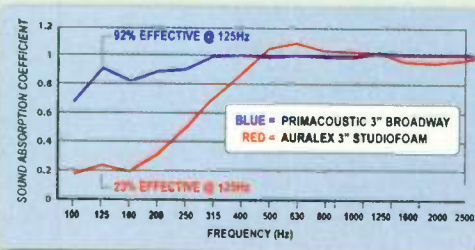


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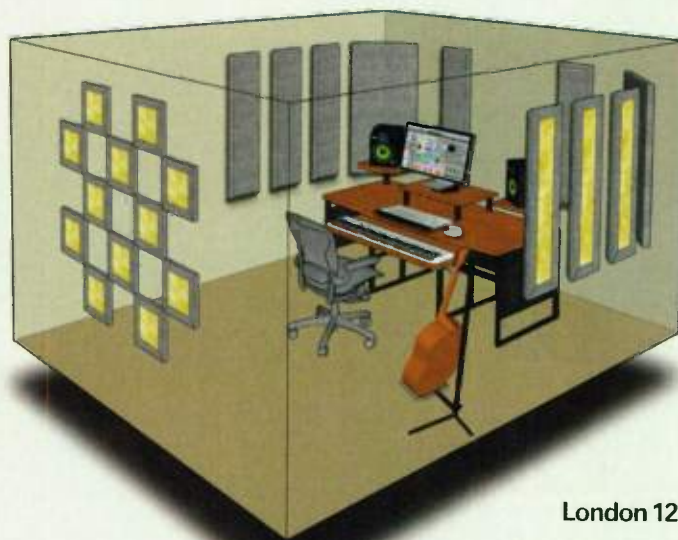


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you might need to set the active band's range as deep as  $-18\text{dB}$ . Adjust the threshold control so that gain reduction only occurs when the track would otherwise sound too bassy or muddy.

**Make it Sizzle** Last month, I discussed reasons why you'd usually want to place dynamics processors before EQ on a lead

vocal track. There is, however, an advanced technique that breaks that rule. To fashion an urgent and hyper-detailed sound, place a de-esser *after* your equalizer. In the equalizer, apply several dB of boost above 4 or 5kHz using a shelving filter. The de-esser should be set to treat the same frequency range. (See last month's installment for more tips on using de-essers.) Adjust the de-esser's threshold to

silence any sibilance and keep the singer from sounding too piercing in his top register. Quiet phrasing toward the lower end of his range (passing under the de-esser's threshold) will sprout detail like the Hubble Telescope.

**Go Beyond Filters** Several standout plugins offer meta-tone that can't be achieved using equalizers. Waves Aphex Vintage Aural Exciter includes a MIX2 mode that sounds outstanding on rock vocals. It pulls the midrange dramatically forward, increasing clarity and intelligibility while simultaneously quashing sibilance.

SPL TwinTube offers separate controls for dialing in tube-like harmonics and saturation. You'll swear you're hearing high-end, modern tube circuitry being added to your vocal track; it sounds that convincing. For a more vintage tube sound, Soundtoys Decapitator is your ticket back to the future. The "Style A" setting models the drive preamp of a '50s-era Ampex 350 tape recorder. Boost Decapitator's Drive control, roll off some highs, and set the Mix control to around 70% wet for a velvety, fat tone (see Figure 2 on page 80).

A vocal that sounds thin and two-dimensional can also be fattened up by running it through the Slate Digital Virtual Channel (part of the company's Virtual Console Collection bundle). The plug-in's Brit N setting beautifully models the colorful solid-state distortion of a Neve console, adding subtle girth and depth.

**Ride 'Em, Cowboy!** Always approach your settings for dynamics processors, tone-shaping plug-ins, and faders as your starting point and not the finish line. Don't be afraid to automate EQ and fader adjustments line-by-line—or even for one lyric or syllable—if that's what's needed to make every moment of the vocal performance an event. The Waves Vocal Rider plug-in is a great time-saver; following a couple minutes of setup, it will automatically ride levels on your vocal track to near perfection. Make the last few fader adjustments manually, if needed, to make your vocal riveting from start to finish.

The lead vocal track should now sound anchored and spectrally balanced, but dry. Tune in next month, when we'll kick it up a few more notches in star quality by adding attention-grabbing effects! ■

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## Everyday Snare and Kick Tweaks

### EQ prescriptions for any song style

BY GINO ROBAIR

THE SOUND of the kick and snare helps set the mood of a song and often becomes a signature element. When it comes time to mix, it is handy to know which frequencies to focus on when you want to enhance a drum track for a specific musical style or when you're looking for certain kinds of effects.

**Oh, Snap!** The snare is the most complex drum in the kit, primarily because of the wires stretched against the bottom head. Its tone is a blend of high and low frequencies that make it perfect for marking out beats 2 and 4. As the all-important backbeat, a snare track needs to have weight, though not at the expense of upper-harmonic content. From the solid smack of a Motown track to the high-frequency ring found in ska, there are a number of EQ settings that will lend the right attitude to a snare part.

In terms of the drum's EQ, your magic numbers are 1, 3, 5, and 10kHz—easy to remember. At the other end of the dial, 200Hz is your target. Because of the nature of the drum, you won't have to boost these frequencies much to get good results; a dB or two is usually all you need.

**Pop** When you literally want that snare to pop, start with a boost around 1kHz. It's a

frequency that gives the drum character and focuses its sound in a mix. Wooden snare drums sound particularly good with a boost of a decibel or two in this range.

**Crack** Solid backbeat? No problem. Push 3kHz up a bit to propel your track like a gunshot.

**Snap** Snap it up by adding a bit of 5kHz to bring out the harmonics of the stick hitting the head.

**Sizzle** When you want something in the air-band, a touch of 10kHz will do it. But be subtle; you will add harshness if you push this band too far.

**Punch** To add meatiness to the snare, try a small boost at 200Hz. This range is particularly useful when you want a solid backbeat that doesn't call attention to itself. If your original track is too boxy, cutting this frequency by a decibel or two will help.

**Four on the Floor** The bass drum is also a somewhat complex instrument when it comes to recording, thanks to its blend of low-mids and the high-frequency tick of the beater striking the head. There are many bass drum mics available, and each model emphasizes



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different parts of the frequency spectrum to suit different musical styles. Nonetheless, there are certain characteristics you can enhance or diminish with judicious amounts of equalization.

**Boom** If you're looking to push some air, 808-style, 80Hz is the ticket. But be careful that the results don't cause the kick drum to compete with the bass or other instruments. Often, you'll find that rolling off a bit of this frequency will help the definition in the rest of your mix.

**Wallop** When you want to feel the kick drum in your chest, a touch of 220Hz will do the trick.

**Thud** To add some punch, dial in a bit of 1kHz. If you've close-miked the drum from the inside, you'll find a lot of richness in this frequency band, and a few decibels is all you'll usually need.

**Attack** A boost at 5kHz will enhance the impact of the bass drum beater on the

head—perfect when you want to add clarity and definition.

**Click** Put a bit of sting in that smack with a slight boost in the 12kHz register. Just a touch is all you need when the drummer is playing 16th-note parts on the kick.

**Further** To add intensity while recording a kick drum, boost the signal at 100Hz and add a touch of compression set to -10dB with a 2:1 ratio. Follow this with a gate that shuts down the tone a few milliseconds after each hit. The result will be a well-articulated punch that makes everyone in the room smile.

**Get it Down** Ultimately, EQ should be the last resort when it comes to tone sculpting. Instrument choice and tuning are important, of course, but savvy engineers start by selecting a mic that yields a drum sound appropriate to the song and musical style. Think of the microphone as your

primary filter in the recording chain: How does it change the frequency spectrum of the kick compared to how the drum sounds in the room?

First and foremost, however, is a killer take. Before you get into processing, you should have a groove that provides a solid foundation for the song. No amount of EQ or compression is going to save a weak or sloppy drum part. So, don't waste time tweaking the mic placement at the expense of a performance. If the drummer is ready to go, place the mics and start recording as soon as possible. Don't sap his or her energy with endless soundchecks so you can home in on the perfect sound. Performance trumps mic placement, period. Be ready to capture that perfect take when it happens. ■

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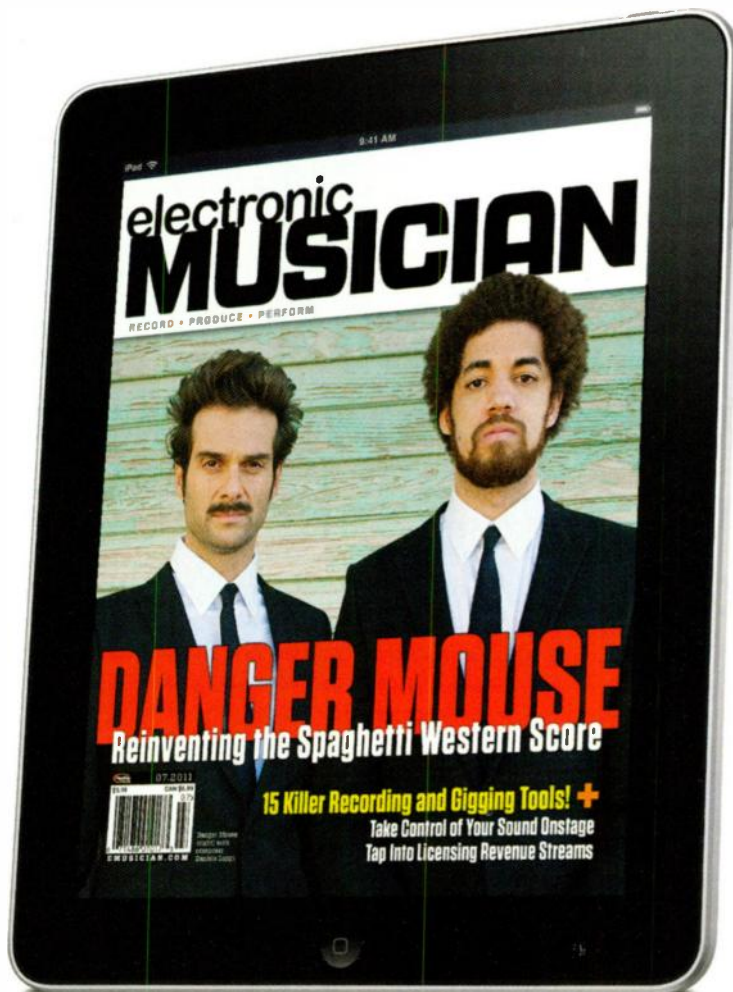
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# Home-Brew Film Scoring, Part 1

Getting up and running is a lot easier than you think

BY BUDDY SALEMAN

THE CRAFT of film scoring might seem arcane or esoteric to the beginner, but truth be told, it isn't. While there is a quite a bit of engineering involved in the creation of a score, there is a process that can be followed easily and swiftly, that is very adaptable for the composer at home; and I'm going to break it all down for you in a three-part series of articles. Don't expect this series to make you into a Jerry Goldsmith or Danny Elfman; but after reading this, you *can* expect a working understanding of the composer's role in a film and the basics you need to get started from your home.

You will obviously need a workstation and audio interface to create your project. Your system does not have to be the most modern revision, or even HD; it basically has to service your needs by allowing you to work at home. So don't let gear freak you out! You will also need either a keyboard and/or guitar controller with a sound library at your disposal. For discussion purposes, I will be using Pro Tools as my starting point; I will assume that you already understand a basic audio/MIDI signal chain.

You will need to configure your "video" chain, as well. Here are two simple options: The first is a two-computer monitor setup; the first monitor displays all of your audio data (plug-ins, editing window) and the second displays your video data. The second method (my preference) is a two-computer monitor set-up plus a video monitor. This configuration gives me all of the screen real estate I need for editing audio and working with plug-ins, as well as a nice, large picture to play off of. It is important that you reference as large a video picture as possible. When I was first starting out, having a larger screen imparted a much more "cinematic" feel to my work in the studio, which gave me a huge psychological boost in my efforts. Having a bigger picture also allows you to see more of the subtle visual nuances in the film; you can use these visual cues for audio





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cues in the score. I use a Canopus ADV 110 as my video converter. This is connected to my workstation via FireWire, and to my video monitor using either RCA or S-video connections. I have both 21-inch and 32-inch flat-screens for video playback.

Remember to set up your session for video. This means that all frame rates and sampling rates should match; a mismatched frame rate could unlock your video from your audio and wreak havoc with the process. I ensure frame rate consistency by importing the film first, before I do anything else. In my case, Pro Tools automatically sets up the session to follow the film's frame rate settings. I also ask the director for all of the vital technical audio info (sampling rate, bit depth—the most common being 16-bit at 48k) so I can then create a session using these settings. Make sure that when you get your video assets, the video comes as a Quicktime DV. This will play over the Firewire connection and not just your computer monitors.

To make sure that your video will play in Pro Tools, you then need to go to the Options pull-down menu and select the Video Track Online option; in the same menu, click the Video Out FireWire choice to play it on the external monitor.

The last task on our setup list is to deal with Video Sync Offset. This is a delay in playback of video in Pro Tools caused by sending it out over the FireWire connection.

Go to the Setup pull down menu and click on the Video Sync Offset Option. This will bring up a small window that will give you two choices for offset, Quicktime or Avid. At my studio, most of the films we work on come in the form of a Quicktime movie so that is our choice. Make sure that everything is happily locked up as well as can be; we have also found out that for our system, 25 quarter-frames of offset works well.

Okay, we are now set up and ready to go! Next month, in Part 2, I'll discuss the elements of the score. ■

When I was first starting out, having a larger screen imparted a much more “cinematic” feel to my work in the studio.



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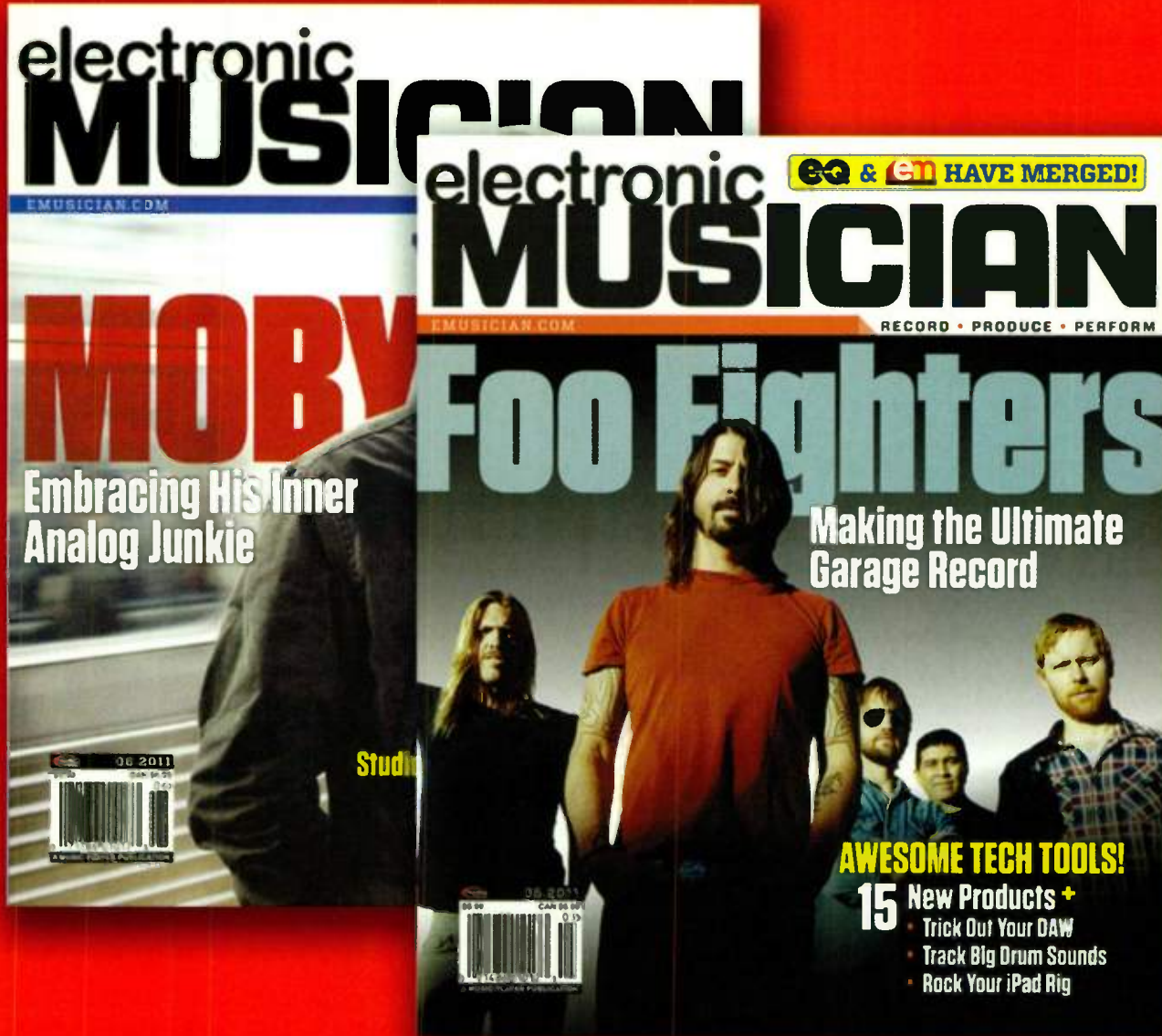
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Shine on You Crazy Lightman: Thane Thomas and his weapons of mass production.

# A Stage Lighting Primer

Simple tips to enhance your live show

BY JIM GREER

THE FOLLOWING is excerpted from *The Best of Gig Magazine*; to read this free digital publication, visit [nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/newbay/bestofgig](http://nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/newbay/bestofgig).

Meet veteran lighting designer Thane Thomas who has lit “zillions” of acts—including Chris Isaak, Jerry Garcia, Tom Waits, and Ronnie Spector—through his work at Slim’s nightclub in San Francisco since it opened in 1988. Here, he shares tips for gigging bands to get the most out of their lighting situation.

## What does “lighting design” mean?

Design is the overall scope of the lighting scene, from the perspective of being further back in the room. You can produce a whole variety of looks even if the gear available is somewhat limited. I don’t approach it as a technical artist; it’s more about personal motivation. I try to get hold of a band’s music beforehand, and use that to make the mood or the setup of the design. It’s really helpful when they have an idea of what they want or they get in touch with me ahead of time.

## What does it mean to focus the lights?

Focus is just pointing the light where you want it to go. It’s really simple in terms of conventional lights. You point them where people are, or maybe not where people are, depending on what you want to see. For people’s faces, [at Slim’s] we operate under the auspice of the hotspot, which is the central beam of the light called the beam angle, verses the field angle, where the light is at about 50% of its value. I generally focus the front lights, usually soft white, on the upper

chest—never right in their face. I rarely use any color on the front lights, so I only have to run the dimmer up about 30%; that way it’s never too bright for the performer.

For focusing, you can get a ladder and move the lights around, but you might save some ladder climbing and time by just moving six inches and being conscious of where the light is shining. You just squint and look up at the light and see where it’s hottest and brightest. This can really make a difference from the audience’s point of view.

## How does color factor in?

That is a very subjective thing. I prefer having the look of the design be people-oriented, where you can really see faces, and then you use the colors and effects behind them for spectacle.

White lights can be really interesting. All-white is a really definite look, and it will look more intentional. Many artists will actually ask ahead of time that we pull all the gels. I remember seeing The Jam do a show with all-white light. Henry Rollins is an all-white light person, and so is PJ Harvey. On a less-conscious level, lighting can compliment the show in a massive way when the light fits really well. I remember doing something with Tom Waits when he took a break from the band and went over and played piano. I took four or five lights, really clean beams, and just lit it from the top and the front. It looked really stark and almost dismal, that sort of dilapidated post-apocalyptic kind of vibe. It was good for shifting the focus because the beam of the light can point the direction you want the people to watch, which is known as throwing focus or pulling focus.



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**Take a band who walks into a club with a small lighting setup but nobody to run it. What can they do besides just turn it on and leave it on?**

The band should have foreknowledge of what they want to look like and then do their best with it once they get there. In theatre, the expression is to “find your light.” You say it to the talent, because generally in theatre the light is very well-focused. Talent moves all over the place, and they have to get good at finding the light that’s going to present them.

It’s important to think in terms of composition. If a band will set up in a way that fits the pre-design of the lights, looking to get under the lights rather than setting up in the same exact way they always do, it might make more of a statement.

**A lot of gigging bands are playing places with little to no lights available. What are some creative ideas for these situations?**

I would take something along. A band can go out and buy one or two little goodies—like a strobe, a smoke machine, or a bubble machine—that will make a difference. I think it’s really enterprising when bands do this. I’ve seen some bands come in with those nine-dollar yellow construction lights and have someone in the band operate them from the stage with a footswitch. If you’re in a little bar with no options and it’s impossible to expand, take a totally different approach. Get lateral and broad in thinking. Go for an unconventional look. For one show I had an old chase unit, which is the box that changes the lights automatically. It had only three light inputs, but also an audio input that would change the light based on the audio frequency. So I grabbed three unconventional lights—a photo flood, a clip light, and an auto trouble light—and set them up, one on each member for a three-piece, and let the chase unit do its thing all night. It went from looking pretty boring to having a really cool avant-garde look, and made it memorable. It was a design, not just blinking lights, which is the way to approach the whole job of lighting.

**Are there some common rules or unwritten laws that lighting designers share?**

I try to be careful about blackouts, leaving people in the dark too long, because usually

they like to see what they’re doing up there. I’ve also learned that if you put red light from the sides or back, it can cancel out the LED lights on pedals. The worst thing is the whole MIDI bank of alphanumeric displays that can disappear with red light. So I avoid that. It looks great when a song ends abruptly to have a total blackout, but then you don’t want them tripping on cords, so I’ll bring up a little work light. I also try not to blind the talent, so the front lights will usually be at about 30%, and that allows the talent to see the crowd—it really helps to know that there is a crowd there.

**So I’m in a band coming into your club. What’s the protocol for how I deal with you?**

Approach the lighting designer diplomatically and say, “We’re this band, and we don’t have a lighting person, but we have some ideas.” Bring a set list, and by the name of each song, write the feeling of it, or what you might like to see. Write down anything unusual that happens, like running around, or climbing on a P.A. speaker, or going out into the audience. Terri Nunn, the singer from Berlin, is really good at asking the right questions, like, “How far can I go out in the crowd so that the follow spots can still get me?” and that kind of thing.

The most important factor in this process is to validate the lighting designers and let them know that they have some meaning to the show. Give them more responsibility and they’ll rise to the occasion.

**Do you have any final words of wisdom you’d like to drop on the gigging musicians of the world?**

With lights, it’s not so much about the technical competence of a band; it’s about their spirit and attitude. It is a real bonus when a band expresses interest in the lighting design, because it shows that they care about the show and the people who are working for them. I’ll pull out all the stops for someone who’s nice about the whole situation. ■



**More Online**

Read the extended version of our interview with Thane Thomas. [musician.com/september2011](http://musician.com/september2011)



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The “King of Pop” never put on anything less than a spectacular show; this meant (right) putting in all of the countless hours of preparation to make it better!



## Size Up Your Show

Taking your stage performance to the next level means doing some serious self-evaluation

BY KAITLIN MCGAW

ARTISTS HAVE a ton to juggle and master in order to pull off a successful show. From executing thorough promotion to securing proper gear to memorizing lyrics and licks to documenting it all for social networks, the list of “to dos” sometimes seems endless. But when was the last time your to-do list included mastering a new approach to the *performance* of your song?

Improving your performance is nuanced and requires a critical eye in self-evaluation. Evaluating your presentation (not just your song or lyrics) may feel awkward at first. You’re not a theater-trained actor, you’re rock and roll, or jazz, right? Improvisation can’t be planned. But there are elements of your stage presence that you can experiment with and practice that will yield a deeper connection with your listeners, regardless of your genre. Having taken several workshops with performance coaches (most notably Steven Memel in Los Angeles [[stevenmemel.com](http://stevenmemel.com)] and Tom Jackson in Nashville [[tomjacksonproductions.com](http://tomjacksonproductions.com)]), I’ve picked up some great tips to take your performance to the next level.

**Check Yourself Out** Video your next show from start to finish, including stepping onto the stage to the point and exiting it. After the buzz of the night wears off, watch the entire video as if you were in the audience. Musically, you may notice lulls and mishaps—those are things to address in your rehearsal. But what else is there? Do you get bored at any point watching the show? Chances are the audience may have, too. Focus on posture and placement: Are you stuck in the same spot onstage the whole time, regardless of the song? The goal is to create levels and dimensions, even if you feel bound to your amp. Next rehearsal, experiment with a different presentation.

**Fill In the Blanks** Notice what you say between the songs—does your banter draw listeners in or leave people wanting to get refills on their drinks? If you are a talker, try a few non-breaks between songs to see how it flows with the audience. Never admit your weaknesses by admitting to the audience something like, “I’m sick,” or, “we just learned this song yesterday.” It leads the listener to expect you to fail, and he or she may not even hear the song.



CHECK IT OUT!

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Do you get bored watching your show? Chances are, the audience will, too.

**Review the Best** You know you love the performances of U2 just as much as their records? Have you watched a live show to see how they connect with their audiences all over the world? Rent a few concert videos for the sole purpose of taking notes on the things that are great, and the things that are simply average. Each time you watch, focus on a single element: mic technique, guitar performance, or the way the band members interact with each other.

**Rehearse the Whole Show** Why not use one rehearsal a month as a practice show? Exclude side talk, bathroom breaks, banter, and tuning breaks, and perform the fullest version of what you will do at the venue. Amp it up a notch and invite two or three people to watch, and run your show with breaks for audience talk—where you actually practice how you talk about the songs. Steven Memel encourages acts to spend serious time practicing and perfecting their “show” in the same way they approach studio recording.

**Set Your Stage** Tom Jackson encourages acts to set the stage the way they see fit; your engineer is going to have a basic setup ready for you to customize. Move monitors where you need them for optimum performance as well as sound. As a singer/pianist, I had found myself feeling “stuck” behind the piano. Now I play the electric piano standing up for club shows, to uplift the energy and connection.

**End Like a Pro** Next show, why not exit the stage before breaking your gear? Even just a 30-second break allows a sense of a closure to the show, and your audience will not immediately see you go from rock star to roadie.

Having taken a critical eye to my own performances, and video-reviewed both rehearsals and shows, I've made several changes to my audience interactions, stage set-up, and song performances. Your show will always be a work in progress—for if you ever get to the point where you are 100% comfortable and nearly on autopilot, it's time to push yourself to the next level again. ■



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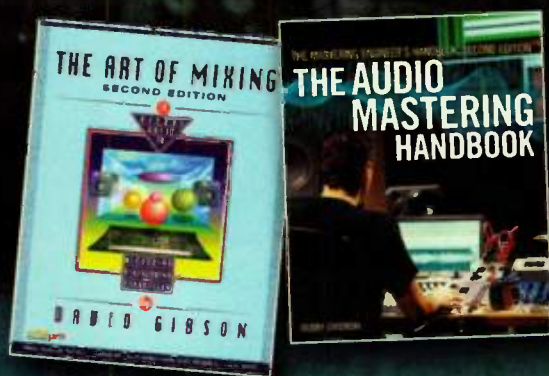
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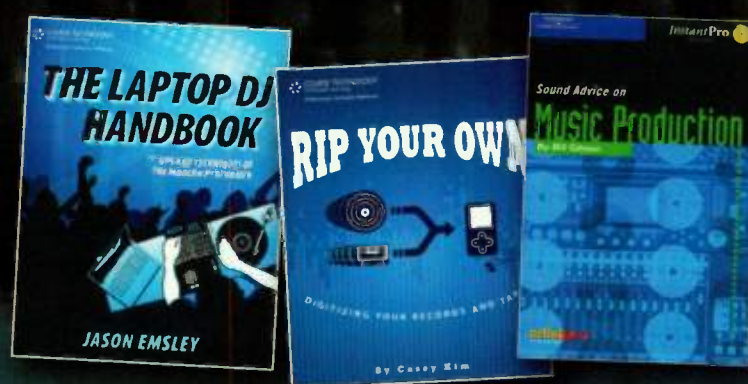
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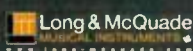
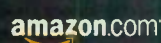
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# Steinberg Cubase 6

## Create a tempo map from long audio tracks

BY CRAIG ANDERTON

### OBJECTIVE

Derive a tempo map from a project's audio track to allow importing additional clips and loops that follow the project tempo.

### BACKGROUND

Cubase offers several ways to warp tempo to audio, or audio to tempo. However, Cubase 6's Tempo Detection algorithm can analyze lengthy tracks and create a tempo map, even if the tempo varies.

### TIPS

■ Step 1: The audio must be at least seven seconds long, and have identifiable beats.

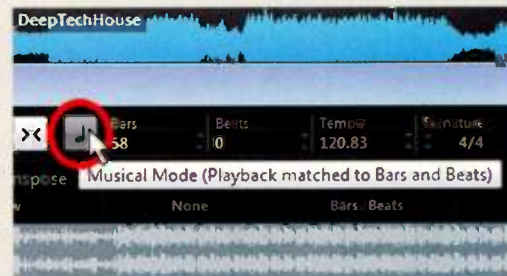
■ If after analysis you import REX or Acidized files, they will conform to the new tempo map automatically. With standard clips, select the clip, then go to *Audio > Advanced > Stretch to Project Tempo*. Often, this is all that's needed to conform the clip to tempo.



**Step 1** Import the track you want to analyze (note that this one is almost two minutes long).

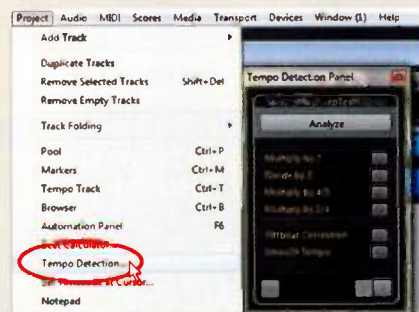
### Step 2

Double-click on the track to open the sample editor, and make sure that Musical mode is off (gray).



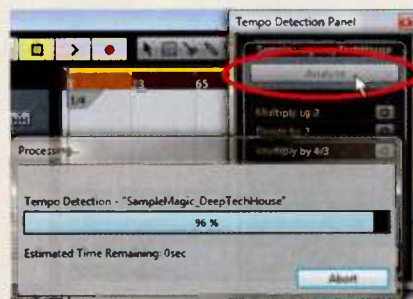
### Step 3

Go to *Project > Tempo Detection* to bring up the Tempo Detection panel.



### Step 4

Click on the Tempo Detection panel's Analyze button, then wait for analysis to complete. Cubase will generate a tempo track.



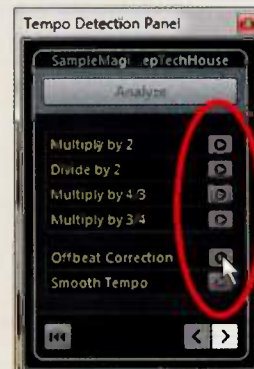
### Step 5

Turn on Click in the transport, and start playback to verify that the clip audio matches up with the metronome.



### Step 6

Even with varying tempos, most of the time Cubase will get the analysis right. If not, the documentation describes how to use several tools to fine-tune the analysis process.







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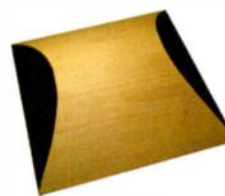
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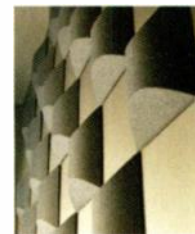
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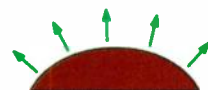
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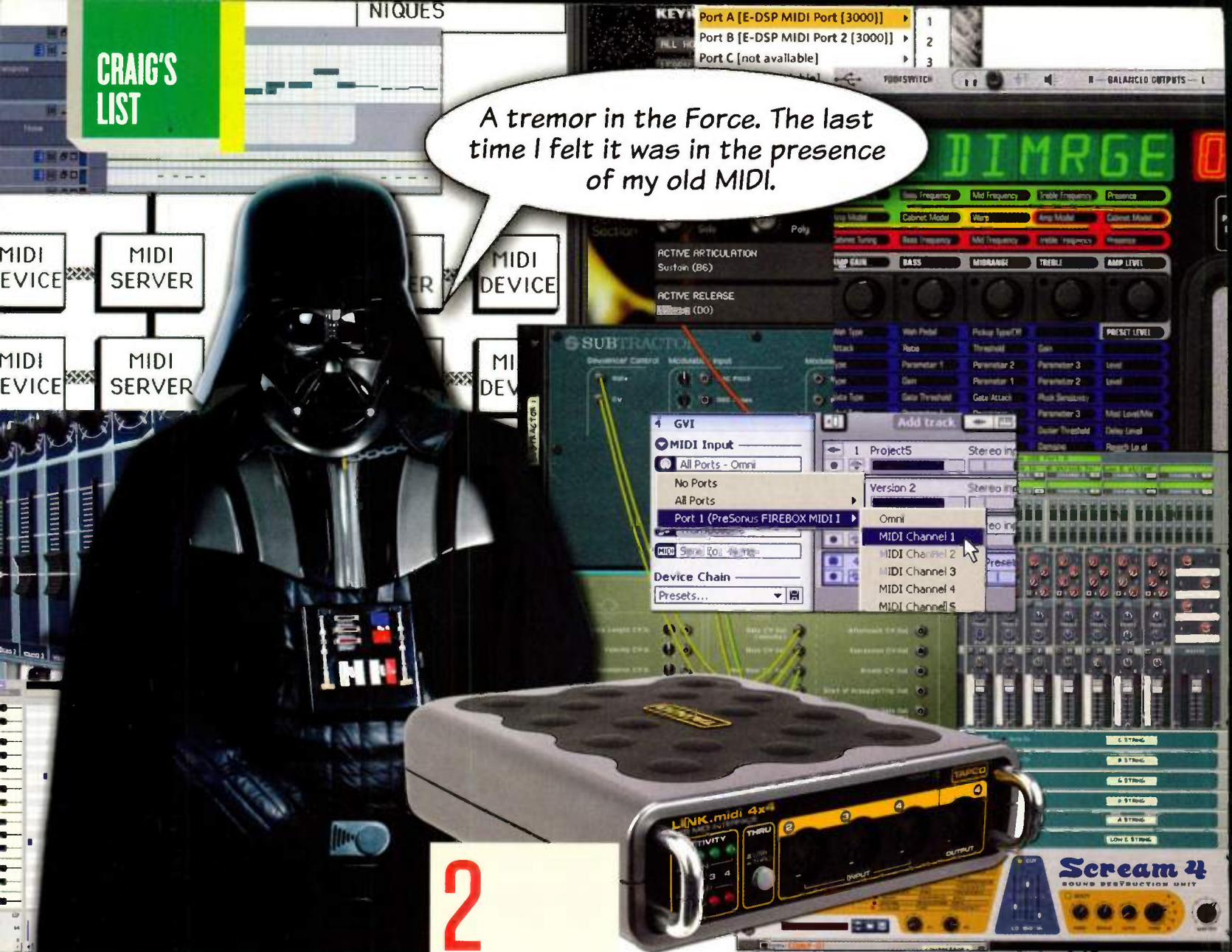
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A tremor in the Force. The last time I felt it was in the presence of my old MIDI.



## Five Reasons Why MIDI Didn't Die

BY CRAIG ANDERTON

**1** We *can* all get along. How can a quarter-century-old computer-based protocol remain relevant? Everyone else got it wrong: Betamax vs. VHS. Blu-Ray vs. HD. SACD vs. whatever-that-other-format was. The music industry got it right: Roland *and* Yamaha *and* Sequential *and* Korg *and* E-Mu *and*...

**2**

The Force was with it. MIDI appeared pretty much concurrently with FM synthesis, sampling, the Mac, cheap microprocessors, and more. MIDI wasn't only in the right place at the right time—it led a movement.

**3**

No one had to fall on their sword if it flopped. MIDI was dirt cheap to implement. If it ended up being a big deal, cool. If it was an epic fail, no heads would roll at Corporate.

**4**

The parents stayed involved. The International MIDI Association is one of the few bureaucracies in the history of civilization that did more good than harm, as it kept the spirit of industry cooperation alive to keep pushing the MIDI spec forward (see next).

**5**

It got down and dirty with Darwin. Like bacteria on crack, MIDI mutated, evolved, grew, and changed with the times. So what if it's *still* officially called Version 1.0? ■





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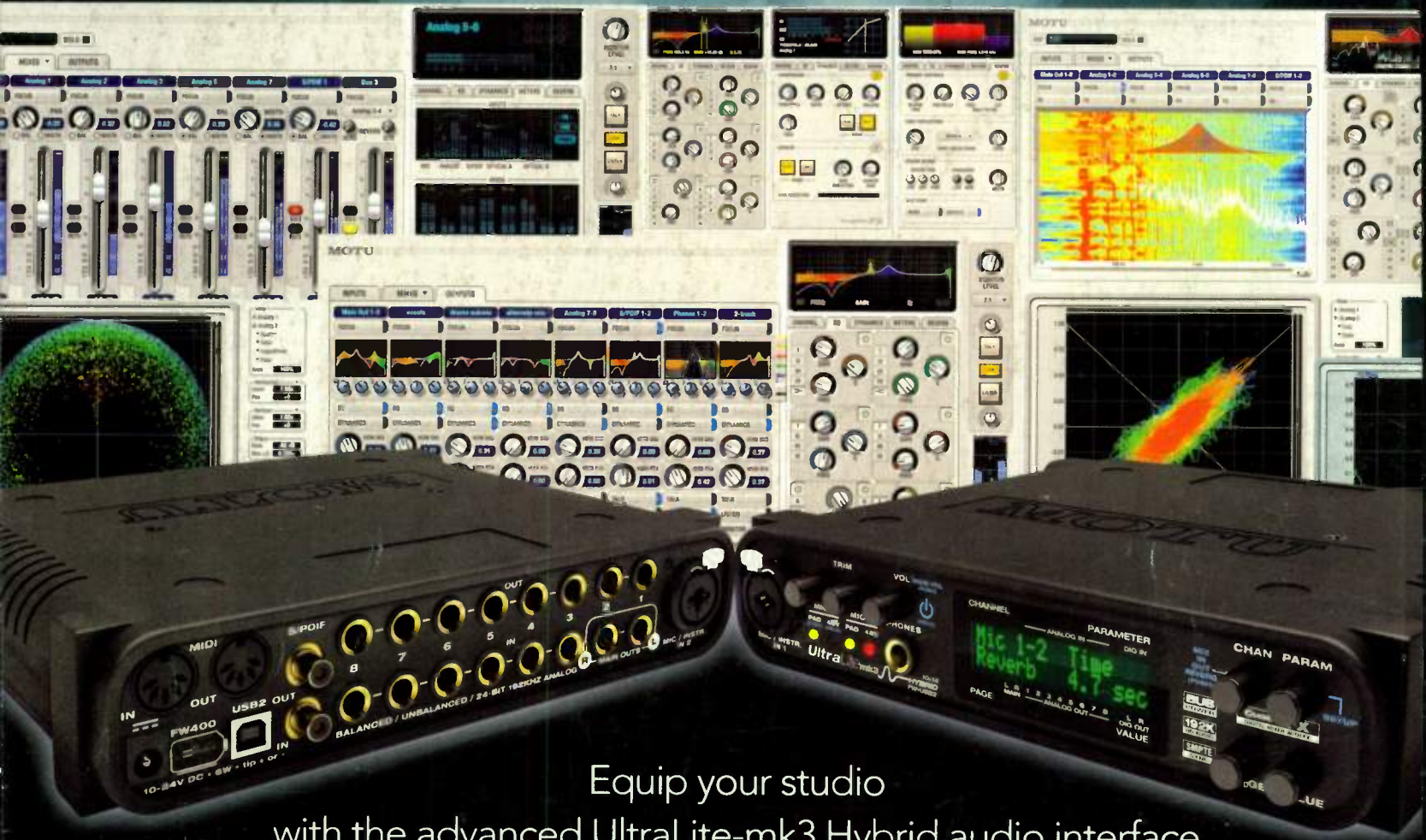
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