2012 AWARDS WINNERS SUPPLEMENT

resolution

QUALITY & INNOVATION

resolution AWARDS 2012

Resolution Awards Winners 2012

Sonnox Fraunhofer Pro-Codec
DPA Reference Series
Merging Technologies Horus
Smart AV Tango 2
RCF Mytho 8
Neyrinck V-Control Pro
Presonus Studio One 2
Universal Audio 4-710d
Radial Workhorse
Maag Audio EQ4
Thermionic Culture Nightingale

The values of Quality and Innovation underpin our industry and differentiate us from others. The quality aspect must be a given in a product intended for professional applications not just for longevity and resale value but also for its degree of optimisation for a given function or application. Quality is as palpable in a plug-in or piece of software as it is in a hardware unit — it's a matter of feel and response. The cost so often associated with real quality is inherently connected with the second of our values — innovation.

The research and development invested by a manufacturer in a product is reflected in its price and it is through innovation that our industry moves forward and we are presented with solutions to problems or different ways of looking at and challenging established workflows. There is a massive difference between products that feed a need at a price point to those that attempt to change appetites and expectations. There are times when we have to remind users that it is their workload, efficiency, creativity and economic return that governs their success rather than their accumulation of surprisingly affordable gear.

Perhaps innovation doesn't speak to everyone as loudly and obviously as quality does, yet when the two combine in a product the result can be magnificent and game-changing.

The Resolution Awards recognise quality and innovation in professional audio and the products highlighted here have been judged to be outstanding in these respects by the best informed readership in the industry.

Zenon Schoepe, Editorial Director

"The Workhorse makes a terrific host for modules - solidly built with useful routing features and extensive connectivity."
~ Resolution

"Radial can't seem to leave well enough alone! Oftentimes, they take what might be otherwise mundane and turn it into a must have."
~ Tape Op

"The Workhorse certainly lives up to its name. The feature set is deep, the system is scalable, construction is solid and it sounds great. What's not to like?"
~ Mix

"Every connection and function worked as promised. The Workhorse is truly professional grade and worth the cost"
~ Pro Audio Review

"From its build quality to its feature set and open-ended architecture, the Workhorse is currently unrivalled for supremacy."
~ Recording

"No other manufacturer currently offers anything like this level of functionality in a 500 series rack."
~ Audio Media

"The Workhorse is one of the most versatile and well equipped racks I've ever tried, and exudes the typical Radial Engineering detail and thoughtfulness..."
~ Sound-on-Sound

"The Workhorse is the perfect choice for bringing analogue processing to a DAW-based studio."
~ MusicTech

Radial 500 Series Racks... More of everything!

Radial power racks deliver more performance, flexibility and headroom, with smart, easy-to-use features that make mixing and matching modules a snap!

More Performance!

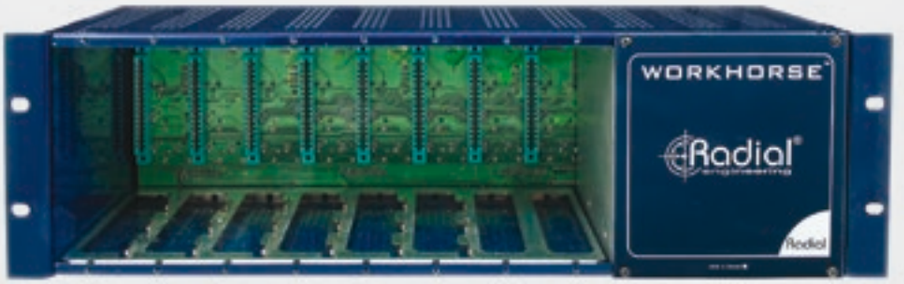
The Workhorse™ - an 8 channel power rack with built-in summing mixer. Lets you combine modules in series or in parallel with more efficiency to deliver creative results that let your mixes stand out. D-subs, XLR and ¼" TRS cross patching included!

resolution AWARDS 2012 Winner Interconnect

More Flexibility!

The Workhorse WR-8™ - designed for those with mixers in place, the WR8 gives you 8 channels to house your 500 series modules and lets you upgrade by adding the Workhorse mixer section later. Backwards compatible to older 500 series formats.

TEC AWARD WINNER



More Power!

The Powerhouse™ - This 10 space power rack delivers 1600 milliamps of current for extra headroom while maximizing your studio space. Built-in feed and stereo link switches make it easy to integrate with your recording system.

PAR EXCELLENCE

More Convenience!

The Powerstrip™ - Single rack space Powerstrip lets you assemble your favorite preamp, EQ and compressor to create the ultimate channel strip. Use it in the studio and take it on the road... quality with no boundaries!

More easy!

The Cube™ - This small wonder gives you a more easy and affordabe way to enjoy the fun and excitement of 500 series mixing, combining up to three modules to create all new sounds! Place the Cube on your work surface, carry it around the studio with the built-in handle or build it right into your desktop with the optional mounting flanges.

Radial 500 series racks... Get ready to start creating!

** Modules shown are not included!*

View the Workhorse Videos at:
www.radialeng.com/re-workhorse.htm

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QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
Monitoring

RCF Mytho 8

RCF is better known for its live sound presence but its origins are actually in the studio and broadcast business. All the parts in the Mytho Series are custom-designed specifically for each model in the range. Mytho woofers feature Impedance Control Coil (ICC) technology in which a secondary coil wound on the speaker yoke and driven in opposite phase to the primary coil has the function of cancelling the primary coil inductance, increasing the speaker sensitivity and reducing the speaker distortion. A primary effect of this technology is the improvement of the temporal behaviour of the speaker, improving the crossover transition from the woofer to the tweeter and resulting in midrange accuracy and excellent phase linearity.

The woofers also feature a 51mm voice coil that guarantees high energy for tight and controlled bass reproduction and excellent thermal stability with minimum power compression. The carbon fibre reinforced natural cellulose cone and a high damped rubber surround produce a well-behaved roll off and avoid high Q resonances. A special air ventilation system that includes the coil, magnet plate and the basket reduces air compression, air noises and minimises distortion in large excursion situations.

Mytho monitors have a metal dome tweeter with a high excursion soft polymer surround. The dome is large and considered by RCF to be state-of-the-art for high frequency definition. The diaphragm is moulded in an aluminium/magnesium alloy and in combination with the waveguide profile it achieves constant directivity dispersion above 10kHz.

The surround is designed for low resonance and mechanical linearity. Voice coil windings, immersed in magnetic fluid, increase the short-term power handling capacity and reduce the compression at high power levels. The optimally damped cavity in the pole piece controls and slightly lowers the fundamental resonance. The chassis is moulded from glass fibre reinforced nylon and the diaphragm is protected with a fine hexagonal metal grille.

The diecast aluminium cabinet is internally braced and reinforced and the shape of the cabinet is designed to minimise edge reflections. Special attention has been dedicated to the bass reflex air port design and the cabinet's vertical angle can be adjusted to optimise the orientation for the listening position.

Mytho monitors are active — two separate amplifiers power the transducers with 200W for the low frequencies and 100W for the treble. The power transformer and power capacitors are designed and sized for maximum fidelity of reproduction even at very high listening levels. The power amplifier design is classic analogue AB circuit.

Ultra low noise operational amplifiers and a dedicated analogue-digital convertor take care of signal input amplification and translation into the digital domain. The signal processing is executed by a dedicated DSP working at 96kHz with filters developed specially for the Mytho.

The input boards have controls to accurately set up the system: balanced XLR signal input; sensitivity control to adjust the speaker sensitivity from –6dBu to +6dBu; treble and bass mute — to mute and listen to single transducers; treble tilt control in 1dB steps; bass tilt control in 1dB steps; bass roll off control with four different filters; and a desktop correction control to correct for various speaker positioning.

'The RCF Mytho 8 is an impressive speaker. It manages to combine a very extended bass response and low distortion without too much compromise in transient response. Taking this into account, along with the smooth, flat frequency response and controlled dispersion, there is very little to dislike; is this one of the greats?' *Resolution* V11.3.

Contact
RCF, ITALY:
Website: www.rcf.it

ALSO NOMINATED: Unity Audio The Boulder; Adam Audio A77X; SE Munro The Egg

QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
Interconnect

Radial Workhorse

The Workhorse is a combination 500 series frame and summing mixer designed to work with today's computer based workstations. The design allows up to eight 500 series modules to be combined in series or in parallel and then 'mixed' to the master section for stereo recording.

Following the API VPR 500 series specification, the Workhorse is designed to be backwards compatible with current 500 series products. Each slot is outfitted with XLR-M input and XLR-F output for direct patching to the module. This is augmented by TRS connectors to simplify interfacing with ¼-inch balanced and unbalanced signals. Separate 25-pin D-subs are wired to the Tascam standard for 8-channel interfacing with workstations and recorders.

As the Workhorse is intended to interface with as many different modules as possible, a special TRS connector called Omniport allows the designer to introduce a module-specific feature — such as a key input on a gate, footswitch for a guitar interface, or an extra output for a reamping module — as a means of expanding functionality. Even and odd numbered slots may also be linked together for stereo by assigning the rear panel switch. To manage signal flow, each card slot is equipped with a 'feed' function that sends the output from the first module into the next. This feature allows the engineer to create a custom channel strip by combining a preamp with an EQ, compressor and gate and feed the mix bus by taking the signal from the last module in the series chain or by combining their outputs in parallel via the mix bus which drives the master mix section.

The Workhorse master section features a low noise virtual earth mix bus and is equipped with individual channel-on, level and pan controls for each of the eight channel slots. This allows each channel to be auditioned individually or mixed in stereo to the master outputs, monitor outs or the headphones. The master out is Jensen transformer-isolated to deliver a more 'vintage tone'; the Monitor Out is IC balanced. A separate 25-pin D-sub allows 8-channel summing. Dual headphone outputs with a mono select makes the Workhorse suitable for live recording environments and multiple Workhorse frames can be used in tandem for 16, 24 or more channel mixing using the expansion bus.

Like all Radial products, the Workhorse is made from 14-gauge steel and finished in rugged baked enamel. The card slot bay has a removable tray equipped with slide-in guides that make swapping modules easy. To ensure optimum performance, each module receives +/-16V with 130mA of current plus 48V phantom for microphone preamps. The Workhorse derives its main power from a custom-designed universal switching supply. The external supply eliminates issues such as hum caused by magnetic coupling. Careful attention has been paid to power supply filtering and tracking inside the Workhorse. This protects against module failure caused by harmful voltage swings that could otherwise affect other modules. Separate power supply and phantom status LEDs illuminate when power levels are normal.

'The Workhorse certainly makes a terrific host for modules — sturdily built with useful routing features and extensive connectivity. The summing mixer bus sounds great, and is a huge bonus; its choice of monitoring features provide a useful and compact system for many applications, whether you combine the module racking with the summing mixer, or use them independently of each other. Whichever 500 Series modules you choose, the Workhorse makes a great home for them.' *Resolution* 10.3.

Contact
RADIAL, CANADA:
Website: www.radialengineering.com

ALSO NOMINATED:
Dangerous Music Liaison; Riedel MediorNet Compact.

QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
Plug-in

Sonnox Fraunhofer Pro-Codec

The Sonnox Fraunhofer Pro-Codec is the first plug-in to offer real-time auditioning of the mp3/AAC encoding process. Traditionally this process involved outputting a mix via an mp3 encoder, listening to the result, making changes to the limited number of options, outputting again, listening, etc.... Now users have the ability to hear the encoded result and compare against the original signal in real-time, identifying exactly what's being removed visually and aurally, monitoring codec clipping, A/Bing different codecs, outputting multiple codec simultaneously, and more. The layout is such that almost anyone can get great results immediately, and the more technically inclined can dig a little deeper and tweak a little further.

The main window of the plug-in features a helpful FFT display, with five slots below to select the desired codecs to audition along with a monitor select button and LED to indicate codec clipping. Any combination of codecs can be output simultaneously. This is a massive time saver. There are also options for offline encoding as well as offline decode back to WAV or AIFF. Trim allows the user to monitor the bitstream levels and reduce the input to the codec while Comp displays the bitstream compression factor. An A/B tab offers extensive options to compare different codecs. The FFT is unique in that in addition to being able to display the left/right and sum of the input signal users can also see the difference between the input and the output signals. You can also listen to the audio that is being removed by the codec.

'Mastering engineers are going to love the ability to determine the best settings for the job at hand. Ultimately, the goal is to strike the right balance between audio fidelity and file size. Nothing else allows you to accomplish this task as well as the Pro-Codec.' (*Resolution* V10.5). ■

Contact
SONNOX, UK:
Website: www.sonnoxplugins.com

ALSO NOMINATED: Waves Kramer Master Tape; Sound Toys Devil-Loc; Universal Audio Ampex ATR-102; McDSP 6030 Ultimate Compressor

QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
Visual Controller

Neyrinck V-Control Pro

V-Control Pro is a fader controller that can be used with most major DAWs — Pro Tools 7 upwards, Logic 9, Cubase, Digital Performer, FL Studio, Ableton Live, Reaper, Reason, Sonar, Studio One and Tracktion. It uses the multitouch capabilities of the iPad allowing multiple faders to be controlled at the same time, which is a definite improvement over trying to use a mouse on each fader. Another fundamental benefit is the ability to connect to the DAW wirelessly allowing control from anywhere in the studio.

While mixing on a piece of glass has its limitations the one overriding attraction is the potential to control many different applications from one controller with limitless user interface possibilities.

The nice thing about the Ney-Fi wireless driver is that it is the same driver for all DAWs so there is no need to launch different versions. Once the Ney-Fi software is installed you just need to run it before starting your DAW and then configure the V-Control Pro in your DAW. Essentially it acts as a Mackie controller, hence the universal support for many leading DAWs.

Using V-Control Pro with Pro Tools 9 LE, the track names all show on the V-Control channel strips and the faders become live. In terms of controllable features you get transport (including record and the online button), 8 faders with audio metering, solo/mute, channel Rec enable, an assignable pan/send rotary controller and a channel insert control to allow plug-in instantiation and control. Individual channel automation mode switches are a really useful addition. On the right hand side there are global controls for edit/mix window switching, input switching for recording, group suspension and automation suspension. In other words all the useful bits from Avid's hardware controllers. There's even a button that gives you a numeric keypad replica with all the Pro Tools shortcut keys marked and an extra application-specific edit window with many useful functions. Banking through mixes larger than 8 faders wide is achieved with bank buttons or finger swipes.

The best feature by far of V-Control is what Neyrinck calls the V Window; this should make hardware DAW controller manufacturers extremely nervous. The V Window is opened by a single button tap and allows access to any open window on your Mac, which means that any plug-in window you have open will be rendered on your iPad with all the controls editable by your fingers! You can take the V Window full screen on the iPad and even zoom into the plug-in using pinch. This is the ultimate in plug-in control for any DAW as you are interacting directly with the plug-in — anyone who has tried to change EQ settings on a hardware controller will appreciate this feature. Another side benefit of the V Window is that you can select any open window, so you can view any other apps running on your Mac. The V Window is unique and fantastic to use. Again the performance is excellent as it bypasses the antiquated and limited HUI protocol and acts like a remote control screen sharing app within a DAW controller. Brilliant design.

'If you don't have an iPad then here's the perfect excuse to get one especially if you need a DAW controller.' *Resolution* V11.4.

Contact
NEYRINCK, USA:
Website: www.vcontrolpro.com

ALSO NOMINATED: RTW TM3 TouchMonitor; DK-Technologies DK1; Waves WLM.

QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
Interface

Merging Technologies Horus

The Horus Networked Audio Interface is a comprehensive audio router and format convertor, a benchmark in transparent A-D conversion, a 'pristine' microphone preamplifier and an input and output connection node to Ravenna IP Audio Networks. Horus is the new primary I-O interface for Merging's audio software and Merging users can take advantage of connection to the Horus unit, over Ravenna Networks, using the MassCore Audio Engine. But to enable the use of the unit with other systems there are ASIO and CoreAudio drivers that will allow for connection into the Ravenna network and the Horus interface as a front end.

Horus is capable of handling 182 inputs, 202 outputs, works from 44.1kHz to 192kHz, permits signal routing from any input to any combination of outputs and works as standard as a MADI/AES A-D/D-A. There's a touchscreen for local access and a browser-based remote using a web enabled device in a unit that can have dual redundant power supplies, adopts a modular design for analogue and digital I-O configuration and boasts a latency from input to output of less than 1ms.

Available modules include an A-DC with mic/line input and a D-AC. ■

Contact
MERGING TECHNOLOGIES, SWITZERLAND:
Website: www.merging.com

ALSO NOMINATED:
RME Fireface UCX; Lynx Studio Technologies Hilo

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EQ4

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resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
EQ

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–Dave Pensado
Grammy Award-Winning Mixer

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QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
EQ

Maag Audio EQ4

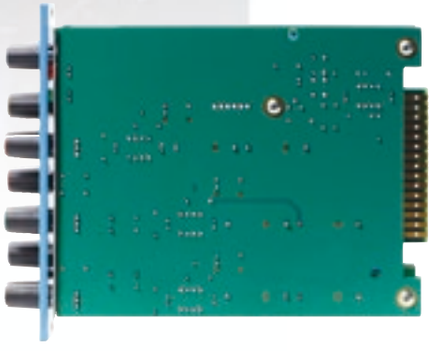
The Maag Audio EQ4 is a single channel 6-band equaliser compatible with 500-series rack systems. It features an Air Band shelf boost from 2.5-40kHz of the type that was first introduced in NTI and Nightpro gear. Maag Audio was founded by recording engineer Cliff Maag, who is an inventor of the NTI EQ3 and the Nightpro PreQ3 and EQ3D. He was also the president of research and development during the early years of NTI and Nightpro. The Air Band was a well-respected element of the original NTI and Nightpro equipment and it is now available in the EQ4 and PREQ4 500-series modules from Maag Audio.

The EQ4 is known for its transparency and top end presence — EQ adjustments are obtained with minimal phase shift and detent controls allow for easy recallable settings.

The EQ4 cannot be described as an 'ordinary' EQ and the way the bands are arranged and interact causes you to employ EQ and approach EQing in a slightly different manner. The EQ4's band passes all interact with each other and increasing the Air Band gain will also increase the overall gain to a small extent. This is normal and is a by-product of the design and happens because of the summing of the AIR Band with all of the other bands. This boost can be compensated for, if desired, by clicking down on the other five bands by equal amounts.

The control layout is straightforward yet controls powerful tonal shaping. The AIR Band is a +15dB boost-only shelf at 2.5, 5, 10, 20, and 40kHz with the frequencies below the shelf peaks also being affected due to the transitional slope. There's also a +15dB boost and -4dB cut 2.5kHz shelf and +15dB/-4.5dB bell bands at 650Hz, 160Hz, 40Hz and 10Hz. These are complemented by an EQ bypass switch and LED indicators for signal present and peak activity.

It's worth mentioning that the PREQ4 also boasts an Air Band section which in this case is matched to a microphone preamp offering 65dB of adjustable gain, phase reverse, a 70Hz high pass filter, +48V phantom power, and a -20dB pad. ■



Contact
MAAG AUDIO, USA:
Website: www.maagaudio.com

ALSO NOMINATED:
Dave Hill Designs Europa 1; MCAudioLab SHD2ch.

QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
Microphone

DPA Reference Standard

The new DPA range marks a significant shift for the company, as it's modular in nature, featuring a range of preamplifiers and capsules that can be freely interchanged and combined. While some of these components have a certain familiarity about them, there are also some less familiar additions. DPA has made a clear decision that the output stages of the new reference standard series should be transformerless.

Starting with the preamplifiers, the 'A' variant is a familiar pencil design with a -20dB pad. The MMP-C preamplifier is the most compact of the three and while it loses the -20dB pad there are changes internally. The MMP-A and MMP-C employ 'Active Drive' — essentially an impedance balanced (not symmetrical signal balanced) output stage. The MMP-B looks just like half of the old 4017 shotgun and has two rotating rings that switch a low cut filter and high frequency shelving boost.

The capsules are split into two categories — derivations of the familiar 4000 series and the new 2000 series. The MMC4017 capsule is a shotgun design while the MMC4006 omni is a conventional, single diaphragm pressure design, and ships with three different grids to modify the on-axis and diffuse field HF response. Other capsule options are the MMC4011 cardioid and the MMC4015 wide cardioid.

The 2000 series, the MMC2006 omni and MMC2011 cardioid, differ as they leverage the capsule technology employed in the DPA miniature microphone ranges.

'Reinventing and refreshing what some would regard as classic microphones was always going to be a challenge but I think that DPA has managed this extremely capably.' *Resolution* V11.1 ■

Contact
DPA, DENMARK:
Website: www.dpamicrophones.com

ALSO NOMINATED: Microtech-Gefell M 930 Ts; AEA KU4; SE Electronics RN17; Sennheiser MKH8070.

Pro-Codec Version 2

Real Time Codec Auditioning

QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
Plug-in

Master directly for iTunes

The Fraunhofer Pro-Codec from Sonnox has changed the way we encode audio for online distribution, enabling audio codecs such as MP3 and AAC to be auditioned in real-time!

Now, with Version 2, Apple's iTunes Plus codec is included, so you can mix directly for iTunes, saving time and ensuring high quality output during the mixing process.

For a list of other new features in Version 2 visit:
www.sonnox.com/procodec

Sonnox
www.sonnox.com
Fraunhofer IIS

QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
DAW

Presonus Studio One 2

There are three versions of Studio One: Artist, Producer and Professional. Professional adds 64-bit processing, the Project (mastering) section, QuickTime and SoundCloud support, further native effects and a Melodyne licence.

The biggest boast is the integration of Melodyne. Selecting an audio clip and selecting the context-menu item Edit With Melodyne causes Melodyne to open in the lower window area and begin the detection process. A feature missed in the earlier version was transient detection and this has been implemented incorporating an 'Audio Bend' function and integrating audio quantisation and groove extraction using Studio One's straightforward drag-and-drop methodology. Another new feature is Track Comping — looped takes each create a new hidden Layer and you can then unpack them to see all the takes onscreen. Swiping sections and promoting them to the main track can be achieved easily with mouse dragging and shortcuts.

Another excellent improvement is that the audio and MIDI editors are now detachable from the main window, so for multiple monitor setups or just simply maximising the editing area this is a great boon. The File Browser has been improved so that you can search within particular locations, and SoundCloud is now integrated directly with the browser. The extensive included plug-ins have been further enhanced and there is comprehensive control surface support and automation.

The clean design seems to present familiar concepts learned in other DAWs to experienced users but a beginner will find this the easiest DAW to learn.

'The version 2 upgrade is significant and enhances the experience in a number of ways. Do take a look.' (*Resolution* V11.1). ■

Contact
PRESONUS, USA:
Website: www.presonus.com

ALSO NOMINATED: Avid Pro Tools 10

The Nightingale the magic number is 3

See us at AES Stand 1038 27-29 Oct. San Francisco

mps See us Stand 8 The Emirates Stadium, London 9-10th Nov. 2012

2 mic. amps/ equalisers and compressor in one!

Perhaps the most innovative studio product to date.
Intuitive and easy to use. The latest and most advanced development of Phoenix style vari-mu compressor. Mic/line amps feature our Varislope eqs, phase reverse and DI inputs and can be combined internally into the compressor or used separately. Small and portable making it valuable for stage use. ie. 2 vocal mics into 1 compressor (use phase reverse on 1). Rack with a Freebird eq., or a 2nd Nightingale to give a stereo mix buss compressor and 4 valve equalisers!

"The Nightingale is a superb triumph of British Design"
George Shilling review RESOLUTION September 2012

THERMIONIC CULTURE
SIMPLY THE FINEST OUTBOARD EQUIPMENT
Powered by Thermionic Valves

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www.thermionicculture.com
Handcrafted in Harlow, Essex, UK

QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
Dynamic

Thermionic Culture Nightingale

Thermionic Culture's range has never followed convention but instead seems always to come from a slightly lateral way of thinking. Following the Freebird, which housed three bands of EQ in a half rack 4U case, comes this, the Nightingale, in a similar case but providing instead two valve recording channels plus a mono valve compressor. It manages to achieve dual microphone, line and DI preamplification, dual EQ and filter channels, along with summing and valve compression based on Thermionic's enduring classic Phoenix model, although with a little more 'bite'.

The front panel has Bakelite-style knobs, some acting as switches and that square meter. The three sections are arranged as two mic channels (designated A and B) and their associated EQ, with the compressor in-between. The rear panel signal connectors are three inputs and three outputs on good quality XLRs.

The Compressor section is a simplified design based on the Phoenix. Using a rotary switch, its input can be sourced in four different ways: Line selects the dedicated rear XLR input; A and B select the outputs from the respective mic channels; and A+B sums both channels together at the compressor input. The Threshold rotary switch has off and three numbered positions (running the opposite way to the Phoenix.) Here, 3 is the equivalent of 1 on the Phoenix (maximum compression). Attack is fixed at around 60ms, where 4 would be on the Phoenix's scale of 1-11. This gives a plectrum bass guitar some extra attack, and sounds natural on vocals. Release has three positions, Fast being 60ms, Medium is 150ms and Slow is 500ms.

On fast release the compressor sounds big, glowing and magical, yet still fairly invisible, even with 6 or 9dB reduction. The slower settings tend to make the compression more apparent, which is not always a bad thing, and Medium was best for smoothing bass guitar. The Compressor Gain knob is an input level, and this provides up to 28dB of gain on the way in. The Nightingale's compressor section and simple but effective EQ give the unit a uniquely useful combination.

'The Nightingale is a superb triumph of British design. It has a unique combination of features and you will wonder why nothing quite like this has ever existed before.' *Resolution* V11.6.

Contact

THERMIONIC CULTURE, UK:
Website: www.thermionicculture.com

ALSO NOMINATED: Dave Hill Designs Titan; Elysia Xpressor; Inward Connections TSL-4.

QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
Winner
Preamp

Universal Audio 4-710D

UA's Twin-Finity design allows continuously variable, phase-aligned blending between a solid-state and valve-based signal path and the 4-710D provides four channels of such preamplification in a 2U. Analogue I-O on the rear of the unit gives, per channel, mic and line level inputs, a balanced output and a switchable insert send and return. There are also high impedance DI inputs for each of the four channels on the front panel. The 'D' suffix indicates that the unit is equipped, as standard, with an 8-channel A-D convertor. A toggle sets the bit depth to 24 or 16 bits and output is in AES-EBU as four pairs on a DB25, or in ADAT Optical.

Front panel controls are an input gain and output level pot for each channel that sandwich a smaller pot that sets the 'blend' between the solid-state and valve circuits. Technically, the input amp is a pure solid-state transimpedance design, which simultaneously feeds a solid-state and a single-ended class-A triode gain stage. The blend control simply balances the proportion of each of these stages fed to the summed output.

Other controls provided are phantom power, a -15dB pad, mic/line selector switch, polarity reverse, insert in, and a 75Hz high pass filter. The remaining controls select what the channel meters show, and engage the hidden gem of this box — an 1176-type compressor built into each channel. The only parameters you get with the compressor are Off, Fast or Slow — threshold is fixed at -10dbU and ratio at 4:1. Located post the initial input gain, but pre the valve and solid-state stages and associated output level controls, you can hit the fixed threshold as hard or gently as you like — perfectly natural to 1176 users.

'UA has created a unit whose sum is far greater than its individual parts. Four channels of preamplification/compression is a good balance between channel count and ultimate flexibility, and the tonal variation on offer here means that there will be few occasions when you wished you'd packed something else.' *Resolution* V10.6.

Contact
UNIVERSAL AUDIO, USA:
Website: www.uaudio.com

ALSO NOMINATED: Dave Hill Designs Europa 1; Radial EXTC Reamp; Cartec PRE-Q5; RND 5017.

Connect to your Mac or PC
Control your favourite apps
Create a masterpiece

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QUALITY & INNOVATION
resolution
AWARDS 2012
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Desk-Controller

Smart AV Tango 2

The Smart Console introduced the concept of the 'ARC' touch-sensitive display that offers rapid access to a large number of channels and enables parameters to be applied to multiple channels quickly. The first Tango took the concept further by applying it to the top of a large touchscreen where a wipe across the top enables you to scroll across 240 channels and gives almost instant access to any channel. Tango 2 takes the game to another level with its enhanced user interface.

From the layout to the OLED displays and the clear and positive buttons this console surface is a tactile delight. Control from the Tango jog wheel is excellent, which is a big deal for those who grew up taking superb jog/shuttle performance for granted. Up to four 12-fader extension units can be added and assembled in any physical order to create a larger console.

The success or failure of a DAW controller is all about workflow and this is the first that could approach the productivity levels of dedicated workstations and mixing consoles. While it is perfectly possible to sit down at a Tango 2 and enjoy some of what it offers in minutes, this is a controller that merits study in depth. Just as the best of the previous generation hardware workstations required a lot of learning to achieve really slick operation and maximum productivity so the Tango 2 will repay your efforts.

After a while it is easy to forget that Tango 2 is a 'mere' controller because it feels like an expensive console. This can be a little deceptive at first but if the workstation mixer can do it, you can almost certainly control it from Tango. Furthermore, Tango 2 has a DVI input that can be used to display one of the DAW screen outputs. Better still, the touchscreen control works with the DAW.

If you are a Pyramix, Nuendo or Logic user you are well served by Tango 2 with comprehensive native or near native support. For Final Cut Pro the Mackie Control protocol applies while Pro Tools users are restricted to the HUI protocol.

'Once you get away from the idea that it is a "mixing console" in the conventional sense and appreciate that it is a carefully targeted workstation controller, its power becomes apparent. With the Tango 2, Smart AV has perhaps produced the missing link between the old paradigms and something far more revolutionary.' (*Resolution* V11.1) ■

Contact
SMART AV, AUSTRALIA:
Website: www.smartav.net

ALSO NOMINATED: Digico SD11B; Roland M-480

QUALITY & INNOVATION
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AWARDS

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2011 Resolution Awards Winners

DAW
Avid Pro Tools 9

Desk-Controller
Solid State Logic Nucleus

Dynamics
API The Channel Strip

EQ
Dangerous Music BAX EQ

Interface
Solid State Logic MADI-X8

Microphone
Schoeps SuperCMIT

Monitoring
Neumann KH 120

Plug-in
Flux IRCAM SPAT

Preamp
Grace Design M103

Processor
Universal Audio UAD-2 Satellite

Recorder
Endless Analog CLASP

2010 Resolution Awards Winners

DAW
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Audient Zen

Dynamics
Anamod AM670

EQ
Elysia Museq

Interface
Riedel MediorNet

Microphone
DPA 5100

Monitoring
Genelec 8260A

Plug-in
CEDAR DNS One

Preamp
Schoeps VSR 5 U

Processor
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Recorder
JoeCo BBR1 Black Box

2009 Resolution Awards Winners

DAW
Merging Pyramix 6 MassCore

Desk-Controller
Euphonix Artist MC

Dynamic
Tube-Tech RM8/CM 1A

EQ
Thermionic Culture The Rooster

Interface
Prism Sound Orpheus

Microphone
Schoeps CCM 22, MK22

Monitoring
Primacoustic Recoil Stabilizer

Plug-in
UAD/SPL Transient Designer

Preamp
Focusrite Liquid 4PRE

Processor
Bricasti M7

Recorder
Sound Devices 788T