◄ ZPLANE ÉLASTIQUEAAX

élastiqueAAX is zplane's time and pitch manipulation AudioSuite plug-in (only) for Pro Tools. It runs offline AAX 32/AAX64 faster than real-time and will time stretch from 25% to 400% and pitch shift +/- 24 semi-tones while preserving formants. It will process multi-channel (up to eight audio channels at a time) for synchronized processing and comes with factory presets for typical film pull-ups/pull-downs.

As a music mixer, my main interest in élastiqueAAX is for both tempo and song key shifting multi-track masters, entire music mixes or as a compositional adjunct to audition already recorded demo tracks in different keys or tempos. I am also interested in using it to pre-process individual guitars and recorded loops tracks for use in other keys and tempos.

My first test was extreme. I time-stretched all the tracks of a multi-track song in Pro Tools HDX 12.7.1. I selected eight tracks at a time and made six passes of eight tracks each for a total of 48-tracks. The song went from about 3:15 minutes to 2:45 minutes in length.

For pitch shifting, there are no controls for selecting a particular algorithm for monophonic, polyphonic or percussion sources as in other software and DAWs. You can elect to preserve formants or not and the Source Material Voicing fader ranges from a bass clef to a treble clef depending whether fundamentals are lower or higher frequencies.

I am well pleased to report that élastiqueAAX worked flawlessly and did everything I expected quickly and with the best possible sound. And now with eight tracks at a time and faster than real-time, I can freely shift all tracks in a surround mix, multi-track recordings or several stereo mix versions quickly and easily.

I'm highly recommending this to music makers and songwriters for all the possible creative uses. élastiqueAAX runs on OSX 10.7 and higher, Windows 7, 8, & 10 and Pro Tools 10 or higher. It sells for $399 as download.

products.zplane.de/elastiqueaax

► DIGITECH CABDRYVR DUAL CABINET SIMULATOR PEDAL

The Digitech® CabDryVR pedal utilizes 24-bit A/D/A conversion and impulse responses of seven guitar cabinets and seven bass cabinets—14 different cabinet simulations within this standard size pedal.

CabDryVR has dual inputs and outputs and works as two completely separate simulator channels named Cab A and Cab B—you could have one for bass and one for guitar. With Cab B's input unused, a single guitar or bass signal coming into Cab A will produce two separate cabinet simulations out of Cab A and Cab B.

Some of the cabinets are: Cab 3 a British Green Slant 4X12 or choose Cab 1 for a Vintage American 2X12 cabinet. The seven bass cabinet choices include Cab 6 called Vintage Fridge 8x10 or Cab 7 called Blonde Basement 2X12.

My main interest is for music production and mixing. Being able to quickly audition cabinet sims with CabDryVR is an awesome way to get just the right "size" of guitar sound. I use CabDryVR as part of a guitar/bass tracking recording chain or in my mixing/remix process.

For recording an overdriven stereo guitar I used a Nexi Dutch Screamer pedal connected before CabDryVR and then I panned the two outputs hard left and right in the mix. I had guitar Cab 2 Vintage British 2X12 (VOX AC30 sound) on the left and Cab 5 called Heavy American 4X12 (a slant cabinet with 30-watt vintage speakers) on the right side. This is a big and real-sounding guitar sound!

The speaker models are excellent and a great way to get a good guitar or bass amp sound without using an actual cabinet. The DigiTech CabDryVR sells for $229.95 MSRP and requires a 9-volt power supply such as the Harman PS0913DC sold separately.

digitech.com/en/products/cabdryvr

◄ INGRAM ENGINEERING EQ50

The EQ50 is a mastering-quality analog three-band 500-series equalizer module. I received two for review and they were immediately connected to the output of the stereo bus of my SSL Sigma Summing system. I also used them on individual tracks in the mix.

The EQ50 has a continuously adjustable low cut filter with a 20 Hz to 1kHz range. It rolls off or cuts 6dB per octave. The middle control is called a See-Saw (sometimes called a "tilt") equalizer with a selectable "pivot" frequency of either 400Hz or 1kHz.

In a See-Saw equalizer, a single control knob boosts and cuts at the same time up to +/- 16dB centered at a pivot frequency. The EQ50's third band is a high cut filter that is also continuously adjustable from 5kHz to over 200kHz and also rolls off or cuts 6dB per octave.

200kHz? The upper harmonics of transient laden audio sources—the fast attack of drums, pianos, and percussion instruments range from just inside the range of human hearing to well above our ability to hear.

I used the See-Saw mid-range section set to 1kHz to add a touch of "cut" and, at the same time, lower the frequencies below 1kHz. This is a touchy control used on program material this way—a little goes a long way and I loved it!

The EQ50 is meticulously designed to maintain an accurate phase/amplitude response for a fully transparent signal path when in circuit. Each Ingram Engineering EQ50 sells for $455 MSRP.

ingramengineering.net/products_eq50.php

BARRY RUDOLPH is a recording engineer/mixer who has worked on over 30 gold and platinum records. He has recorded and/or mixed Lynyrd Skynyrd, Hall & Oates, Pat Benatar, Rod Stewart, the Corrs and more. Barry has his own futuristic music mixing facility and loves teaching audio engineering at Musician's Institute, Hollywood, CA. He is a lifetime Grammy-voting member of NARAS and a contributing editor for *Mix Magazine*. barryrudolph.com