

Ingram Engineering EQ50 500 Series Equalizer

\$415; www.ingramengineering.net



We took our first look at Eric Ingram and Ingram Engineering back in June of 2013, when Scott Dorsey was impressed by Ingram's initial offering, the MPA685 2-channel microphone preamp (and Scott is not easily impressed). In March of 2015 I had the pleasure of taking the MPA575 for a spin; it was one of the first channel strips with a preamp, EQ and compressor in a single slot API 500 Series module.

This time we're taking a look at Ingram's second 500 Series piece, the EQ50. As its name suggests, it is a 500 Series equalizer, but with a twist. With just three continuous pots and two buttons, it's best described as a specialty EQ. It features a high and low pass filter, labeled as Low Cut Freq (20 Hz–1 kHz) and High Cut Freq (5–200 kHz) both a slope of 6 dB/octave.

The other EQ parameter is a See Saw/Pivot EQ. This style of equalizer does just what the name implies; the selectable center or pivot frequency can be set to 400 Hz

or 1 kHz, and as you boost the high end with a clockwise twist, you lessen the low frequencies in equal proportion. A counterclockwise twist does the opposite, bolstering the lows and lessening the high end. The EQ50 also offers a front panel EQ in/bypass control.

Internally it has a well laid out circuit board design that is minimal and sonically transparent. It has balanced ins and outs, and can handle a maximum input level of +20 dBu with Total Harmonic Distortion 0.002% at that level and –98 dBu input referred noise.

Despite the simplicity of its controls, this device is quite powerful. The high and low cuts extend much farther than many found in channel strips or other EQ units, and the pivot EQ is so dramatic that it needs a word of warning—even the smallest movements yield a huge level of change to the sound.

EQs such as this one are good alternatives/additions to conventional equalizers. The EQ50 is great choice for how quickly and simply it can massage a bass guitar, kick drum, or snare track, seating them in a mix or pushing them forward. It's also great for adding highpass filtering to vocals and acoustic guitar, as well as taking the bite out of cymbals or tambourines with its lowpass filter. Putting all of these EQ tools together in a simple package, the Ingram EQ50 is a great addition to any 500 Series rig. —PV

Pop Audio Pop Filter Studio Edition

\$99.99; www.popaudio.co.uk

One of the non-negotiable studio accessories we all need sooner rather than later is the humble pop screen. Pop filters serve two general purposes. They protect the mic from plosive bursts of air brought on by Ps, Ts and even spitty S sounds. They also allow us to regulate how close a singer or instrument should be to a mic... a performance spacer, if you will.

Sadly, in many studios, pop screens are homemade affairs of panty hose stretched over a bent hanger... cheap, but kind of gross. Even if the panty hose were bought new, clients still wonder where they came from. Another option is to buy one, usually the cheapest one the engineer can find... a thin plastic circle with two layers of nylon stretched over it, attached to a wimpy gooseneck and clamp.

Over the years, other varieties have "popped up," substituting either metal mesh or thick porous foam, each with its own benefits. The downside of most designs lies not in the screening material but with the mount and clamp, which get loose and worn out with age. To avoid "pop screen sag," I threw the goose neck clamp of my last pop filter away and have been screwing the screen to a second mic stand, which then takes up more room in my iso booth. The new Pop Filter Studio Edition from Pop Audio addresses all of the above in one new product.

