

Eventide Clockworks Legacy Collection

Eventide has built its reputation on some groundbreaking analogue and digital hardware but in its first foray in to plug-ins it's gone back to its roots with emulations of its early boxes for Pro Tools Mix and HD.

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THE LEGACY COLLECTION BUNDLES plug-in versions of Eventide's Instant Phaser, Instant Flanger, Omnipressor and the H910 and H949 harmonizers. Having never used any of the original units, I found it hard to see the reasoning behind developing accurate emulations of 30-year-old analogue products, but I was pleasantly surprised.

For people not familiar with the originals, here's a brief rundown of what they did, complete with approximate vintage. The Instant Phaser was developed in 1971 and was one of the first tapeless phase effects units. The Instant Flanger was released in 1976 as the 'ultimate tapeless flanger', retaining most of the attractive characteristics of tape flanging. The Omnipressor was released in 1971 and was way ahead of its time as a very advanced dynamics processor, capable of expanding, compressing and dynamic reversal (making low level signals louder than loud ones). Then in 1975 came the H910, the world's first harmonizer and the first digital product for Eventide. This was followed in 1977 by the H949; probably the first digital multi-effects unit, offering harmonizer, delay, flange and some unique reverse effects.

The Clockworks package consists of an installation CD, Ilok SIM card and a T-shirt. You will need either a Pro Tools Mix or HD system running version 5.3 or higher, and an Ilok key (approximately UK£40) to authorise the plug-in. This is currently the trend with all plug-in developers, but most offer a floppy alternative, Eventide does not. Installation is fairly straightforward and after some DAE memory re-assignment (*And presumably installation of the T-Shirt. Ed*), you're ready to go.

The Instant Phaser and Flanger can only be used in a mono track, as the originals only had a mono input, but they do have stereo outputs. The Omnipressor, H910 and H949 can be used in mono or stereo tracks and include linking. All the plug-ins are fully automatable, which allows some creative effects to be achieved. All five processes will also work at 48kHz and 96kHz, with the Instant Phaser and Omnipressor going up to 192kHz. This does limit the number you can use at once, details can be found on the Eventide website.

The Instant Phaser is definitely instant. The controls are a little unconventional to begin with, but after reading the manual, things become clearer. The depth



control ranges from total phasing to a 50/50 mix, with the rest of the phasing controlled by the 4-position switch on the right hand side. Manual activates the phase change control on the plug-in. Oscillator, which allows control of the oscillator, ranges from slow phasing effects to fast doppler/vibrato effects. Envelope allows control of threshold and release, allowing phasing effects based on the dynamic content of the input signal. Finally, Remote permits MIDI control of the phasing effect.

The graphic design of the plug-in is excellent, with accurate replicas of the original front panels. I tried the Instant Phaser on vocal and guitar tracks, with excellent results. Once you get used to the controls and how they interact with the function switch, a wide range of phasing and tremolo effects can be achieved. Noise levels are non-existent and the stereo image from a mono source is superb. I've not heard a phaser this good as a plug-in.

The same can also be said of the Instant Flanger, but with the added bonus of being able to combine the

various control methods instead of switching. This means you can set a manual flange rate and also have MIDI modulation controlling the amount of flange interactively. With the addition of an automated feedback control, some great effects can be achieved quickly and easily.

The Omnipressor is an interesting dynamics processor. Instead of having separate expansion and compression functions, the two are combined on a central function control. When the function knob is turned anticlockwise the gain of signals under the threshold setting is severely reduced and the signals above are increased, effectively increasing dynamic range. This works well on music, but I also tried it on some atmos recordings. With careful adjustment some definite improvements were possible. The presets are also excellent as a quick start.

The H910 is a bit of a mystery to me. Why has Eventide faithfully reproduced a basic ± 1 octave harmonizer, including pitch change 'glitches', with a digital delay thrown in? I can only assume that this plug-in is included for historical completeness but I fail to see the relevance it has to the market. Despite the criticism, the controls are simple enough, and the addition of MIDI pitch control should appeal to someone.

Finally the H949 – this combines a delay, flanger and harmonizer in a single unit, with some interaction between them all. As a straightforward harmonizer the quality is not that great, with several HF artifacts appearing at the shifting extremes. The flanger is reasonable, but my favourite is the random feature, which when combined with the original signal, creates a good ADT effect on vocals.

The Eventide Clockworks Legacy bundle is definitely a good example of using modern DSP techniques to emulate classic studio gear. My only doubt is in the harmonizer area, as things have definitely improved since H910 and H949 days, including Eventide's own excellent state-of-the-art signal processors. I don't quite get the point of revisiting these. Much to my surprise Instant Phaser, Flanger and the Omnipressor are excellent processors in their own right, bringing a unique take to common processes. It's a shame you

have to buy all plug-ins together, I'm sure people would prefer to pay £80-100 for each process, rather than UK£500 for all of them. I think I'll wait for a DSP4000B plug-in. ■

PROS Great looking plug-in design; Instant Phaser and Flanger are different takes on common effects; Omnipressor is a unique dynamics processor.

CONS Only available on Pro Tools Mix and HD with Ilok authorisation; Harmonizers are hardly state of the art; only available as a bundle.

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