

PSP Prozilla

Plugzilla currently ships with an evaluation version of this suite of VST plug-ins that will not run on any other host than this machine. After 25 uses you are encouraged to buy the plug-ins from the PSP website. **GEORGE SHILLING** goes from Plugzilla to Prozilla.

THERE ARE NINE DIFFERENT plug-ins included in this comprehensive suite from Polish company PSP, mostly useful as mastering processors (Euro 512).

AutoComp is designed to emulate classic opto-electronic compression. Ratio is apparently fixed, while Knee is available as a percentage setting for the range below the threshold level, and there is an option between RMS and Peak operation — both modes sound great. With Plugzilla 'zoomed', all parameters are available on one page, with two knobs' LEDs used for metering of Gain Reduction and Peak Level. A Time knob adjusts attack and release simultaneously, and there is an element of automatic adjustment. Gain is automatically made up — the make-up seems a little over-generous at times, although there is a knob to trim this! AutoComp sounds remarkably analogue-like, and is quick to set up.

EasyLimit is a brick wall limiter with just four knobs for two variable controls, plus bypass and a meter. The controls are Input level and Release time. The threshold is fixed — level coming out appears to remain below -6dBfs. Release time is oddly shown as a percentage, and again there is an automatic element to this. It sounds good, and by tweaking the release you can vary the degree of pumping. The sound remains pleasantly crunchy at fast settings.

MasterQ comprises parametric EQ with high and low filters (12 or 24dB/octave), high and low shelving bands, and three parametric bell curves with slightly



different ranges, although these all cover almost all of the audio spectrum. Default frequencies and Q settings are sensibly chosen though.

Q settings for the shelves changes the slope and includes overshoot and undershoot settings. In-built 192kHz capability (although Plugzilla is presently only 96kHz capable) ensures accurate EQ with ranges up to 30kHz. Bands have ranges of +/-24dB and there is an optional FAT mode that uses double sampling technology for higher accuracy HF filtrations at the expense of slightly increased latency.

Extremely small boosts and cuts are easy to achieve accurately with Plugzilla's knobs. There is even a LimSat setting with a choice of seven soft-clipping and

limiting algorithms (or thru). All bands include bypass knobs, and the only downside of this great sounding and incredibly powerful EQ is all the page-scrolling necessary on Plugzilla's front panel, although this is probably no more of a nuisance than mouse-controlling the DAW equivalent.

MixPressor includes more possibilities than the aforementioned AutoComp, but apparently works on



broadly similar principles. The Compress knob seems to operate much like a threshold knob. Make-up starts with Auto then moves into a 0 to 47dB range, but there seems to be a slight software glitch that makes the Auto mode display 'Auto' when in fact there is 0dB gain.

This plug includes a sidechain filter with a listen facility, and separate Attack, Hold and Release settings, the Hold setting effectively providing LA-2A-style dual release times. A Delay setting (on or off) seems to act as a look-ahead and contains transients more effectively, and there is a Limit or Saturate option before output that stops things getting nasty. It sounds much like the AutoComp but the extra knobs give the user a few more options to tweak.

MixSaturator adds distortion and enriching harmonics to mixes or individual instruments. There are three Valve settings, three Tape settings, and one



Clip setting — a surprisingly gentle emulation of digital clipping. There are also separate Low and High Frequency bands where you can select frequencies and then drive these bands separately; you can then compensate for level differences of these bands with gain trims. Overall Drive level plus Input and Output trims are provided, along with a Mix setting. The analogue distortions are remarkably convincing, creating some juicy rich sounds... I still long for a good tape-hiss plug-in though!

MS is a simple XY to MS and MS to XY codec with

a Gain knob and channel swapping options.

StereoController comprises a bunch of tools for corrective mastering, such as phase reversal, L-R swap and Balance correction. The Sides setting cleverly uses the differential signal to balance the stereo signals without influencing centrally panned signals, and similarly Center moves the central elements without affecting the sides. Correlation and Balance meters are included on two of the knobs, and another knob controls a very accurate short delay for corrections between the channels.

StereoEnhancer uses differential signal adjustment and comb-filtering to enhance stereo width. There are several different modes and a comprehensive set of controls for tweaking the exact effect, including selection of the base frequency for the comb filtering and an Emphasis setting to use a high pass filter, reducing the effect of spatial enhancement on lower frequencies. A correlation meter is included, and there is also a mode for making mono signals into spatial stereo effects. This plug-in is great fun and works really well.

VintageWarmer is yet another compressor/limiter, this one including a 3-band multiband mode, and tape saturation effects. In single band mode, a three-band



EQ is available. The multiple bands are fully editable with individual settings for crossover frequencies, saturation effects and release times. ■

PROS Simple to operate; powerful and great sounding plug-ins; 96kHz.

CONS Plugzilla metering is poor; Prozilla won't run on any other VST host; Plugzilla's physical noise too loud for mastering rooms.

Contact

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