

# Waves Transform Bundle

Representing clever and interesting additions to the V4 range, the Transform combo brings together time, pitch and envelope processors.

**GEORGE SHILLING** doubles, morphs, shifts and then experiments with Trans-X.

**T**HE BRAND-NEW Transform plug-ins add a further four items to the extensive Waves V4 range. It is not immediately obvious what links the separate elements of this bundle, but they bring new techniques and algorithms to familiar processes. All are present in Mono and Stereo versions, with the Doubler and Morphoder also in Mono-in, Stereo-out versions. All come in the usual Waves format, with a 'Waveshell' that goes in the plug-ins folder, in DAE, VST and MAS variations to suit most common DAW packages.

The plug-ins use the proprietary preset method, rather than that of the host, and include usual Waves features, such as the useful A/B dual settings for quickly comparing two different settings. The Transform plugs came with a good bunch of presets, although as the review copies were beta demos, there was no documentation available. All Transform insert plugs include a useful meter with a peak margin readout and overload-hold indicator.

The Doubler2 is a two-voice doubler, with two separate voices each with a delay of up to 100ms (resolution 0.1ms) and a variable Feedback setting with variable high-pass filter, plus a pitch shift of +/- 100 cents and an additional 'octave down' setting. Finally, each voice has a pair of modulation settings for Depth and Rate, and there is a Modulation Reset button that could usefully be automated to synchronise the effects.

An overall EQ acts on both voices and comprises high and low shelves with a range of +12/-88dB variable over a full frequency range. Two clever graphical displays represent all settings, these include colour-coded blobs that can be grabbed to vary parameters.

Each voice and the direct signal can be trimmed in level and switched on and off, and there is an overall Gain slider. The direct signal has an Align setting that seems to delay the dry signal to match the minimum delay available, 7.3ms. The Doubler4 is identical but with two additional voices. The stereo versions of these add a Pan parameter to each voice while a third Graphic springs to life featuring blobs for stereo placement, Bypass and Gain.

The Morphoder is a great sounding vocoder. An internal seven-voice synth is provided with a mini graphic four-octave keyboard and 10 excellent presets, although there is no MIDI control. The Carrier can be selected from the internal synth, the inserted track or the sidechain input, while the Modulator can be the track or the sidechain.

An additional filterable Noise source provides a whispery sound strong in formants, great for adding vocal clarity. A mini mixer has sliders for Carrier, Modulator, Noise and 'Morph' (the vocoder output), each with Solo and Mute buttons. There are no separate frequency bands, as you find with a conventional vocoder, but instead the graphics are dominated by a comprehensive 5-band EQ that additionally shows a moving spectrum analyser of the signal. A handful of other parameters tweak the



character, and there is a stereo version of the plug that includes stereo noise and synth, with a Spread control for the latter.

As an insert, SoundShifter is a simple harmoniser, with some of the best sounding algorithms I have come across. Multiple displays enable simultaneous

view and control of the pitch with frequencies displayed in cycles (hertz) where you can set a source frequency, such as 440, and manipulate the destination, semitones and cents, musical intervals, and as a ratio with a slider.

The different algorithms are available from a menu, with a choice of Transient, Smooth, Sync and Punch. With the maximum available range set at an octave above or below the source, a little extra would have been useful. SoundShifter is quite different when used in its AudioSuite versions, and more akin to Serato Pitch'n'Time.

The parametric version includes similar pitch settings to the insert, plus time-related adjustments using all manner of scales, including SMPTE times, bars and samples. In the Graphical version things get even more interesting, with stretching of length and pitch variable during the selected audio. Pitch and Time graphs are superimposed, and nodes can be created and moved allowing all kinds of variations to be drawn.

The Trans-X plug-in is something of a cross between the SPL Transient Designer and a compressor/expander, but is really quite unique. The Wide version covers the full frequency range, while the Multi version includes four variable frequency bands, with separate Range and Sensitivity settings for each band. The former sets the maximum amplitude variation (above or below zero) and the latter determines how much effect there is.

The other settings are time related, designated Duration and Release. This plug-in produces all sorts of interesting results on a wide range of sources, taking the spikiness out of vocals or drums, or conversely bringing life to flat sounding loops and instruments.

I loved it in 'expander' mode, it works in a way conventional expanders never seem to. The multiband version is great for bringing life to sources where individual elements are already mixed and squashed, with broad or precise dynamic tonal changes possible – de-essing is an obvious use. All versions include parameter settings and graphical displays with elements that can be grabbed and moved.

These are all useful additions to the arsenal, and represent some of the best sounding plug-ins I've heard. ■

**PROS** Great sounding harmoniser and vocoder; useful doublers; interesting and unusual dynamics with Trans-X.

**CONS** No MIDI control of Morphoder synth.

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