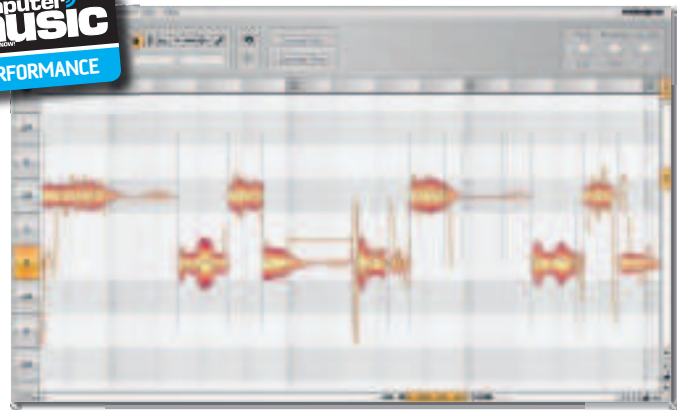


Mac PC What is it? Plug-in version of Melodyne **PRICE: £230**

CONTACT: Arbitr, 020 8207 7880 WWW.celemony.com INFO: Upgrades and crossgrades available

CELEMONY SOFTWARE Melodyne Plugin



▲ Melodyne's lush display goes to work on another errant vocal part

A plug-in version of Melodyne is what many of Celemony's users have been waiting for, but now it's here, will we still be singing its praises?

► SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

PC: PII 1GHz, 512MB RAM, Windows XP (SP2), VST/RTAS host application

Mac: G3 1GHz, 512MB RAM, OS X 10.3.9, VST/AU/RTAS host application

► TEST SYSTEMS

PC: Carillon AC-1 Pentium 4 3.4GHz, 2GB RAM, Windows XP SP2, Steinberg Cubase 4

Celemony's Melodyne software is undoubtedly very powerful, but having spoken to many people who've demoed it, our impression is that it's perceived as having a very steep learning curve. Although this is slightly unfair, in comparison to throwing a real-time pitch correction plug-in across a vocal track, using Melodyne can seem like a bit of an ordeal. Up until now, we've had to rely on ReWire to make it work with a host sequencer (even when using the Melodyne Bridge plug-in), and this has only added to the head-scratching of prospective users.

Now, at last, Celemony have delivered a truly integrated Melodyne plug-in (you guessed that from the name, right?) that can be used with any host that qualifies as VST, AU or RTAS plug-in compatible.

While Melodyne Studio is at its best when used as a standalone application and offers many more functions than basic pitch correction, it's a fact of life that, much of the time, it's used for doing precisely that. After all, the correction of dodgy vocals is

one of its specialities. We've always been fans of the Celemony approach to doing this, as it seems to produce genuinely natural-sounding results.

Bridging the gap

If you want a detailed overview of how Melodyne works, you'd best refer to the Melodyne 3 Studio review that we ran in **cm98**. What we'll say here, however, is that the plug-in works in a similar way to the 'Melodyne Bridge' that comes as part of the Studio version. What this means is that audio must be transferred into the plug-in before any processing can occur.

The process of using Melodyne Plugin, then, goes something like this: insert it on a track, locate the start of the material, click the Transfer button and press play on your sequencer. When you've stopped the playback, Melodyne will analyse the audio and a visual representation of the notes (called 'blobs') will be displayed in its window. For instant pitch correction, just choose Select All from the drop-down menu and click on the Correct Pitch button.

And that's it. In the main, the results are fantastic and require very little tweaking. Should you want to make further edits, however, the material can be transformed in numerous ways. Note, formant, pitch transition (bend), pitch modulation (vibrato), volume and note separation can all be tweaked, and the audio timing can follow host tempo changes and be corrected using the Quantize Time button. Some parameters can even be automated from the host (see *Note and formant automation* boxout).

In summary, Melodyne Plugin does exactly what we wanted and hoped for, and the great news is that it's also very easy to use. Job done, in other words. **cm**

► ALTERNATIVELY

Antares Auto-Tune 5

cm109 >> 8/10 >> £280

The first and most famous pitch correction plug-in was recently updated to version 5

Waves Tune

cm95 >> 9/10 >> £405

Tune is a relative newcomer but extremely powerful and quickly gaining in popularity

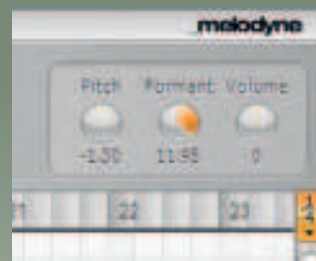
Note and formant automation

One of the more useful things about Melodyne Plugin is that it offers real-time host automation control. Three controls at the top-right of the window can be tweaked, and these enable you to adjust note pitch, formant pitch and volume for any given piece of audio. Right-clicking on either of the Pitch controls enables adjustment of the range of the effect, with options for ±2, ±12 and ±24 notes.

The automation system is as simple as your host allows and enables you to

manipulate all the audio within any one instance of the plug-in. Ultimately, this means you could have multiple tracks being pitchshifted in different ways at the same time, which is fantastic for strange vocal tricks, weird guitar tones, bizarre rhythmic loop manipulation and extreme sound design.

This is the side of Melodyne Plugin that goes beyond simple pitch correction and inspires experimentation. We encourage you to use it.



▲ Extreme automation: changing the note pitch and formant in real time

VERDICT

FOR

- + Great quality
- + Easy to use
- + Well integrated
- + Fun and creative
- + Useful host automation

AGAINST

- 'Loyalty' upgrade could be cheaper
- Lacks some of Melodyne Studio's advanced features

It may not be as all-encompassing as its standalone big brother, but Melodyne Plugin performs just as it should and has its own advantages

RATING

