

UAD 9.4 plugins

The latest update to the UAD software provides access to one of the most classic compressors of all time and one of the most requested emulations UAD have ever received. There are also new (and free!) amp sims and one of the dreamiest chorus effects you'll ever hear.



Empirical Labs EL8 Distressor £249

It's no exaggeration to say that Empirical Labs' Distressor is one of the most coveted compressors of all time. The clue is in the name: this isn't a traditional dynamics processor but instead one ready to impart a rich and highly flexible character onto any input signal you dare to send its way. What makes Distressor unique? For a start, it's capable of a super-fast response time, allowing it to decimate transient peaks and almost 'reimagine' sounds. The Ratio options include 'Nuke'; the Distressor's unique take on limiting, which has warm, rich, inflating sonic qualities. But most of all, it's the colour and rich tonal shaping added as a consequence of processing signals through Distressor which have made it a studio favourite. Expect this one to be a huge hit.

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VERDICT 9.5



Gallien-Krueger 800RB Bass Amp £115

Brainworx have quickly established themselves as UAD's go-to provider of modelled amplifiers, and within 9.4, there's a powerful and dedicated bass amp added to a growing portfolio. The amp in question is one favoured by luminaries including Radiohead and is a model of the Gallien-Krueger 800RB. Whilst this plugin will cause most excitement amongst electric bass players, there's masses here for those looking to inflate synth basses too. The power and rasp is particularly impressive, all the more so when you engage the onboard four-band EQ and instantiate Brainworx's flexible FX rack. Two onboard power amps further add to the bespoke nature of what's possible and further enhance Brainworx's reputation as an important UAD partner.

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VERDICT 8.9



Marshall Plexi Classic free

If you're an electronic music producer, UAD's array of guitar amps will have flickered past your interest sensor; why pay for distortion plugins unless you're a guitarist, right? Well, maybe, but it's also true that there is a

range of free distortion solutions for Apollo owners, and a new one is added via UAD 9.4. If you're not ready to purchase any of the other new titles, downloading the software update is highly recommended. The Marshall Plexi Classic has a serious amount of bite and drive and is fantastic for parallel treatments on vocals, drums and synth basses, as well as being ready to decimate lead lines if you're in that kind of a mood.

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VERDICT 9.3



UAD Ocean Way Mic Collection

£189

UAD's relationship with Townsend Labs strengthens further within UAD 9.4, thanks to the release of the Ocean Way Microphone Collection. To stress, in order to use this collection of modelled microphones, you'll need to own a Townsend Labs Sphere L22 microphone. For those lucky enough to do so, the very best of the microphone collection from one of the world's best know recording studios becomes available, with models of classic Neumann, AKG, RCA and Sony microphones available. The modelling technology here is absolutely breathtaking but, for now, will remain relatively niche unless you're prepared to make the hardware investment to match the software capability.

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VERDICT 8.8



Dytronic Tri-Stereo Chorus

£149

The Tri-Stereo Chorus is the second Dytronic plugin Softube have developed for UAD. Rich, creamy, analogue chorus is the order of the day here – the sound of the original hardware became synonymous with lush Rhodes pianos. However, it soon found favour with guitarists, synth players and mix engineers the world over, thanks to it featuring three independent bucket-brigade delay channels labelled Left, Centre and Right. Each of these is modulated by a sweeping LFO before being blended with as much of the original input signal as you want. Better still, each channel has its own controls for feedback and delay response, offering yet more flexibility. One neat trick is that whilst the LFO Mode can be set to Manual or Preset (fixed speed), you can engage both simultaneously for some great cross-modulation doubling treatments.

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VERDICT 9.1