

INCLUDES AUDIO

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WHAT IS IT?

UAD's latest software update, including six independent effects aimed primarily at guitarists

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Wood Works reinvigorates the compromised sound of acoustic guitars captured via piezo pickups
- 2 Distortion plug-ins are capable of much more than guitar processing alone
- 3 Friedman emulations faithfully replicate two classic vintage Rock guitar amps



UAD V8.0 Effect Plug-Ins | from \$249

UAD's latest software release provides effects aplenty for guitarists. *Jono Buchanan* wields the virtual axe

UAD's plug-in line has swollen dramatically in recent years and, like their main competitor Waves, they now offer effects to cover a multitude of bases. Classic reverb emulations? Tick. Channel strips emulating the cream of analogue hardware consoles? Another tick. And so the list goes on, with compressors, EQs, delays and much more offered in abundance.

The fact that UAD's hardware hosts their plug-ins, drawing load away from your computer's CPU, has always been particularly powerful at the mix stage but, via UAD's own Console software,

effects have more recently been made available at the tracking stage too. This has meant that players can benefit from the sound of UAD's effects on the way into the computer, as well as on the way out.

With the latest software upgrade – Version 8.0 – UAD's Console software has been updated too, alongside the release of some new plug-ins. Check out this month's *Producer's Guide To...* to learn more about Console and the Apollo Expanded concept which UAD have recently announced. Here, we'll be looking at Version 8.0's new effects processors.

Acoustic dreams

All of Version 8's effects have guitarists in mind but, as we'll see, many have uses which stretch into other musical realms. The first, and perhaps most noteworthy, plug-in is Sound Machine Wood Works which aims to tackle the problem of recording or performing on an acoustic guitar through a piezo pickup. A huge part of the sound of acoustic guitar is its wooden body, which resonates as the instrument is played. If you choose to record a guitar via its pickup alone, this 'process' is bypassed, dramatically altering a guitar's sound to produce a thinner, reedier tone which lacks the character of a 'true' acoustic guitar. However, sometimes mic'ing an acoustic guitar is difficult – either because it's being played onstage, or because it's being recorded as part of a larger band and sonic isolation is the main priority.

Wood Works is designed to take an acoustic guitar pickup recording and process it via a simple parameter set, to emulate the sound of the real thing. Firstly, it allows you to choose from three guitar types, with Studio, Dreadnought and Jumbo options, which

are further divided into a number of preset starting points. Below this, the processed sound is created from separate Neck and Body dials, which feature independent level controls to allow you to balance these sound sources to taste. These can be panned too, whilst both Input and Output levels can be tweaked to further optimise the plug-in's performance.

You might think that such a limited parameter set would mean that Wood Works' range of tones would be correspondingly cropped. However, the Machine starting points are dramatically different in character and, in practice, the plug-in allows you to work intuitively and quickly. It's hugely effective too, whether you're looking to try to emulate the sound of a 'true', mic'd acoustic guitar tone, or to bring more life to a pickup channel you've recorded alongside a mic'd signal. Unsurprisingly, you may well find that enhancing Wood Works with additional processing – EQ, compression and reverb – will help

Friedman Amp Emulations

Brainworx and UAD have collaborated again with this pair of Friedman amp emulations. The first is the gentler (but still fierce!) BE100, while the second is an emulation of the DS40 amp, whose nickname Dirty Shirley offers some insight into the tones it can produce.

As with the Distortion bundle, the initial amp

parameter set is broadly self-explanatory in both effects, with EQ controls, Gain and Presence dials front and centre.

However, both effects also feature an effects rack, which greatly enhances their sonic potential. The effects include noise gating, tempo-sync'able delay, and filtering, while a

range of speaker options are available in the Recording Chains section, matching amps to cabinets or allowing for custom pairings.

If you're a Rock guitarist, you'll love the power of both amps, while, again, there's lots here for producers looking to add more bite to non-guitar sounds too.



If you want to add grit to synths, drums or vocals, the Distortion plug-in bundle can work beautifully

options provided by all three. But, if you're interested in adding more grit to rasping synth lines, adding power via mashed-up drum parallel

create even more pleasing sounds but the plug-in does an impressive job even without further enhancement.

Let's get dirty

Next comes a group of processors, collectively titled the Distortion Essentials Plug-in Bundle. This includes three classic emulations, the first of which is the Ibanez Tube Screamer TS808. Next is the Raw Distortion

pedal, which takes its sound from the vintage Pro Co Rat released in the early '80s, while the Bermuda Triangle completes the line-up. This is based on the Electro-Harmonix Big Muff Pi and, like the other processors in the bundle, is designed for quick set-up. It contains controls for Volume, Sustain and Tone only, whilst the Tube Screamer offers Overdrive, Tone and Level, and Raw provides Distortion, Filter and Volume.

All three processors provide a distinct sonic flavour and, if you like your guitar sounds on the filthier side, you're in for a treat, with hair-raising

treatments or even bringing aggression and fizz to vocals, all three can work beautifully on these sources too. Indeed, the processors' preset starting points hint at all of these uses and more besides, so don't be put off if you're not a guitarist, as these effects are not to be ignored if you make music in non-Rock genres. That said, if you do play guitar, everything here will provide you with a greater range of sonic options, whether you're intending to track through these effects in the studio or onstage, or have a greater range of sounds available at the mix stage. All are very good. **FM**



Three virtual stompboxes are included in the Distortion Essentials bundle

SPECS

Apollo Expanded featuring Console 2.0 Software
Compatibility with Pro Tools 12
Support for OS X Yosemite
Compatible with PCIe UAD-2 cards, the Apollo and Satellite interface ranges
System requirements differ depending on host hardware – check www.uaudio.com for details

PRICING

Sound Machine Wood Works **\$299**

UA Distortion Essentials Plug-in Bundle (includes Ibanez Tube Screamer TS808, Raw Distortion and Bermuda Triangle) **\$249**

Friedman Amplifiers Plug-In Collection by Brainworx (includes Friedman DS40 and Friedman BE100) **\$249**

ALTERNATIVES



NI Guitar Rig 5 **£169**

A veritable playground for guitarists, with simulated amps, speakers and pedals galore. Plenty here for creative producers in other musical genres too.

www.native-instruments.com



IK Multimedia AmpliTube 3 **199 euros**

Another software rig par excellence, with a comprehensive range of amps and effects which can be further expanded. Also available for mobile devices.

www.ikmultimedia.com

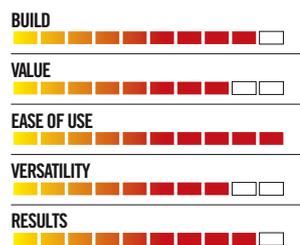


Line 6 Pod Farm **From \$99**

Now at Version 2.5, the Platinum version of Line 6's Pod Farm offers tens of amps and cabs for guitar and bass alike.

<http://uk.line6.com/podfarm>

FutureMusic VERDICT



The Distortion bundle/Friedman amps can frazzle any sound source, and Wood Works is highly effective.