

JOEY WARONKER (BECK, REM, ATOMS FOR PEACE) On Blending Analog And Digital Drums

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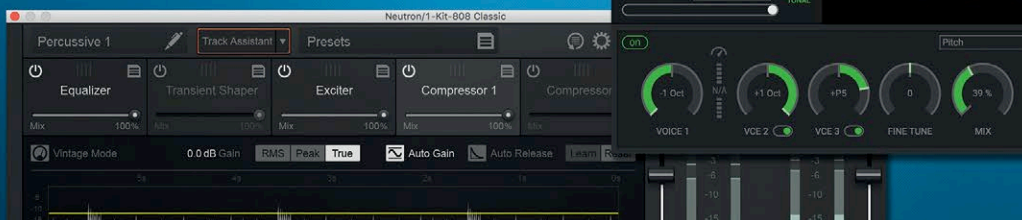
Hottest new controllers, interfaces, and soundware

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Plug-In Outlet



Eventide Structural Effects Fission

By Paul Vnuk Jr.

Eventide's products have always been cutting-edge, on the edge, and highly useful... but very often, just slightly off-center. Consider how the company embodied all of the above when Tony Visconti, Brian Eno, and David Bowie put the earliest pitch-shifting delay units to work in the mid-1970s.

This trend continues today with a brand new plug-in platform known as Structural Effects. This is a process which breaks down sounds into various component parts, processes them individually, and then mixes them back together. The first plug-in in this series is Fission, which was launched at the 2017 NAMM Show.

Fission takes and separates a sound's transients from its tone, applies different processing and effects to each, and then you decide how to blend them back together. It sounds simple, and in use it is—the program does the heavy mathematical lifting so we can have instant sound design fun, as well as some advanced problem-solving capabilities.

A look around

The program operates in a single-window environment. In the center of

the user interface is the Structural Split section, complete with a waveform display that updates as each component part is manipulated. The Transient section is on top in blue while the Tonal is on the bottom in green. You can control the levels of smoothing between the sounds and how long the transient decay is. Then use the Focus slider and blend to taste.

There is a source type menu and slider to help select the best starting point and how your audio will be processed, such as guitar, voice, drum set, and so on. The fun begins when you start to tinker with each component.

In each section (Transient and Tonal) you can select between processing and effects for each. On the Transient side there's Delay, Tap Delay, Dynamics, Phaser, Reverb, and Gate + EQ. On the Tone side you get Delay, Compressor, Pitch, Chorus, Reverb, Tremolo and EQ. These effects all exhibit Eventide's signature quality. Of special note, the reverbs are quite nice for what is essentially a multi-effects plug-in, to which the company is no stranger.

As a process is selected, each window self-adjusts its parameter dial choice. You can tweak each, just as you would adjust each process were it a standalone

version in your DAW. Each section has its own Gain and Solo control, and there is also a Master Gain and Mix setting for the plug-in as a whole. Fission gets you started with some great presets; these can be selected by source, as well as by artists and engineers who've donated programs—Joe Chiccarelli, Chris Carter, Suzanne Ciani, and many others.

In use

Fission can be as simple or as deep as you need it to be. Overall I would say it excels in two areas. One is as an advanced transient shaper/controller for helping smooth jagged guitar playing, errant stick hits, and spiked vocals. You could also use it to add pick, strike, pluck, and edge to dull sounds that need life. Most of this is done best with a combination of the initial smoothing and decay controls and then judicious use of dynamics and EQ after Fission.

The fun begins when you abandon reality and move into sound design territory. Here, Fission is a monster. You can create delayed pick hits with phased undertones, reverbed plucks with dry-pitched tonal drones, slow bowed-sounding piano notes with tremolo wobble... and the list goes on and on. Eventide offers some well-done videos on its website that will get you understanding Fission in no time.

I can't really find any negatives with Fission, because there is little to compare it to on the market. I will say that if you are after real-world vintage effects more seated in reality, Fission may not be your go-to plug-in. It gets very artificial, mangled, and modern; you can hear a structural synthesis tonality when it's pushed hard.

If that sounds like your cup of fizz, and you are ready to take the blue pill and jump into the Matrix, then this could easily be your new effects freakout toy! I know I will get lots of use out of Fission in my world. ☺

Format: VST, AU, AAX Native for Windows 7+ and macOS 10.7+

Licensing/Copy Protection: two activations, either on disk or iLok2 USB key

Price: \$179

More from: Eventide, www.eventideaudio.com