AlexB Programs Manual

Rupert 88 Console
Legacy Edition



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ABOUT ME

AlexB is a one-man company, so:

Hi ! I'm Alex :)

I have been a member of the Acustica Audio community since the 2007, and started Beta-Testing in 2009. I released my first commercial program libraries for Nebula Pro in 2009 because I wasn't satisfied by the sound of theplugins.

What I looked for was a good emulation of the console to improve my music - I have composed a lot of songs for Café del Mar in that years. My first Café del Mar recording was done with a Korg CR-4 only, then the following years I have moved to PC world and Nebula has been found as the plugin of my dreams.
Sincerely at the first test I wasn't satisfied at all by the sound. The libraries was very poorly sampled and the plugin was a little cloudy and flat.
After being in touch with Giancarlo (the genius behind Acustica Audio) and to have said him about my thoughts about what to improve in Nebula, he has promptly given me a new improved release of the plugin. We have continued for the whole afternoon and after some exchanges of test and new releases, finally Nebula became dynamic, open, deep and with life. Thank you Giancarlo !

So, pushed by this experience I've made some of the most highly sought after and rare hardware devices available for use in the digital world while maintaining virtually all of the analog character that makes recording a true art-form. Every sampled hardware piece has been refurbished and modified to improve the sonic characteristics, thanks to my 30+ years of experience in electronics and audio engineering. With hyper-realistic samplings of pristine mastering equalizers, top class consoles, the most sought after compressors, and the rarest vintage devices, I'm proving to the audio community that Acustica Audio sets the standard for the finest sound quality in the digital realm by facilitating a true analog experience with programs that make full use of the VVKT technology.

Please visit the website for more information: http://www.alexb.eu

Thank you !

AlexB... Audio Renaissance.

NOTICES

Please do not illegally share the program libraries, your financial support allow me to continue in developing. **Be aware: there isn't any authorized reseller of my programs.**

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Technical support is for customers only. You can ask support via email or web form and receive a reply at least into 24 hours.

Thank you

Documentation, Installation and Support

Introduction

Thank you for purchasing the AlexB library programs for Nebula.
Now you have one of the best professional high quality audio software. I have spent countless hours to develop these no-compromise programs to give you only the best sound and the most realistic “feel” as possible to the real hardware. I'm confident that this plugin will help you make better and more professional mixes (while enjoying yourself even more)... Because: Sound First !

If you have any trouble with the software please do not hesitate to contact me at:

support@alexb.eu

Overview

Despite the digital revolution in the pro audio industry, many of today’s top albums are still mixed on analog consoles and with analog outboard gear. Mixing into an analog desk just sounds better. Everything sits better in the mix, there is more weight to the bottom, and the overall sound is more three dimensional.
Analog devices produce electrical artifacts that affect frequency response, add harmonics, cause signal clipping and increase noise. These artifacts, which audio engineers often consider the character of a particular device, result from a combination of factors such as component grade, technology type (i.e. vacuum tubes, ICs, transistors), power supply specifications, equipment casing and other variables.
Depending on the circuit characteristics, input signal frequency response varies. Some circuits cut frequencies, others boost them. This behaviour is part of the overall device character and should not be confused with user adjustable EQ.
Total harmonic distortion (THD) is based on the levels of the odd and even harmonics of an input signal, usually at a level much lower than the fundamental level. THD balance and decay are circuit dependent, and thus differ from device to device.
Cross-Talk and Noise are two elements which every designer tends to avoid to not affect the audio quality. Since in the analog world they can't be avoided, fortunately in digital domain with Volterra Technology I have reduced the noise at less of -120dBfs and completely avoided Cross-Talk during the sampling.
The result is an optimum full quality sound from a like-new working condition hardware.
I have recreated these non linearity characteristics into these programs by sampling the units in excellent condition. Your tracks will become more alive with the classic vibe of a real hardware and you may notice that your mixes may take on an almost magical quality with punch, glue, and dimension that you didn’t hear with your other algorithmically based plugins.

Sampling Process

I believe that "Vectorial Volterra Kernels Technology" is the path of the future and will enable analog sound to be implanted into digital DAW environments with real harmonic content and analog vibe. In my creation of these Nebula Programs, I use only top notch modern and vintage gear, precisely sampled by using my own proprietary technique with custom converters I have built specifically for NAT3 which outperforms top notch commercial converters. Ultra filtered and stable AC supply, high end cables, with particular care to the connections, levels and impedance matching were used to translate the sonic qualities of this priceless devices into the Nebula software technology. Every captured sample is analyzed and carefully listened. Every volume change, gain change, frequency change is tested and accurately programmed without destructive digital processing for optimized sound and then compared to the original device. The result is a virtually indistinguishable digital replication of this landmark device.
The hardware is sampled without introduction of noise or aliasing. The thinking behind this process is to provide the full quality of the analog behavior, which means placing all emphasis on quality over cpu resources. The process is extremely efficient and optimized to be used on current computer technology with a forward thinking to the future of more powerful systems, but this will be a more cpu-intensive device than your typical software. Consider the value in having even one instance of the original unit in your hardware rack and choose to see the true value in having the best sound that technology has to offer.
The preset doesn't sound processed, harsh or digital as many plugins do, but instead it sounds like a natural extension of the original audio, gluing your tracks in the mix with an analog vibe.

Some plugins make your recordings sound like digital.
Some plugins are supposed to make your recordings sound like analog.
THIS plugin helps make recordings sound like MUSIC !

Legacy Edition

The original sampled library fixed in some NAT3 issues as Low-End Ripple and Echo.
Audio quality improved and tuned to avoid unnecessary kernels.
Performance improved for low CPU and RAM load.
Three sample rate available: 44.1 - 48 and 96kHz.

System Requirements

- Intel or AMD CPU based PC or MAC computer
- Free space on Hard Disk or better SDD (library size depending)
- Nebula3 v1.3.903 or Nebula4 with installed commercial license

Installation and file BACKUP

After downloading, unpack the files and **make a safe backup** of the library. I reccommend to use a Toshiba Canvio 2.5" HD as well to do a regular backup of your system with Acronis True Image.

Copy the files manually, *.N2P into \programs folder and *.N2V into \vectors folder.
Clean the \temp folder in the main root nebulatemprepository.

The Skin

Skins for Nebula3 and Nebula4 have a cost but they are included in the libraries as **gift**.

To install the skin into Nebula3:
1 - copy the *.N2S file into the root skin folder
2 - run your DAW and open Nebula
3 - go into MAST Page
4 - set the Skin to ALEXB_N3
5 - click on save and reload Nebula

To install the skin into Nebula4:
1 - copy the *.N2S file into the root skin folder
2 - copy the Properties files into Properties root folder
3 - run your DAW and open Nebula
4 – load a preset

After installation it's recommended to clean the \nebulatemprepository\temp folder.
Now you are ready to go at the next step to read how to use your new Nebula library!

Remember:
Scientific studies have proven that the brain is influenced more by the visual stimuli than acoustics. What you see is not what you hear. In mixing and mastering nobody can hear your screen.

General Use

Parameter Settings

Some parameters must to be set into Nebula to work correctly with AlexB Programs.

Nebula3
The best way is to make copy-and-paste of Nebula3.dll and Nebula3.xml (or whatever is the name of your installed Nebula plugin has) then rename both copies as AlexB-N3.dll and AlexB-N3.xml.
Now set the following parameters by editing the AlexB-N3.xml file:

<AHEADLENGTH> 6000 </AHEADLENGTH>
<RATECONVERSION> 4500000 </RATECONVERSION>
<OFREQD> 11 </OFREQD>
<SKINNAME> ALEXB_N3.N2S </SKINNAME>
<DSPBUFFER> 8192 </DSPBUFFER> (optional for better audio quality)

click on save and load the AlexB-N3 in your DAW.

Nebula4
The best way is to make copy-and-paste of N4.dll and N4.xml then rename both copies as AlexB-N4.dll and AlexB-N4.xml.
Now set the following parameters by editing the AlexB-N4.xml file:

<AHEADLENGTH> 5000 </AHEADLENGTH>
<OFREQD> 11 </OFREQD>
<OTIMED> 5 </OTIMED>
<LEDSPEED> 3 </LEDSPEED>

click on save and load the AlexB-N4 in your DAW.

NOTE: *MAC users find more info on the "MAC Nebula4 Setup Addendum" on the website:*
www.alexb.eu/nebula/AlexB_MAC_Nebula4_Setup_Addendum.pdf

Off Line Process

If your DAW isn't powerful or you want/need to freeze or export processed audio tracks I strongly recommend the Free NEBULASETUP2 by Zabukowski: http://zabukowski.com/software/

Gain Staging

GUI's meters show the value in dBfs.
Take care with gain staging since the programs are close to the hardware, as reference 0dBVU on the hardware corresponds to -18dBFS on your DAW digital meter.
Normally the best sound is achieved with occasional maximum digital peaks to -10dBfs, i.e. kick or snare transients, pluck synth and other hits. On the mixbus the whole mix can hit an occasional maximum digital peaks between -8dBfs and -6dBfs. (imperative!)
When the signal is too high the sound will be congested and saturated/distorted in a bad way, too high peaks (and inter-sample peaks) overload Nebula which plays a BLIP as alert.

I recommend to mix with a good and precise VU Meter like this by Waves:
https://www.waves.com/plugins/vu-meter



It mimics the way our ears react to sound by giving you a more realistic representation of the way audio level changes are actually perceived.
In this way you can easily check the levels on every single track and for the whole mix by inserting the VUMeter as last instance on the mixbus and by setting the 0dBVU = -18dBfs on it (Headroom).

I suggest to deactivate or remove the VU Plugin when you export the mix to avoid any coloration.
Yes, some plugins color the sound even if they are analyzers and/or bypassed.

NOTE: *a console, limiter, equalizer, tape machine or compressor is not a guitar amp! If you drop the level back to where it would be using the real hardware, libraries can sound huge.*

Useful video about to use the VU Meter and Gain Staging:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DVz_T48M-Q
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECRx4WF3pcc

Great book about audio recording engineering:
https://bobbyowsinski.com/recording-engineers-handbook/

Another great book about music production with my contribution about console:
https://www.routledge.com/Producing-Music-1st-Edition/Hepworth-Sawyer-Hodgson-Marrington/p/book/9780415789226

Common Controls

All programs have some common controls which are detailed below.

Input Gain
The Input Gain control sets the level at the input of the plugin.
The range is from -∞ dB to +6 dB.

Output Gain
The Output Gain control sets the level at the output of the plugin.
The range is from -∞ dB to +6 dB.

Bypass
This switch control sets the plugin operative or bypassed

Meters
Input and Output Meters display the levels at the input and output of the plugin in dBfs.
Compressors and Expander/Gate have a gain reduction meter also.

NOTE: *clicking on the controls while pressing "ctrl" on computer keyboard, the control returns to zero.*

Rupert 88 Console

About the original hardware

This excellent console has the most sweet, modern and musical sound. The circuit topology is unprecedented: custom transformers, high voltage, discrete op-amp cards that have been developed to offer extended headroom, dynamic range, and frequency response. Some circuits of the sampled unit have been slighty modified by enhancing in the DC and audio path with top grade audio components by improving dynamics, details and multi-dimensional sound. The resulting sound is breathtaking!

With its broad bandwidth the Rupert 88 Console has been engineered to deliver recordings at the best conceivable quality onto any format at any sample rate, capturing all the energy and atmosphere of the original performance as perfectly as possible.

Session Setup

Rupert 88 Console reproduces the sound of Modern British Recording Console by using a library programs consisting of channels input, group bus and mixbus. To faithfully reproduce into the DAW the analog console signal chain and workflow, we recommend using the Rupert 88 Console in one of two following session setup configurations.

As a virtual summing box : Input Channel is inserted on the last insert of the DAW audio tracks, like a direct out routed to a summing box. The MixBus is placed on the first insert of the master track, just as the stereo return would be routed from the analog console back to the DAW.

To simulate a console : Input Channel is inserted on the first insert of the DAW audio tracks, the MixBus is placed on the last insert of the master track. If you group channels in your DAW, i.e. drums elements, you can insert the GroupBus as last insert in the submix group bus to achieve the classic bus coloration.

You should set the Pan Law in the DAW at -3dB. You might like to use the analog panner (included in the library) on some stereo tracks and group bus instead of the DAW panner, the R88 Panner should be the last insert into DAW's track or group bus leaving the Pan Law in the DAW to 0dB.

TRICK: *to emulate the non linearity between the channels of the console, you can set the GDRV control slightly different on every track into a range of +/-3dB.*

Preset list:

The Rupert 88 Console library includes 13 different programs displayed into sub-menu “R88”

R88 Line in : line input channel
R88 MIC Pre : microphone preamplifier
R88 MIC Pre Silk : microphone preamplifier with silky sound
R88 G.Bus Clean : Group Bus clean signal
R88 G.Bus Acoustic : Group Bus with equalizer patched useful for acoustic instruments
R88 G.Bus AmbFX : Group Bus with equalizer patched useful for ambient & FX
R88 G.Bus BG Vox : Group Bus with equalizer patched useful for backing vocals
R88 G.Bus Drum : Group Bus with equalizer patched useful for drums
R88 G.Bus GTR : Group Bus with equalizer patched useful for guitars
R88 G.Bus Percussions : Group Bus with equalizer patched useful for percussions
R88 G.Bus SynthPad : Group Bus with equalizer patched useful for synthesizers and pads
R88 M.Bus Clean : MixBus clean
R88 M.Bus Modern : MixBus with R33 equalizer patched, useful for modern and polished sound

R88 Line in
The Rupert 88 Console Line in is the first stage of the console, normally it works as line amplifier and you should insert it in every track.

R88 MIC Pre
The Rupert 88 Console microphone preamplifier has more coloration than Line in and you can use it when more character is needed.

R88 MIC Silk
The Rupert 88 Console microphone preamplifier has more coloration and harmonics than Mic Pre and you can use it when more character by silky sound is needed.

R88 G.Bus Clean
If you send some tracks to a submix bus group in your DAW and you like to have the real sound by Bus Group of the console, you can insert the G.Bus Clean preset as last insert into DAW's submix bus group.

R88 G.Bus Acoustic
When acoustic instruments are grouped into a submix in your DAW, you might want to have the G.BUS Acoustic preset as last insert into DAW's submix bus group to give a cohesive colored glue.

R88 G.Bus Amb&FX
When ambients, reverb, echo and other effects are used into an aux-send/return in your DAW, you may like to have the G.BUS Amb&FX preset as last insert into these DAW's channels to give more spatial dimension.

R88 G.Bus BG Vox
When backing vocals tracks are grouped into a submix in your DAW, try inserting the G.BUS BG Vox preset as last insert into DAW's submix bus group to push a little in the backward the sound by achieving air and transparency.

R88 G.Bus Drum
When drum instruments are grouped into a submix in your DAW, you may want to have the G.BUS Drum preset as last insert into DAW's submix bus group to give a cohesive punching glue.

R88 G.Bus GTR
When guitars are grouped into a submix in your DAW, try using the G.BUS GTR preset as last insert into DAW's submix bus group to give a cohesive brilliant glue.

R88 G.Bus Percussions
When percussions are grouped into a submix in your DAW, you might like to have the G.BUS Percussions preset as last insert into DAW's submix bus group to give a cohesive snapping glue.

R88 G.Bus SynthPad
When synthesizers and Pads are grouped into a submix in your DAW, maybe try the G.BUS SynthPad preset as last insert into DAW's submix bus group to give a cohesive focused glue.

R88 M.Bus Clean
Modern Flagship Console Mix Bus is the final stage of the console, it must be inserted in the mixbus of the DAW.
The M.BUS Clean gives the original clean glue.

R88 M.Bus Modern
When a polished glued mix is needed, with some of air and punch, try the M.BUS Modern preset as last insert into DAW's mixbus.

Controls

The Rupert 88 Console has only a few but intuitive and effective controls which are detailed below.

GDRV **GDrive Control**

The “GDRV” control is a unique feature not found in similar products from others brands that comes from Acustica Audio VVKT proprietary technology and sampling aproach.
It allows you to control the amount of harmonic distortion that is coming from the analog hardware. The “Input” control acts as the analog signal chain of the device, where reducing the volume also reduces the harmonic distortion in accordance. The “GDrive” function allows independent control of this harmonic content, so that the input level can be left alone while making adjustments to the harmonics. Reducing the harmonics leads to a cleaner signal with an already clean device. Increasing the harmonics should be done with moderation.
This type of effect is not truly representative of a real console, but it can be useful when you want more of the console’s nonlinear “vibe” without altering the channel’s levels. The available range is ±12 dB.. Note that increasing the input signal the internal headroom will be reduced.

DRIVE **Drive Control**

The “DRIVE” control affects the harmonic contents in an unnatural way, but suitable if you look for an effect.
The available range is ±30 dB.

NOTE: *clicking on the controls while pressing “ctrl” on computer keyboard, the control returns to zero.*

NOTE2: *do not adjust the ATTCK and RELS controls, leave them at stock value (center 12 o'clock).*

END