UAD 9.7 plugins
From £75

Universal Audio's latest software range is a real 'hall of fame' of classic hardware emulations, says **Jono Buchanan**

CONTACT WHO: UAD **WEB:** uaudio.com **KEY FEATURES** New plugins included in UAD 9.7 **PRICING:** Lexicon 480L Digital Reverb and Effects: £260, **Softube Vocoder:** £149, **AMS Neve DFC Channel Strip:** £229, **Brainworx bx_masterdesk Classic:** £75, **Suhr SE100 Amplifier:** £115

THE PROS & CONS

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Lexicon 480L is everything you'd hope for; getting a classic vocoder sound with Softube Vocoder is lots of fun

The AMS Neve DFC will appeal to those writing to picture and The Brainworx bx_masterdesk Classic sets a useful balance between price, ease-of-use and output loudness

While less 'essential' to *FM* readers, the Suhr SE100 Amplifier adds to UAD's impressive collection of modelled amps

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UAD plugins aren't the cheapest; but quality on this scale never comes cheap

Some technology just stays with you. Maybe it was the first time you saw an SSL E-series console, or heard a vocal compressed through an 1176. The iconic white remote control of the Lexicon 480L Digital Reverb is one such device, a staple of world-class studios. It's also the flagship emulation in this latest UAD software release.

The Lexicon 480L is famous for its lush, rich tones; this is the first time an emulation has been endorsed by Lexicon themselves. There are ten effects types (halls, rooms, ambience etc) and once you've picked one, you can further refine your choice. Thereafter, the sliders control individual parameters and there are pages of these, to let you contour the sound. I could fill my word allocation using words like 'shimmering' and 'silky' and still not do justice to the quality here.

Next up is Softube's Vocoder, an homage to some classic vocal processors. It can be used as a 'fixed' audio effect, whereby you can use a root note as a pitch for the vocoded voice effect but it works more effectively when triggered as a MIDI effect, using Note On messages to determine output pitch. The 'Bands' options, coupled to the waveforms in the Carrier Synth section, combine to provide a wide variety of potential flavours, and it's quick work to create some great sounding Vocoder treatments.

Among the most notable categories are the channel strips, with faithful emulations of SSL, API and Manley among those modelled. To their ranks, the AMS Neve DFC (Digital Film Console) Channel Strip is now added, of particular interest to 'for picture' composers. The channel strip offers four bands of fully parametric EQ, two bands of fourth-order filtering, with dynamics handled by separate compressor, limiter, expander and gate modules. You can easily swap the processing order of the active effects via the flow diagram beneath the EQ display; there's extraordinary flexibility here. As a cost-effective,

simple approach to output volume management, the Brainworx bx_masterdesk Classic should prove a hit for UAD too. Via six dials, two compression modes and four tone profiles, you can push output level, tweak stereo imaging and control transients. Simple, effective and a super-quick way to apply a basic form of mastering to your tracks.

In short, UAD v9.7 provides high-quality processors aplenty to add to its already mouthwatering collection of class-leading effects. **FM**

FM VERDICT

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UAD's star is on the ascendant with this latest release. The Lexicon 480L is the highlight but all the new plugins sound great