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– BARRY RUDOLPH barry@barryrudolph.com

◄ STANTON T.92 USB AND T.55 USB PROFESSIONAL

The Stanton T.92 and T.55 turntables have solid bases and beefy construction with stable platters to minimize acoustical feedback. Both use precision tone arms for tracking any vinyl record using Stanton's 300 Series cartridge.

I'm attracted to the direct-drive Stanton T.92 USB (pictured) and the belt-driven T.55 USB professional turntables, because they use conventional analog RCA output jacks and both offer USB connectivity utilizing their built-in A/D converters to digitize records for personal use MP3s. Both come with iZotope Music and Speech Cleaner software—these are all the tools needed for complete audio cleanup using many advanced noise-reduction tools. The software operates with Microsoft Windows and Apple Mac OS X.

The T.92 sells for about $299 MAP while the T.55 sells for $199 MAP. Both decks have +/- 12% pitch control and come with a slip mat.

stantondj.com

► MOTU ULTRALITE AVB

With more I/O than previous models, the MOTU half-rack space UltraLite AVB has 18 inputs and 18 outputs that includes two microphone and two guitar inputs, 8-channel ADAT optical (switchable to stereo TOSLink), 6 x 8 balanced 1/4-inch analog I/O and MIDI IN/OUT jacks. Easy to throw in your backpack, this small interface's balanced analog outputs have a dynamic range of 117 dB, and there is double the DSP available for the redesigned console-style software mixer capable of 48 inputs and 12 stereo busses.

The routing matrix allows for the intuitive patching of inputs to outputs, or splitting inputs to multiple destinations. The UltraLite AVB will also work as a stand-alone mixer with 32-bit floating-point processing and modeled analog EQ, compressors and reverbs. Now you can control everything wirelessly from an app running on an iPad™, iPhone™ or Android tablet, smartphone and laptops running a Web browser.

The MOTU UltraLite AVB connects to a computer through AVB Ethernet or class-compliant hi-speed USB 2.0 (compatible with USB 3.0 and iOS) and records at sample rates up to 192 kHz. Through AVB Ethernet, users can connect another AVB for more I/O or connect to an expanded MOTU AVB network with multiple interfaces and computers. The MOTU UltraLite AVB sells for $649 MSRP.

motu.com/products/avb/ultralite-avb

◄ MXL CR89 LARGE DIAPHRAGM CONDENSER MICROPHONE

The CR89 is part of the new black chrome MXL CR Series and is designed for any recording task from vocals to close in on instruments and guitar amps. With home/project studios, there is a lot to spend money on, so getting the most out each microphone is important.

The MXL CR89 has a wide cardioid pattern with a 6-micron gold-sputtered diaphragm that is center-terminated and features a FET-based low noise head amp circuit. It has a very low proximity effect; when I got it up close to my vocalist—I got a clear sound with presence and just a slight bass buildup—not the huge bump I normally hear when singers get close to other cardioid condenser mics.

The CR's large, beefy body reduces microphone body resonances, and its broad cardioid pickup pattern is perfect for singers who move around while singing on studio microphones—there is less noticeable change in sound caused by their movement.

I then put the CR89 on my Fender Blues Junior amp and cranked back the microphone gain on my Sunset Sound S1P mic pre-amp down to about 10 dB of gain (I was at 30 dB for my singer) and got a solid sound.

The CR89 comes with a durable aluminum flight case, a matching sexy flat black shock mount, and microfiber cleaning cloth. It sells for $349.95 MAP.

mxlmics.com/microphones/studio/CR89

► PSP AUDIOWARE L'OTARY ROTARY SPEAKER PLUG-IN

PSP L'otary is a master emulation of Don Leslie's rotary speaker cabinet he invented seven years after the introduction of the Hammond organ in 1935. In fact the L'otary's algorithms are based upon the two original Leslie® 122 and 147 speakers that were usually sold to accompany Hammond organs.

L'otary is not a simulated modulation effect plug-in; there are cool graphics showing the speed (visually) of the rotors and programmable independence between the drum (bass) and horn (treble) speakers.

I installed in my Pro Tools 11 HD rig and started inserting L'otary on every instrument to generate ideas. It was excellent on electric pianos—I preferred it without the amplifier's color switched in. Any synth organ will sound very authentic and distorted guitars take on a nasty tone with the Leslie speaker's upper mid-range peakiness. I found the "relaxed" or "old rotary" presets good starting points to start tweaking rotating distorted guitar sounds.

PSP's L'otary will become the standard rotary speaker plug-in because of its great sound and its intriguing and vast programmability. It is available for Windows and Mac OS X in VST, AU, AAX32/64 and RTAS plug-in formats and sells for $99 MSRP.

pspaudioware.com/plugins/multimode_effects/psp_lotary