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- Tech Support Page
- User Area
- Product Registration
- FAQ

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Select Product

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SOUND SPOTLIGHT



ARTIST SPOTLIGHT



STUDIO SPOTLIGHT



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IK Interview with Marc Urselli

By Starr Ackerman
June 12, 2006

SA: How long have you been engineering and producing records, and where did you get your first start in the music business?

Marc: I started engineering in my parents' basement when I was 14 or something like that, recording the rehearsals of one of my first bands on a 4 track tape recorder, shortly after I bought my first 16 channel mixer and started recording other bands, and at age 17 I opened a small commercial recording studio (32 channel board and 16 track half inch reel to reel). At the time I was living in Italy. I've been doing it professionally ever since, but at age 22 I decided to take it a step further and move to NYC, where I now live and run a serious commercial facility. More about all of that on my website...

SA: Who are some of the artists that you have worked with in the past, and what has been your most recent project?

Marc: When living in Italy the bulk of my clients were punk/hard core bands. I did a lot of that because Italy has/had a great underground scene. Although I also love (and made) electronic and rock music myself, I didn't get to do much of that until I moved to the US. In NY the bulk of my clients have been jazz artists although I have been blessed to work with people like Luther Vandross, Roy Hargrove, Eliane Elias, Jojo Mayer, Jerry Gonzales' Fort Apache, Clark Terry etc... Last year I finally got every rock-loving engineer's dream gig when I got to record and mix the Capitol/EMI Les Paul and Friends' record "American Made World Played", which was an all-star tribute duet record to the 90 years old genius, composer, performer, father and inventor of the solid body electric guitar and features (among others and just to mention a few) Sting, Joss Stone, Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, Sam Cooke, Keith Richards, Buddy Guy, Joe Perry, Edgar Winter, Peter Frampton etc... It's a great seventies-rock album with a modern edge and it was produced by my dear friends Fran Cathcart and Bob Cutarella. Following to that I've been working on the solo debut of Vandross' background singer Paulette McWilliams, the solo debut album of Alicia Keys' background singer Jermaine Paul, some records for John Zorn's Tzadik label, some folk records and producing new emerging artists such as the NY singer/songwriter Adrienne Arno or the amazing Italian guitar player Vincenzo Pastano.

SA: Having the dynamic scope of working with amazing artists, what kind of rig are you using now to record them?

Marc: I record everything to Pro Tools HD, usually at 88.2 or 96k. I had the pleasure to work with tape machines, from the low-end G16S of my early days to high-end Sony, Studer and Ampex, but in today's market it's hard to give up the flexibility and number of tracks that a DAW offers and I am gonna go as far as to say that I don't think it really sounds all that bad when the material is tracked at high sampling rates and through awesome mics and pre-amps like the ones I have at my studio EastSide Sound, in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. I usually track drums through 16 Harrison Series Ten B class A pre-amps, which have great headroom; I track vocals with a modified 1977 Neumann U87 and a Rode NT2000; and I track piano through Neumann UM57 and UM92 through API 512c's... I could go on and on about mics and pre-amps I love and use, but there's so many...

SA: After being introduced to **Classik Studio Reverb**, when you first launched CSR in your studio's host sequencer, was it easy for you to navigate and get right into finding a great sound?

Marc: Absolutely. Once I got it running it was very intuitive, most certainly. It's pretty straight forward after all.

SA: Since you are an experienced user of reverbs on many kinds of different musical projects, did CSR sound like anything you had used before in the studio on vocals and instrument tracks?

Marc: As you say we work with so many kinds of verbs all the time... For easy recalls' sake, it's certainly nice to have a plugin that is not too resource-intensive but still sounds very good and CSR definitely fits that description. I am a big fan of my MasterRoom II spring reverb and the 480 of course, but I could definitely see myself using CSR more and more in the world of plug-in reverbs...

SA: After using CSR in the studio, was there anything about it's sound or editing features that you were particularly impressed by?

Marc: It seems like it really is not that CPU-intensive, so I am looking forward to being able to use it on the go on my laptop.

SA: How do you see yourself using CSR on any of your current and future projects? Are there any that CSR would be just perfect for?

Marc: Where it stands now I can definitely see CSR being perfect to add some ambiance (if and where needed) to grand piano recordings. I would love to be able to start using it on vocals and more stuff...

SA: If you were to recommend using CSR to a friend or fellow musician, what would you say about it?

Marc: I'd say that it's a great reverb priced right that is very flexible, thick, rich and good sounding overall and that it would make a great addition to any mobile, home/project and even professional recording studio.

Click [here](#) for more IK news and quotes from Marc Urselli.

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