Review: REmatrix by Overloud

Imagine one really good convolution reverb. And now close your eyes and imagine five of them. Add some extra features and you get REmatrix, an endless amount of space packed into one box.

by Alex Arsov, Nov. 2014

Some time ago I discovered a virtual reverb that I thought would be my mix partner for the rest of my life. OK, it was at least for a year or two. Then in comes a guitar. I had one crowded mix and wasn't so pleased with the sound of the guitar. Equalization was just perfect, panning position also, but somehow the presence and wideness wasn't quite there, something was wrong with the space and some extra juice was missing. It crossed my mind that I saw some video clips recently about a new convolution multi-layer reverb, representing a plentiful number of various presets that are included with the product. I downloaded a demo copy of REmatrix from the Overloud site, while trying to figure out how this will work with my guitar.

I have to confess that I have never been a wise geek when it comes to a reverb programming. I need at least a good starting point. First thing that draw my attention was a browser outfitted with 400 presets. In most cases, I know how to set up general room reverb or Hall reverb, but was never so sure about guitar reverbs or how to set things up for some other live instruments, e.g., which reverb should go with a brass section or a string section. REmatrix had me from the start with big collection of guitar reverbs, both acoustic and for electric. I've tried it and it works really great, giving my guitar take a nice presence, making it more defined and wider, fitting it nicely in a

mix. I've tried it also on a string track; it proves to be even better than my "chosen" preset from one of the string libraries that I had used it with my old convolution reverb. At first I thought that Room presets are a bit too sharp for general use with live arrangements, then after watching video tutorials again I realize that I should maybe switched off distortion inside a selected preset if I wanted to achieve a less sharp, more natural, soft effect appropriate for airy mid tempo arrangements. A clever combination of few parallel reverb spaces along with a set of additional effects – modulation section definitively brings a new winner for that "give me some space and let me breathe" field. This is a bit pricey of a winner as it will make your wallet lighter for €299 EUR or $399 USD. As you know, there are plenty of other reverbs on market at the moment, costing half much as this one, but it is up to you to decide. I have not toyed much with Lexicon, but as far as I remember the sound, this one definitively has some of the airy, real-space feel that I've heard in pro studios years ago, allowing you to use fewer instruments in your arrangement without getting this "something missing" felling that you have if the space is not right.

What Do We Get for That Money?

Actually, the main difference is a live vivid sound, being a combination of up to five different real spaces along with clever usage of different effects that can fix all the weak points that convolution reverbs could have. Let's start with a few facts. REmatrix comes with a more than adequate large and versatile library of reverb impulses compiled in a monster patch library containing 400 presets, nicely organized in various categories. Thankfully, there is not much abstract naming here, so if you are looking a reverb for specific instrument, you will find it under the general group to which that instrument belongs, choosing from clearly-presented space variations for that group. I know that all producers constantly repeat that presets are only a good starting point, but you can't imagine how long-and-windy a road it can be when you start with a preset named Aurora and try to adopt it for a string or guitar purpose, as it is the case with some other reverbs. Actually this preset library, presented in a browser on a left side, is one of the most to-the-point collections that you can find in any reverb. Plates, halls, big venues, special plates, vocal, orchestral, extra rooms, digital, dirty are just a few main categories among many. It is a big time saver having such a library in which a final solution is just a few clicks away.
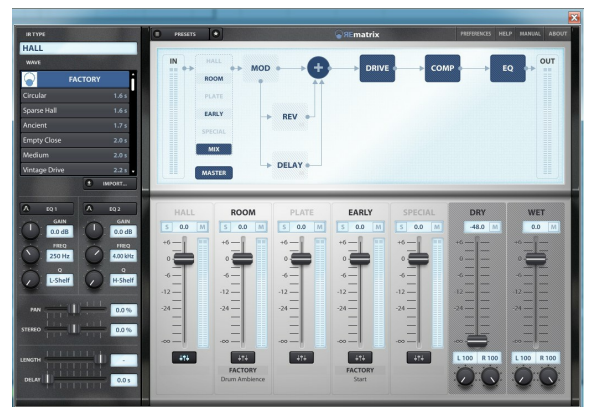
Five

After finding your starting point, it is a time to start tweaking one of the five individual impulses with faders at the bottom half on the left side of the UI, setting the gain balance between them, or even changing the impulse by clicking on a button under the fader, picking one impulse from included library or even loading some external impulse. (There are a few great free libraries laying around on the net).

This "under the fader button" opens a new window in a browser place allowing you to fine tune the impulse setting the low and high filter with two equalizers along with additional four faders for pan, stereo, length and early delay. In upper part is a sample window, where we can see the shape of the impulse along with a slider for controlling the reverb time. Maybe this doesn't look like much, but actually those are more or less all controllers that you need to fine tune the impulse.

Deeper and Deeper

This is the point where usually convolution reverbs end with their arsenal of tools and this is the point where most of the fun begins with Rematrix with a carefully collected set of effects adding some extra life to the set of convolutions. Each set of effects could be implemented on any selected impulse. Just choose the impulse clicking on appropriate fader and press the Master button under at the bottom of the upper sample window. You will get an effect diagram in which you can switch on/off the desired

effect while getting some additional controllers for the chosen one: a compressor that can tame the affected sound, adding a bit more stable, full signal along with original one, Drive for adding some additional overtones that can make some instruments shine (or make the whole mix too aggressive, so Careful with that Axe, Eugene.), Reverb, actually the algorithmic reverb for providing more natural, musical tails (a weak point of many convolution reverbs), Delay for subtle additional effects and Equalizer for fine tuning impulse responses.

Sum of All Parts

Actually, not the functions but the sound is the factor that tells us how good this reverb is. Visit Overloud site and watch demo video clips. All I can say, everything you see and hear is pure truth. Five carefully selected and well balanced Impulse Responses with some additional effects sounds ten times better than one, no matter how carefully selected, Impulse Response. In addition, the presets, given their quantity, and the quality of implemented Impulse Responses, along with all additional effects, can really improve audio, bringing an additional dynamic. Considering that the whole package is user friendly, all this makes me saying that €299 EUR is maybe not so much as we thought initially. After all, REmatrix is a plug-in that can easily satisfy professional audio engineers, convincing them with the functionality and the sound quality, allowing them to speed up their work-flow. The can be as much of a real lifesaver for reverb bozos like us, allowing us to set appropriate reverb for our tasks in the same way that we order coffee on a drinking automat. With or without sugar, milk maybe? That's all we need. One with a sugar, extra-large for acoustic guitar please. And don't forget to add few overtones please, as my friend really likes it this way.

More info about the product: http://overloud.com/products/rematrix.php