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Subject: Audio Confessions

Posted by [Bill L](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 01:21:38 GMT

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I've tried to put these incident behind me, but I can't seem to forget about them and I have to come clean it to the only people I know who might understand.

When I worked as Chick Corea's studio manager we did a crazy little experiment. We decided to see how good the Yamaha O2R96 mic pres are compared to pristine vintage Neve 1073 modules. We used a 9 foot Yamaha grand with Yamaha's mechanical recording/playback system (can't remember the name of it) into 2 AKG C12s. We were able to get the exact same performance on each take with the playback system.

In the end, we could hear that the Neve was ever so slightly warmer than the O1v96, but we were shocked at how unremarkable the difference was - really shocked. Bernie Kirsh, a true golden ears, and a world famous engineer who has done virtually all of chick's records could not hear much difference either, and I gotta tell you he is a real snob when it comes to equipment.

In a similar vein, when I listened to the first Lynn Fuston mic pre CD of female vox, I blindly picked the Mackie mic pre as my 3rd favorite. However I must say that that comparo is not as accurate as the one with the piano because despite how good she was, she could not do the exact same performance every time, while the piano could.

Does that make me a bad person?

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions

Posted by [Ted Gerber](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 01:56:25 GMT

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This is where I jump in as a piano Tech and tell you that of course the differences were minute, since you were using a Yamaha piano to "measure" your Yamaha Pres. If the O2R96 had been presented with the more complex tone of a Steinway, or a Bosendorfer, or a Fazioli, the difference between Pres would have been more apparent.

Actually, I'm joking. I think.

Thanks for the "confession". In fact through the past few years of belonging to this group, I've come to know those whose sonic priorities align with mine. You are one of them. I always appreciate your posts.

I tuned for Chick Corea once while he was in Toronto...

Peace,

Ted

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions

Posted by [Ted Gerber](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 01:58:57 GMT

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By the way, you refer to both the 02R96, and the 01V96, I'm guessing  
you meant only to say the 02R96, right?

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [LaMont](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 02:01:39 GMT  
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Bill, I sometimes work at a studio which uses the Yammy Dm-2000. The studio has avalons, neves, UADs, but long story short, when we compared those other pres with the DM-2000, we choose the DM-2000 for the every day go to Pre..

They even put those pres on their portable studios AW2400/AW1600. I got a few projects form those units and they sound as good anything out there..

Bottom line..it doesn't surprise me..:)

Bill L <[bill@billlorentzen.com](mailto:bill@billlorentzen.com)> wrote:

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [audioguy\\_editout\\_](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 05:05:23 GMT  
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Yep, the DM2K pre's are all that... I was quite stunned the first time I dialed them up... I knew they were supposed to be good, just wasn't expecting Great! 24 of them in the desk is just a bonus.

David.

LaMont wrote:

> Bill, I sometimes work at a studio which uses the Yammy Dm-2000. The studio  
> has avalons, neves, UADs, but long story short, when we compared those other  
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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Aaron Allen](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 05:20:34 GMT  
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You know, now Deej will have to have one of the DM's, or....

AA

"Dave(EK Sound)" <audioguy\_editout\_@shaw.ca> wrote in message news:4668e52d@linux...

> Yep, the DM2K pre's are all that... I was quite stunned the first time I  
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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [wireline\[15\]](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 12:02:25 GMT  
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Not at all, Bill. The Yammie pres have kind of a noted love-to-hate thing going on, and so much is written about how bad they suck by people who have never heard them or did not know much about stupid minute details such as gain staging...Truth be known, I have always liked the Yamaha pres, dating back to the PM1000 days.

Of course, almost anything would sound pretty decent with a pair of C12s...

That said, it is my firm belief that just about any quality preamp is capable of being the basis for an entire production (we used to call them consoles <nudge-nudge-wink-wink>) As you know, almost any good board is going to have at least functional preamps...

While I've heard Lynn's CD as well, I must confess that non of my choices were Mackies, but it is after all personal choice.

(Dammit Bill!!!! Just when I was on the brink - ON THE BRINK I tell you - of selling all three of my mixers, you post this...DAMMIT)

IMO a quality recording starts with a quality preamp...(perhaps this is why I was let go from a sales gig) and I do not think for one moment the preamp choice is a critical issue...yes, a couple of flavors is IMO fine, but necessary?  
No. I remind many of my colleagues of this, that the overwhelmingly vast majority of recordings the industry uses as sonic references for excellence had but one brand of preamp...API, Neve, EMI, Quad 8,

Bill, you also know that quality mics and placement of those quality mics is a much more important and immediately noticable factor in the end result than a stable full of preamps.

Bill L <bill@billlorentzen.com> wrote:

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Bill L](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 12:16:15 GMT  
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Chick has a 9' Bose just ten feet away from the Yammy, but it does not have the playback device on it.

Luckily, as a guitar player I could achieve a similar level of satisfaction with just a Gibson L5 and Buscarino Cabaret.



Ted Gerber wrote:

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Bill L](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 12:23:19 GMT  
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I have a Yamaha i88x, which has the same pre as the DM1000. They are very nice. Some guys buy them just for the 2 pres, which have insert jacks.

I have found Yamaha products to be a cut above generally, sort of the way Toyota is a little higher quality than the rest of the Nipponese imports.

LaMont wrote:

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [TCB](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 14:19:32 GMT  
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The Lynn Fuston CD was a real eye opener to me. I'm an empiricist in pretty much all things, including audio issues. Also, I'm not anywhere near 'golden ears' but I can usually tell which string is out of tune on the other guy's guitar (very useful at live gigs, 'Hey Russ, your B is flat') and can hear better than any civilian. On the Fuston CD I could barely tell any difference at all. I still own a couple of nice preamps, but if I had 16 channels of Syteks ( > \$200 per preamp) I'd be pleased as punch.

TCB

Bill L <[bill@billlorentzen.com](mailto:bill@billlorentzen.com)> wrote:

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Neil](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 17:36:30 GMT  
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"wireline" <spammersDIAF@droolingdog.gov> wrote:

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>Not at all, Bill. The Yammie pres have kind of a noted love-to-hate thing  
>going on, and so much is written about how bad they suck by people who have  
>never heard them or did not know much about stupid minute details such as  
>gain staging...Truth be known, I have always liked the Yamaha pres, dating  
>back to the PM1000 days.

Personally, I've always found Yammy pre's to be a bit lacking in the headroom area... you get about 20db of boost before you start encroaching on the crackle zone. But then I've never used the DM boards, so maybe they're better.

>Of course, almost anything would sound pretty decent with a pair of C12s...

Gear snob. :)

>IMO a quality recording starts with a quality preamp...(perhaps this is why  
>I was let go from a sales gig) and I do not think for one moment the preamp  
>choice is a critical issue...yes, a couple of flavors is IMO fine, but necessary?

Not necessary, but nice to have... you start mixing & matching the right mics with the right pres (and by "right", I don't necessarily mean super high-end, I mean "ones that compliment each other") and you'll find yourself doing less EQ-ing, things stand apart & isolate better, it's almost like you're pre-mixing before you're even mixing.

Neil

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions

Posted by [LaMont](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 19:47:32 GMT

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I totally agree. Certain gear combinations work better than others.

"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>

>"wireline" <spammersDIAF@droolingdog.gov> wrote:

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [TCB](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 20:07:35 GMT  
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"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>  
>Steve Albini, probably my favorite engineer after Rudy van Gelder, takes  
>very much this approach. As I've started tracking guitars I'm using one of  
>his tricks which is to put a bright and a dark mic on the cab and mix them  
>together before I start to EQ. Works very nicely. The current best, i.e.  
>most versatile, combo seems to be the SE ribbon and the Baby Bottle you sold  
>me. Either sounds pretty damn good on its own but together there's a whole  
>new world out there.

TCB

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Neil](#) on Fri, 08 Jun 2007 21:07:41 GMT  
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"TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote:

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>together before I start to EQ. Works very nicely. The current best, i.e.  
>most versatile, combo seems to be the SE ribbon and the Baby Bottle you  
>sold  
>me. Either sounds pretty damn good on its own but together there's a whole  
>new world out there.

Yup, agreed. I know I posted this tune before, but for the purposes of this topic, here it is again:  
The only tracks that have any EQ on them are the toms & the snare & one guitar pass where I rolled off a little 100hz. Everything else is simply tonal coloration imparted by the particular combination of mics & pre's on the source.

<http://www.saqqararecords.com/MiscAudio/SedationFinalMixMP3.mp3>

May not be your cup 'o tea musically, but it's a perfect example of what I'm talking about.

---

---

Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [TCB](#) on Sat, 09 Jun 2007 12:40:12 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>

>"TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote:

>>

>>

>>

>>"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>>>

>>Steve Albini, probably my favorite engineer after Rudy van Gelder, takes

>>very much this approach. As I've started tracking guitars I'm using one

>of

>>his tricks which is to put a bright and a dark mic on the cab and mix them

>>together before I start to EQ. Works very nicely. The current best, i.e.

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>Yup, agreed. I know I posted this tune before, but for the

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>  
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>  
> May not be your cup 'o tea musically, but it's a perfect example  
> of what I'm talking about.

Wow, those are some thick sounding geetars. Very impressive work.

TCB

---

---

Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Bill L](#) on Sat, 09 Jun 2007 13:11:08 GMT  
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---

Yeah, Baby, wide, fat and deep guitar layers. It pushes the bass track right down to the floor. Also it seems to make the bass sound late.

Back when I played lots of rock I had this fantasy of a section of, say, 10 guitarists layering to get a live sound like this. Problem is the conductor would only last a few shows before he would be too deaf to continue.

TCB wrote:

> "Neil" <[OIUOIU@OIU.com](mailto:OIUOIU@OIU.com)> wrote:  
>> "TCB" <[nobody@ishere.com](mailto:nobody@ishere.com)> wrote:  
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> Wow, those are some \_thick\_ sounding geetars. Very impressive work.  
>  
> TCB

---

---

Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Neil](#) on Sat, 09 Jun 2007 15:18:54 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Bill L <[bill@billlorentzen.com](mailto:bill@billlorentzen.com)> wrote:  
>Yeah, Baby, wide, fat and deep guitar layers. It pushes the  
>bass track right down to the floor. Also it seems to make the  
>bass sound late.

Are your speakers out of phase or some wierd stuff like that?  
The bass sounds great on every system I've played this on, and  
in fact it's even been on radio here (the band opened for  
Flyleaf at the KLAQ Memorial Day Balloonfest, and the station  
had them on for an interview & played a couple of their tunes)  
& I was cringing the first time they wee getting ready to spin  
it, just because it's not mastered yet and I had no idea how it  
would come across over the air... one measure into the song &  
the cringe went away - sounded great.

I think you're hearing more bass than than you think - IOW,  
less of that bottom end is coming from the guitars than you may  
realize... the bass has a little drive on it, as well, so that  
may have something to do with your perception of what's bass &  
what's not. Feel free to import the mp3 into your DAW & flip  
the phase on one channel so that the bass drops out completely  
(the two bass tracks are both dead-center-panned, so you'll  
definitely lose all of it.), and that way you can see what I'm  
talkng about... you'll retain most of the rhythm guitar tracks  
since there's some panning going on on all of them, IIRC.  
Here, you can use this free plugin to phase-flip one channel if  
you don't want to have to bother splitting the stereo file:

<http://www.braindoc.de/vst/ChannelTool.zip>

>Back when I played lots of rock I had this fantasy of a  
>section of, say, 10 guitarists layering to get a live sound  
>like this. Problem is the conductor would only last a few  
>shows before he would be too deaf to continue.

You don't need a lot of volume to get this effect, just a lot of layers of different textures. We used two (or was it three - I'd have to check the files) different amps, four different mics, and three flavors of preamps. Every chorded pass was mic'ed in dual-mono, then doubled with a different amp/mics, and pres, and every single note or accent pass (like the octave hits) was doubled with a different mic & pre. In fact, when tracking stuff like this, I like to use just enough volume to get the speakers moving - that way your tones can still stay articulate as you layer tracks; as opposed to if the amps are blasting at "11", and then everything just turns into a big pile of overdistorted fizz.

Neil

>  
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>>> "TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote:  
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>>

>> Wow, those are some \_thick\_ sounding geetars. Very impressive work.

>>

>> TCB

---

Subject: Re: Audio Confessions

Posted by Nil on Sat, 09 Jun 2007 15:21:47 GMT

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"TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote:

>

>"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>>

>>"TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote:

>>>

>>>

>>>

>>>"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>>>>

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>>Yup, agreed. I know I posted this tune before, but for the

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>>& one guitar pass where I rolled off a little 100hz. Everything

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>>

>>May not be your cup 'o tea musically, but it's a perfect example

>>of what I'm talking about.

>

>Wow, those are some \_thick\_ sounding geetars. Very impressive work.

Thanks - I may have something else to post tonight or tomorrow.

Different band this time, but some interesting sonic textures

you guys might like. Trying to get some more vocals & maybe guitars knocked out today.

Neil

---

---

Subject: Re: Audio Confessions

Posted by [Bill L](#) on Sat, 09 Jun 2007 19:28:27 GMT

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---

Neil wrote:

> Bill L <[bill@billlorentzen.com](mailto:bill@billlorentzen.com)> wrote:

>> Yeah, Baby, wide, fat and deep guitar layers. It pushes the  
>> bass track right down to the floor. Also it seems to make the  
>> bass sound late.

>

> Are your speakers out of phase or some wierd stuff like that?  
> The bass sounds great on every system I've played this on, and  
> in fact it's even been on radio here (the band opened for  
> Flyleaf at the KLAQ Memorial Day Balloonfest, and the station  
> had them on for an interview & played a couple of their tunes)  
> & I was cringing the first time they wee getting ready to spin  
> it, just because it's not mastered yet and I had no idea how it  
> would come across over the air... one measure into the song &  
> the cringe went away - sounded great.

Hey, Neil, I wasn't knocking it! The tracks sound awesome. I was just commenting on the amount of seperation between the bass and the guitars, like a layer of oil and water, kind of. I LIKED the effect and the degree of seperation. It is impressive how you did it.

Do you really imagine \*I\* might not hear if my speakers are out of phase?

>

> I think you're hearing more bass than than you think - IOW,  
> less of that bottom end is coming from the guitars than you may  
> realize... the bass has a little drive on it, as well, so that  
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> hits) was doubled with a different mic & pre. In fact, when  
> tracking stuff like this, I like to use just enough volume to  
> get the speakers moving - that way your tones can still stay  
> articulate as you layer tracks; as opposed to if the amps are  
> blasting at "11", and then everything just turns into a big  
> pile of overdistorted fizz.

I actually never track at much volume unless I'm trying for feedback or some room overload effect. I was talking about in a live setting. Of course I am actually one of the more demure guitar players volume-wise. I prefer to let the engineer have control of the mix. BTW, in my musical circles I'm known for having an exquisite tone - warm, smooth, creamy and delicious w/ just a hint of jaunty strut.

>  
> Neil  
>  
>  
>>  
>> TCB wrote:  
>>> "Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:  
>>>> "TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote:  
>>>>>  
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>>>  
>>> TCB  
>

---

Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Neil](#) on Sat, 09 Jun 2007 19:45:13 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Bill L <[bill@billlorentzen.com](mailto:bill@billlorentzen.com)> wrote:  
>Do you really imagine \*I\* might not hear if my speakers are out of phase?

I have no idea! You could be trippin' or somethin' :)

>I prefer to let the engineer have control of the mix. BTW, in my musical  
>circles I'm known for having an exquisite tone - warm, smooth, creamy  
>and delicious w/ just a hint of jaunty strut.

Are we talking about a guitar tone or a nice Reisling?

:D

---

Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Cujjo](#) on Sat, 09 Jun 2007 23:02:17 GMT  
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Sounds more like a red, Merlot perhaps..Oh that Jaunty strut could make it  
a peppery Shiraz

"Neil" <[OIUOIU@OIU.com](mailto:OIUOIU@OIU.com)> wrote:

>  
>Bill L <bill@billlorentzen.com> wrote:  
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>  
>:D

---

---

Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [IOUOI](#) on Sun, 10 Jun 2007 06:30:02 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

"Cujo" <chris@applemanstudio.com> wrote:  
>  
>  
>Sounds more like a red, Merlot perhaps..Oh that Jaunty strut could make  
it  
>a peppery Shiraz

Yup, you're right - the "warm, smooth & creamy" bit should've  
clued me in from the get-go... his tone is like a rich Cabernet,  
and that "jaunty strut" bit definitely points to a nice aged -  
but not so old as to be considered "mellowed" - Red.

:)

---

---

Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Bill L](#) on Sun, 10 Jun 2007 13:18:49 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Sorry, guys, just a Cru Beaujolais.

NeilOIOIU@OIU.com wrote:  
> "Cujo" <chris@applemanstudio.com> wrote:  
>>  
>> Sounds more like a red, Merlot perhaps..Oh that Jaunty strut could make  
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> and that "jaunty strut" bit definitely points to a nice aged -  
> but not so old as to be considered "mellowed" - Red.  
>  
> :)

---

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Subject: Re: Audio Confessions  
Posted by [Deej \[4\]](#) on Wed, 13 Jun 2007 05:25:43 GMT  
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---

I'm playing catchup. Haven't had DSL since last Thursday. I have almost died a couple of times when watching these sell for around 6k on EBay.

;o)

"Aaron Allen" <know-spam@not\_here.dude> wrote in message  
news:4668e8d6@linux...

> You know, now Deej will have to have one of the DM's, or....

>

> AA

>

>

> "Dave(EK Sound)" <audioguy\_editout\_@shaw.ca> wrote in message  
> news:4668e52d@linux...

>> Yep, the DM2K pre's are all that... I was quite stunned the first time I  
>> dialed them up... I knew they were supposed to be good, just wasn't  
>> expecting Great! 24 of them in the desk is just a bonus.

>>

>> David.

>>

>> LaMont wrote:

>>> Bill, I sometimes work at a studio which uses the Yammy Dm-2000. The  
>>> studio

>>> has avalons, neves, UADs, but long story short, when we compared those  
>>> other

>>> pres with the DM-2000, we choose the DM-2000 for the every day go to  
>>> Pre..

>>>

>>> They even put those pres on their portable studios AW2400/AW1600. I got

>>> a

>>> few projects form those units and they sound as good anything out  
>>> there..

>>>

>>> Bottom line..it does'nt surprise me..:)



>>>  
>>> Bill L <bill@billlorentzen.com> wrote:  
>>>  
>>>>I've tried to put these incident behind me, but I can't seem to forget  
>>>>about them and I have to come clean it to the only people I know who  
>>>>might understand.  
>>>>  
>>>>When I worked as Chick Corea's studio manager we did a crazy little  
>>>>experiment. We decided to see how good the Yamaha 02R96 mic pres are  
>>>>compared to pristine vintage Neve 1073 modules. We used a 9 foot Yamaha  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>>grand with Yamaha's mechanical recording/playback system (can't remember  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>>the name of it) into 2 AKG C12s. We were able to get the exact same  
>>>>performance on each take with the playback system.  
>>>>  
>>>>In the end, we could hear that the Neve was ever so slightly warmer than  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>>the 01v96, but we were shocked at how unremarkable the difference was -  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>>really shocked. Bernie Kirsh, a true golden ears, and a world famous  
>>>>engineer who has done virtually all of chick's records could not hear  
>>>>much difference either, and I gotta tell you he is a real snob when it  
>>>>comes to equipment.  
>>>>  
>>>>In a similar vein, when I listened to the first Lynn Fuston mic pre CD  
>>>>of female vox, I blindly picked the Mackie mic pre as my 3rd favorite.  
>>>>However I must say that that comparo is not as accurate as the one with  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>>the piano because despite how good she was, she could not do the exact  
>>>>same performance every time, while the piano could.  
>>>>  
>>>>Does that make me a bad person?  
>>>  
>

---