
Efficient use of Mic Pres.

Posted by RTASW - 2008/06/06 13:10

Hi folks, this isn't really a Pro-Tools specific question but i am a Pro Tools user about to embark on my first serious project. My problem is this.

I am due to start recording Live Drums in the next week, due to budget restrictions I only have a Focusrite Octopre LE and an RME Octamic D.

I'm going to use more than 8 inputs and I'm wondering which chanel to use for the best results. My initial instinct would be to use the Octamic (the superior of the two pre-amps) for all of the close Mics and use the Octopre for Overheads and room Mics. . .However I've read in quite a few places that the room Mics and Overheads are crucial to getting a quality tone and so the better quality Mic Pre's should be used on them?

Any advice you guys could give would be much appreciated.

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Re:Efficient use of Mic Pres.

Posted by cneal - 2008/06/06 13:57

It depends on the style of music and drum approach (such as in-your-face or more natural), but to me the order of importance is Overheads, kick, snare, toms, and hi-hats. The overheads really provide the overall stereo picture of the drums. If the room is great and you use a proper stereo technique you can easily get a great drum sound with only OHs and a kick mic.

The more mics you use the harder it is to get a great sound. What I mean by that is, the more mics you have on the drum set the more possible phase issues you are creating and it takes experience and knowledge to avoid and minimize these issues.

I didn't put a room mic in my list b/c it 1) depends on your approach, and 2) if the room your recording in isn't killer I typically won't record them anyway, unless I want to use it for a special sound (gated for amb. on snare on loud hits, etc.).

So I would use your best pre's on the most important elements 1st, which again for me generally, would be overheads over toms and hats.

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Re:Efficient use of Mic Pres.

Posted by ritelec - 2008/06/07 10:53

Chris,

I was expirementing a couple weeks back with changing the "polarity" on the drum mics.

Defenately some cool and not too cool sounds.
You mentioned, before you change the polarity you like to go and see it first.

To "see" it, would that be in a pluggin. Could you also change the polarity after the sound has been recorded?

In that Gold bundle, I see some plugs that get into analizing the sound. Is that the direction I should go?

RTASW, overheads or close, dead room or hot live room, dead tuned or ringing tuned kit, getting the "snare" out of the snare drum, the boom or batter head thud out of the bass drum.

Not as easy as it may sound.

For years I've played a deader set which sounded good but recently retuned and removed deadening material. They defenitely sound fatter now and sound great in certain genre of songs, but they sound in left field for others.

Mic and tune for the song? Find default drum sound? Still working it out here.
Easier said than done.

C- when you record drums, to you physically isolate the different mics with materials to stop bleed into other mics? Or do you use a gate? Can you gate the "recorded" sound or does the gate get placed while recording.

Is there a support Cneal fund for all your help on these subjects?

R

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Re:Efficient use of Mic Pres.

Posted by cneal - 2008/06/16 17:11

I'm not sure I understand everything you are asking, so I'll do my best:

- 1) By "see it" I mean recording a pass and looking at the waveforms
- 2) I don't physically isolate mics, with the exception of a) on occasion using a cup or similar to get a little more iso on the snare mic (from hi-hat); b) kick mic placed outside the shell, I will sometimes build an iso tunnel;

I do place mics in such a way that I am utilizing the mics directional response to optimize isolation

- 3) I almost never gate drums prior to recording. It can easily be done in the mix, either with a gate or just plain editing. As momma always said "it's better to have it and not need it, than to need it and not have it". Now my my was talking about my coat, but the phrase really works well in this situation.
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