
Subject: Overproduction other than auto-tune
Posted by [brian21](#) on Wed, 18 May 2011 04:15:27 GMT

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Currently, I think the most notorious example of overproduction is auto-tune. I actually like auto-tune sometimes, but it seems to get the most negative attention. What are some other effects that you think are used too much in music today?

Subject: Re: Overproduction other than auto-tune
Posted by [Adveser](#) on Wed, 18 May 2011 19:51:51 GMT

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I actually prefer "overproduced" music such as Chicago 17. I wouldn't even consider listening to demos of the band playing those songs in a more live recording situation.

The thing I really hate about modern pop music is that they have abandoned organic instruments for the most part, which are usually harmonically limited and of course have singular repetition of the exact same sound. A live drummer has subtle dynamics and timbre every time they strike a drum that registers as completely unique sound to your ears.

Thinking back. I wonder if anyone ever toyed with the idea of miking up an acoustic piano and sending the signal through processing to create synthesizer tones, like a guitarist would. I think that would have given keyboards longevity. If anyone's played a keyboard for a period of time, the same tone becomes very grating due to the repetition of the same sound on the ears. If you can eliminate that effect, keyboards could become as versatile and beloved as guitars have been. I've never had a guitar sound that quickly got irritating, but keys always have that effect.

Subject: Re: Overproduction other than auto-tune
Posted by [Thermionic](#) on Sat, 21 May 2011 02:03:04 GMT

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brian21 wrote on Tue, 17 May 2011 23:15 Currently, I think the most notorious example of overproduction is auto-tune. I actually like auto-tune sometimes, but it seems to get the most negative attention. What are some other effects that you think are used too much in music today?

IMO, compression is hands-down, by far, the most abused and misused effect on recordings these days. It seems that today's norm is to squash the tracks to zero dynamic range, then boost it up to 0dB so that everything is max volume, all the time. It's a big mess of homogenized goo, with all the subtleties, nuances, air, and microdynamics that give the music life and breath destroyed. Of course, LOUD and in-your-face is what the kids want nowadays, so that's what engineers shoot for.....

Don't get me wrong; I'll be the first to admit that compression is an absolutely essential tool for getting a good recorded sound, and I use it profusely. The right compression profile on a kick drum (along with the right mic technique and EQ, of course) means the difference between a dull,

boomy, boxy thud and a tight, fat, meaty punch. The right compression profile makes explosively dynamic pop-and-slap bass tight and smooth without sounding flat and lifeless, and makes it lay in the mix just right. The right compression profile makes a vocal track's nuances sang at nearly whisper level clearly heard on the recording, while preventing very loud vocal passages from overpowering the mix.

What compression should NOT be used for is to squash the dynamic range flat after mixdown to two tracks. AAAAAARRRRGGGHHH, my #1 pet peeve when it comes to how recordings are engineered!

Thermionic

Subject: Re: Overproduction other than auto-tune
Posted by [brian21](#) on Sat, 21 May 2011 08:46:58 GMT
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Adveser, that's a very interesting idea about acoustic pianos. As a piano player, I would love something like that. I saw a rock band once where their lead singer played keyboards, and he was really good. He rocked it out as hard as he could, and I thought it was cool. You make a good point though, I guess for some people that sound gets old after a while.

Thermionic, compression was actually the first effect I was thinking of when I started this thread, I agree with you on that.

Subject: Re: Overproduction other than auto-tune
Posted by [Adveser](#) on Sat, 21 May 2011 20:44:17 GMT
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Compression is not the problem at all IMO. I've heard albums that sound absolutely amazing and there is not a thing I would change that every instrument is compressed to at least -6db. You must do it in the mixing stage and not the mastering stage though.

The problem is laziness. Compression is a delicate art that requires applying the effect multiple times and equalization between applications.

For the record, people calling over compression "clipping" is not accurate. There is nothing clipped at all on a square looking waveform due to compression. All that happens is that the 3db "peak" that was there is matched to the loudness of the rest of the sound. True, it may sound abrasive. It may appear that a signal had it's top chopped off, but that simply isn't the case.

I've said it before and I'll say it now. There is a lot of hypocrisy in saying that analogue is pure and digital compressed is an abortion that has no business in quality production, considering they are doing the exact same thing, but with a different sound. Analog sounds warm because it is compressed at both the recording stage and when the information is physically recorded on to the

medium. This is distortion, not fidelity. When someone does anything in digital to enhance the sound at the expense of fidelity it is always met with harsh criticism. The same thing is usually praised in analogue.

Are people really that "not over it" when it comes to Digital Vs. Analog?

Subject: Re: Overproduction other than auto-tune
Posted by [emaugust](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2011 13:36:05 GMT
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This might be really ticky tac, but one of my production pet peeves is when people really ride the vocal effects hard in a song, like Katy Perry - E.T. - if you listen in it goes from a slap delay in the verse to a widened doubled effect in the verse to a more layered pre-chorus to probably a 8x layered chorus with that stutter chop effect.

I think from a producers viewpoint it is probably just awesome, but to me it feels too much sometimes.
