



By Matt Kees

PreSonus ADL 700 Channel Strip & Monitor Station



The ADL 700 Channel Strip by PreSonus stems from the ADL 600 discrete Class A tube preamplifier, designed in part by Anthony DeMaria of 'Anthony DeMaria Labs.'

Out of the box, this is a solid, ruggedly built unit that ensures reliability. This channel strip, streeting at \$1,999, is certainly designed for 'pro-project' studios or single input project studios (like mine) for smaller productions, voice overs or broadcast. The ADL 700 provides a stellar sounding mic preamp at a very decent price. The mic pre is worth the price of admission... but you get more.

The ADL 700, unlike the 600, features a compressor and a parametric EQ. Otherwise, much is similar. The 700 uses the same DeMaria designed Class A discrete tube pre's incorporating a 12AT7 and two 6922 vacuum tubes. There is input gain control (stepped in 5dB increments) with continuously variable trim. There is also a high pass filter (20-200Hz), a line level quarter inch DI input on the front, and multiple impedance settings for mics (150, 300, 900, 1500). Also included are a -20dB pad, +48v phantom power, & polarity switch.

The preamp is probably the most impressive part of this unit. It is very clean and clear, yet musical. It's also quite versatile. There is so much headroom with this preamp. You can drive it extremely hard, and get a glimmer of breaking up... but you can slam it hard and allow the tubes to saturate, and it sounds wonderful. The various impedance inputs will also give you a variety of sounds that are quite fun to experiment with.

Next in the channel is the FET based compressor, designed by Robert Creel of PreSonus. Compression ratios range from 1:1 to 4:1. There are several low ratio options between 1:1 and 2:1... basically half of the continuous sweep of the pot. There is also a switch that allows you to place the EQ before the compressor in the signal chain, or you can bypass the compressor.

Next is the EQ. It features 4 frequency

bands. The low and high have either a shelf or peak curve. The 2 mid frequency bands are gently sloped Q curves. Frequency selection and gain control for the EQ are continuously variable, and the gain has a slight detent at 0dB. Again, you have the option of placing the EQ before the compressor in the chain of events, or you can bypass the EQ completely.

While reviewing the ADL 700, I have used 2 units together, and you are able to stereo link the two compressor sections.

During recording sessions using this preamp, I noticed an increased depth and clarity, especially with vocals. The Direct Input for instruments also boasts a more musical signal, as opposed to simply using my XMAX preamps on my Firestudio, which sound incredible on their own.

I highly recommend this channel strip for recording/project studios, regardless of size. The most important thing when recording anything is capturing the signal well... with the ADL 700, you can capture it extremely well.

MONITOR STATION

So, in a nut-shell, the Monitor Station enables you to manage multiple audio sources, as well as monitor speakers & headphones right from your desktop... it's easy and it's fun! Yes, fun! Lots of buttons, lights and knobs.

It has two sets of stereo, line-level analog 1/4" inputs and a pair of RCA analog aux/phono inputs with a defeatable RIAA filter so you can connect a DVD player or turntable. You

can listen to all 3 inputs at the same time, or individually. Also, you can 'sum' these inputs to a mono switch to check for any phase problems your mix might have.

There are 3 speaker selections for you to select from while auditioning your music, each with their own separate volume control. You can use them simultaneously, or one at a time. There are 4 distinct headphone amplifiers with individual level controls. A great option for a project studio with a small group of performers. Grab a few headphone extensions, and you're on your way!

The Monitor Station allows you to route your audio signals to one of 2 audio paths... Main & Cue. You can then route these 2 options to your headphones. This enables you to send a mix with a click track to one input, while sending the other to your main mix, so you don't have to listen to a click in your control room :)

Other cool features include an LED meter, a large volume knob, a mute button, a 'dim' button (music is attenuated for conversations), and a built in talk back mic. This is an excellent tool for a project studio. Retails for around \$300.

