

By GeorgePetersen

Channel Strips

Originally designed for studios, channel strips — in this case, single-channel units offering a mic preamp, EQ, dynamics (and sometime more) — have become popular with sound reinforcement users. Besides adding a different flavor to your mix, these are an ideal solution for putting a little “frosting on the cake” for that featured performer’s “money channel” or a bit of analog warmth, punch or sizzle to your console. The trend is on the rise and we found plenty to choose from, for any budget. Check ‘em out!

Aphex Channel



PREAMP: Tube
EQ: Single band parametric; HP filter
DYNAMICS: EasyRider compressor, logic-assisted gate
OTHER PROCESSING: Big Bottom, Aural Exciter, de-esser
SIZE: 1U
WEIGHT: 6 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; AES and S/PDIF digital outs

Price \$999

aphex.com

API The Channel Strip



PREAMP: Solid state 512c type
EQ: 550a type with three sweep bands plus shelf HF/LF; HP filter
DYNAMICS: 527-type comp/limiter
OTHER PROCESSING: Thrust circuit for added punch.
SIZE: 1U
WEIGHT: 9.5 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; inserts at all stages and external muting access

Price \$2,545

apiaudio.com

ART Voice Channel



PREAMP: Solid state
Tube w/ selectable plate voltage
EQ: 4-band with sweepable mids and HF/LF shelving; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Compressor/limiter/gate
OTHER PROCESSING: Variable input impedance; de-esser
SIZE: 2U;
WEIGHT: 10.5 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; AES, USB and S/PDIF digital outs

Price \$449

artproaudio.com

Manley VoxBox



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 3-band Pultec-style; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Optical compressor; limiter
OTHER PROCESSING: De-esser
SIZE: 3U
WEIGHT: 14 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input

Price \$4,140

manleylabs.com

Millennia STT-1 Origin



PREAMP: Tube or solid state (switchable)
EQ: 4-band with parametric mids and shelf HF/LF; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Optical compressor/limiter
OTHER PROCESSING: De-esser
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 22 pounds
EXTRAS: Twin Topology with tube or solid state circuit in any section

Price \$3,067

mil-media.com

Pendulum Audio Quartet II



PREAMP: Tube
EQ: 3-band shelf/dip/peak; 75/100 Hz HP filter
DYNAMICS: Compressor and peak limiter
OTHER PROCESSING: Transformer/xformerless input switch
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 15.8 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; inserts on all sections.

Price \$4,600

pendulumaudio.com

PreSonus ADL 700

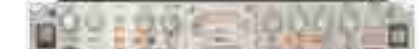


PREAMP: Tube
EQ: 4-band sweepable; HP filter
DYNAMICS: FET-based compressor
OTHER PROCESSING: None
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 22.8 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; Anthony DeMaria design

Price \$1,999

presonus.com

Avalon Vt-737sp



PREAMP: Tube
EQ: 4-band with sweep mids and shelf LF/HF; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Compressor/limiter
OTHER PROCESSING: None
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 22 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; 11 selectable HP points

Price \$2,250

avalondesign.com

Buzz Audio ARC-1.1



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 4-band with sweep mids and shelf LF/HF; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Optical compressor; FET limiter
OTHER PROCESSING: Clean/transformer insert switch
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 15.4 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; variable input impedance

Price \$2,695

buzzaudio.com

dbx 376



PREAMP: Tube
EQ: 3-band with sweep mid; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Overeas compressor
OTHER PROCESSING: De-esser
SIZE: 1U
WEIGHT: 6 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; AES and S/PDIF digital outs

Price \$529

dbxpro.com

Drawner MX-60-PRO Front End One



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 3-band, parametric mid; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Compressor/gate/limiter
OTHER PROCESSING: De-esser
SIZE: 1U
WEIGHT: 7 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; “Tubesound” saturation effect

Price \$597

drawmer.com

Rupert Neve Designs Portico II Channel



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 4-band parametric mids and peak/shelf HF/LF; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Compressor with switchable feed back/forward modes
OTHER PROCESSING: De-esser
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 17 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; parallel comp/uncomp blending; Texture harmonic control

Price \$3,145

rupertneve.com

Solid State Logic XLogic Alpha Channel



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 3-band with parametric mid; HP filter
DYNAMICS: “Lite” limiter
OTHER PROCESSING: Variable Harmonic Drive adds 2nd/3rd harmonic distortion
SIZE: 1U
WEIGHT: 7 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; S/PDIF digital out

Price \$1,099

solidstatellogic.com

SPL Channel One



PREAMP: Tube
EQ: 3-band; sweep LF/MF and shelf Air band HF
DYNAMICS: Compressor/noise gate
OTHER PROCESSING: De-esser; FET distortion control
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 9.2 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; headphone monitoring section

Price \$1,669

spl-usa.com

Summit Audio ECS-410 Everest



PREAMP: Hybrid tube/transistor
EQ: 3-band passive, each with six switchable frequencies
DYNAMICS: Compressor with “Classic” and “Tight” modes
OTHER PROCESSING: Drive gain distortion processing
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 26 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; touchpad processing order routing

Price \$3,499

summitaudio.com

Focusrite ISA430 Mk II



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 4-band with parametric mids and shelf HF/LF; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Compressor (optical/VCA switchable); expander/gate
OTHER PROCESSING: De-esser; soft limiter
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 16.7 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; input impedance switching; “Air” band boost

Price \$1,999

focusrite.com

GML 2020



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 4-band parametric; HP filter
DYNAMICS: 8900 Dynamic Range Controller
OTHER PROCESSING: None
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 11 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; requires Model 9015 external power supply

Price \$6,650

massenburg.com

Grace Design m103



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 3-band with parametric mid and shelf/peak HF/LF; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Optical compressor
OTHER PROCESSING: None
SIZE: 1U
WEIGHT: 4.5 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; ribbon mic mode raises input impedance

Price \$1,695

gracedesign.com

Joemeek oneQ2



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 4-band with sweep mids and shelf HF/LF; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Optical compressor
OTHER PROCESSING: HF enhancer
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 6.6 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; “Iron” switch for two transformer flavors

Price \$999

joemeek.com

Symetrix 528E Voice Processor



PREAMP: Solid State
EQ: 3-band parametric
DYNAMICS: Compressor/ downward expander
OTHER PROCESSING: De-esser
SIZE: 1U
WEIGHT: 7.6 pounds
EXTRAS: Individual patch points for each section

Price \$849

symetrixaudio.com

Tascam TA-1VP



PREAMP: Solid state
EQ: 2-band parametric
DYNAMICS: Compressor/gate
OTHER PROCESSING: Antares Auto-Tune; de-esser
SIZE: 1U
WEIGHT: 4.4 pounds
EXTRAS: Antares Mic Modeler; tube modeling effect

Price \$399

tascam.com

Tube-Tech MEC 1A



PREAMP: Tube
EQ: 3-band with semi-parametric mid, shelf LF/HF; HP filter
DYNAMICS: Optical compressor
OTHER PROCESSING: None
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 12 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; all-tube design

Price \$4,650

tube-tech.com

Universal Audio LA-610 Mk II



PREAMP: Tube
EQ: 2-band with 3-stepped frequency shelving
DYNAMICS: LA2A T4-style optical compressor
OTHER PROCESSING: None
SIZE: 2U
WEIGHT: 12 pounds
EXTRAS: Hi-Z input; transformer I/O; switchable input impedance

Price \$1,599

uaudio.com