SPL M/S Master

The master of the 120V sound chain has arrived with a cost-effective M/S solution for mastering engineers on a lower budget.

NIGEL JOPSON looks to the mid and to the side...

A bonus of equipment selection in the days of vinyl mastering was that once the cutting lathe was chosen the manufacturer supplied a rig replete with useful extras — faders, meters, elliptical EQs, and the very important Mid/Side matrix. The modern mastering engineer who’s made the commitment to analogue now has many options for acquiring vintage or reproduction-classic EQs and compressors, but the administrative electronics necessary to join them together are more elusive. Now SPL, maker of the high-fidelity 120V (Class A) MMC1 Mastering console as used by Bob Ludwig (Resolution V9.2), has come up with a cost-effective solution for mastering engineers with lesser budgets.

The M/S Master (£1449) has balanced XLR stereo I-Os, and switchable Mid and Side balanced sends and returns. This means that conventional stereo EQs and compressors can be hooked up, chained if necessary, with left channel used for Mid and right for Side. The Mid and Side sends each have relay operated insert switches, and the entire M/S unit is taken out of circuit with the Active button on the far right of the front panel. A clever part of the concept is that, when the Active blue LED is not illuminated, the stereo processors inserted on the rear are relayed over for Left-Right operation once more. So a small mastering room can do without an expensive Mid/Side matrix. The modern mastering engineer who’s made the commitment to analogue now has many options for acquiring vintage or reproduction-classic EQs and compressors, but the administrative electronics necessary to join them together are more elusive. Now SPL, maker of the high-fidelity 120V (Class A) MMC1 Mastering console as used by Bob Ludwig (Resolution V9.2), has come up with a cost-effective solution for mastering engineers with lesser budgets.

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