

Discovering ClockWise Orange

J.J. Girardot – September 2016

contact@coloredblackboxes.com

Abstract

A very short introduction to *ClockWise Orange*...

1 What is ClockWise Orange ?

ClockWise Orange is a plugin aimed at *sound design*. It looks like a complex device (and in some sense, it is), but it lets you build very creative sounds from almost any set of sound samples. It uses for that a very long stereo delay line, which is explored by 8 multi tap delay engines (called «lines» in this document), each one including various modulations and filters. If you read french, you are invited to look at the very detailed reference manual. If you don't, do yourself a favour, and just spend ten or twenty minutes exploring its possibilities with the numerous provided presets... You'll discover that ClockWise Orange is unlike any other plug-in you have ever tried.

[[Note that ClockWise Orange is currently only available as VST and AU plugins for Macintosh, in 32/64 binary form (so, except ProTools, it should run on any Macintosh DAW). We expect to have, in a few months, Windows versions as well...]]

2 Installation

The version you have is fully functioning, there is no copy protection of any sort. Just install the file «CBBOrange.vst» in /Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST, and/or, for the AU version, the file «CBBOrange.component» in the components directory, /Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components, and finally the directory «Orange-Presets» anywhere in your home directory.

3 Exploring...

Run your favourite DAW (mine is REAPER). Create a stereo track, where you install a sequence of various sounds, each being typically between 20 and 100 seconds long: human voices, individual instruments (piano, violin, cello...), percussive sounds, noises, and whatever material is familiar to you. Make sure to have at least a 5 or 6 minutes track, and loop on that sequence.

Install the ClockWise Orange plug-in on the track, and start playing. The default preset just plays the input, but also records it in its delay line (which is about 30 minutes long). Let it play at least once the full loop. And click the «C/Rst» button (in the left/bottom part of the window) so that it is grey, and not yellow. This keeps the contents of the buffer when you stop playing, instead of clearing it...

Then start loading the presets: type «L» after clicking in the plug-in window. This opens a dialog box. Select any file in the «Orange-Presets» directory, and listen. Many presets take some time to deploy their characteristics. And since the plug-in records also its output in the delay line, every past manipulation has an effect on the current sound...

4 Some suggestions

Many presets have much more possibilities than the sound you initially get when you load them. Take «*Resonance 1*», for example and loop it on some voice sample. The preset provides 8 comb filters, each tuned to a specific harmonic. The brown tall vertical slider lets you choose which lines are active. Click on the blue arrow, and move it slowly up and down. The «width» of the slider (actually, its height, since the slider is vertical) is such that two lines are simultaneously active. Listen to what happens when you activate various pairs of delays. Now, click on the arrow again, and move the mouse from right to left and left to right. This changes the width of the slider, and hence the number of simultaneous active lines. Make it small, so that just one line is active at a time. Now you can hear individually each specific tuning. You can also, without touching the slider, activate each line by clicking on its on/off button (named «D. 1», «D. 2», etc.). Create complex chords, by activating three or four lines – for example, the first 4 lines build a major nine chord. Finally, the global «D. Tune» pot (left, center) lets you modify simultaneously the tuning of all the lines. Change the value, listen as the global tuning slowly changes (if the changes are too slow for you, just lower the value of pot «Alpha»). Finally, note that for each line, the tuning secret is in the value of the «Delay» pot. Change these values to build different harmonic (or inharmonic) intervals...



Fig. 1: ClockWise Orange – User interface

As an other example, take «*Classical Echoes*». As a preset, it provides a mix of the input with the results of some settings of delay line 1. Take some time to apply it to some sounds you are familiar with, and change the «Dry» and «Wet» settings according to your taste. Then, move the vertical slider to test the settings of the other lines (in some cases, you may wish to turn «Dry» to zero to hear only the wet sound, and have a best understanding of what the settings do – you’ll find then, for example, that line 1 is tuned to provide a classical ping-pong effect, well audible on separate percussive sounds). Turn off and on the various delay lines, and see how they interact together. Some small changes in the settings may have dramatic results: listen to line 7, then change the value of «Cpr/Exp» from 0.99 to 1.00: this turns the line into a resonant filter, with a very different sound.

We have just discovered a few square inches of a very large iceberg... Try exploring that way other presets, and discover the unlimited possibilities of ClockWise Orange...