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REDDI FOR SESSION TO SESSION PERFECTION

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA: In-demand bass player Reggie Hamilton discovered a piece of equipment this year that helps him overcome the limitations of the hi-Z instrument input signal chain in the average studio. Since first trying the A Designs REDDI all-tube direct box last July, it has been his constant companion, reports Hamilton, and ensures that he can consistently deliver exactly the sound for which he has been hired as he moves from session to session.

“The first four days I had it at four completely different sessions -- pop, rock, R&B and acoustic jazz bass. I found it honestly to be exceptional, and that’s without blowing smoke. I really, really like the box and take it with me everywhere I go. I love the tube sound. It’s so natural and warm,” says the busy musician, whose resume of live and recording session work includes such diverse artists as Boyz II Men, Ricky Martin, Kelly Clarkson, Seal, Whitney Houston, Warren Zevon, Johnny Hallyday, Bette Midler, Randy Newman, and his mentors, Stanley Clarke and George Duke, among many others.

The challenge, Hamilton observes, is that not all studios pay as much attention to the high-impedance instrument input chain as they do to the vocal path. Even some of the high-end preamplifiers most commonly found at many studios come up short due to manufacturing and design compromises. “They’re really concerned with how it sounds with a microphone; they’re not thinking about how it sounds for a bass guitar or a transducer for an acoustic bass or a keyboard for a synth bass.”

Carrying the REDDI from one gig to the next eliminates that problem, he says, and allows him to do his job. “A lot of people I work with have nice home studios but there’s often little thought for the inputs they’re getting from somewhere else. Some people have a signal path that’s pretty

poor. You could have bad cabling in the patchbay and lose 4 dB, which is a pain. Taking the REDDI to a session, especially having 16 dB of gain, really helps a lot.”

He adds, “I know from my bass and the cabling that I use, down to the DI, that after that it’s on them -- I’ve fulfilled my part. It’s nice to have a DI that I like and trust as much as my bass.”

Years of recording in a wide variety of locations, from the top commercial facilities to high-end home studios have exposed Hamilton to nearly every DI box available. Compared to some of those high-end boxes, he says, “This is significantly better. Having used all those DIs, I’m really happy with the REDDI.”

He continues, “It might not have the tonal variance that I might have with some units, but that’s all made up by the fact that it’s all natural tone, and it sounds excellent. I like the way my sound saturates the tape -- or the hard disc, as it were. You can bring a great sound to the table automatically. You don’t need anything to polish it up. It’s just true, which I like.”

Not surprisingly, engineers at Hamilton’s sessions have also been impressed. “So much so that a friend of mine, Tony Shepard, who has a studio, Tony Sound, now has one also. Each guy I’ve worked with has been really pleased with it. They like that there’s control. And everybody likes the really shiny light!”