

are the revolutionary Crowley & Tripp ribbon mics. They are really different."

These comprise the Soundstage Image, the Proscenium, and C&T's flagship model, the Studio Vocalist, a large ribbon mic with a figure-eight pattern that has been specially built for voice recording applications. Providing the highest output signal of any natural ribbon microphone, the Studio Vocalist keeps a low noise floor, offers increased fullness via a smooth proximity effect, and has a symmetric frequency response well suited for minimizing off-axis coloration.

"It has a lot more output and a lot of natural brightness, which is not really characteristic of traditional ribbon microphones," Resta says. "That's been one of my secret weapons — I'll put it on a Matchless guitar amp and run a keyboard through it. I like the saturation that you get with analog, and I try to put that into the digital world."

SYNTH-ESIZING RHYTHMS

"For 'Dark Star,' I ran a lot of analog synths through various guitar pedals, miked them with the Crowley & Tripps, and got some really unique textures," Resta says. "With a lot of my stuff, you can't tell if it's a guitar or a keyboard, and with the circuit bent drum machines I make these really unusual beats that glitch but also groove. It's sort of like an MPC style. Having worked with a lot of hip-hop artists, my music is beat-driven . . . it's definitely electronic, but there are lots of human elements too, like a real drummer on top of the machine stuff."

"Nuno would send me a stereo mix of music and beats in Pro Tools, and then I would just start experimenting and cutting things up. I don't really use MIDI — years ago I did, but I don't quantize anything. I just play everything in real time and then edit it in Pro Tools, because I find there's so much more of a human aspect to that. I might quantize things slightly by moving the audio around, but I gave up on MIDI because I found the timing lag really annoying. Instead, I prefer to use CV [control voltage-based gear] because it's instantaneous — when you have those things sync up, it's just beautiful to hear it where you want it right now. I was first and foremost a drummer when I started out, and so everything for me is about the rhythm."

"In this case, as with everything else, I'd just go by my gut instinct. I'd start plugging things in and trying things, like the circuit bent drum machines and Suzuki Omnichords. I've got quite a collection of those, and I would run them through various guitar FX pedals. I have a collection of hand-built pedals by Pete Cornish — he built me these sustain pedals that are to die for. It's a tone that you only hear on something like 'Revolution' by The Beatles. It's incredibly saturated and analog and complex and wonderful. So, I run things through those and they take on this otherworldly quality."

MAKING THE HARD LIFE EASY

Constantly requesting feedback, Resta would overnight Farrell and Bettencourt the files he'd been working on via FedEx, and they in turn would call him to express their likes and dislikes.

"I left Nuno's tracks alone," Resta says. "He does his own thing and I do mine. My stuff is more programming, playing keyboards, and coming up with various transitional noises. I'll even take some stuff off vinyl, like the swell of an orchestra, and then run it through processors like [ITC Electronic] FireworX or Eventide's DSP4000 to create those really interesting, haunting textures that might go into the last chorus."

"On a track like 'Dark Star' I also used my Roger Linn MPC 3000, which I call the drum machine with a soul. That's really the sound of pretty much everything I do. I swear there's something about the way the clock works in that thing — it has just a wonderful feel

that is a widely imitated groove template. In my case I use the real thing, and I take a lot of my own samples off old vinyl records, like single snare hits and single kicks, because even though they're samples they do have that character. The way a speaker moves when you put an analog signal into it is unmistakable — a real sine wave is not jagged, and it definitely moves speakers in a different way.

"The most enjoyable Satellite Party song I worked on was one called 'Awesome.' Perry just keeps singing that word over and over again, almost like he's looking at a picture of stars and different galaxies. It's so floaty and beautiful — I love atmospheric sounds that make you feel like you're floating, and so for that track I did lots of ambient keyboards; analog stuff from my [Roland] MKS-880, which has 16 oscillators. I also have another thing called the Freeman Symphonizer which has 40 oscillators in it, and it produces that sort of rich analog string texture, which is another of the sounds that I put in there, along with various percussion loops. I make my own loops, like bongo loops and tom loops, and I run those through guitar pedals as well. Then, after I record them I re-amp them — a lot of my percussion stuff made it onto this record."

When asked which was the most difficult track, Resta is non-committal, insisting that all of the songs were nothing less than a pleasure to work on.

"It was a dream come true for me to have a guy who's into pioneering and always pushing the boundaries," he remarks. "That's the ultimate client. I mean, what could be better?" **EQ**



Anthony Resta exploring the final frontier.