BAND SOLO
Solo a band to focus on how it sounds

BAND CROSSOVER AND LINK
Control the lower and upper crossovers and link bands

THRESHOLD
Wide threshold range, all the way down to –40dB

DRIVE
Per-band drive, modelled on classic SSL console circuitry

RATIO
Switchable from a gentle 1.5:1 through to an intense 10:1

BANDS VISUALISATION
Shows the levels, thresholds and crossover cutoffs being used

BALANCE
Per-band and master wet/dry mix controls

ATTACK
There's a good choice of attack times (labelled in milliseconds)

RELEASE
Release times range from 0.1s to a lazy 1.2s

EXTERNAL SIDECHAIN
Set a band to respond to an external sidechain signal

Solid State Logic
G3 MultiBusComp

£192/$240 PC MAC

The G Series bus compressor's classic sound can be restricted by its design, says **Stuart Adams**, so SSL has combined three into one

> There are many reasons why SSL's SL 4000 G large-format mixing consoles elicit such dewy-eyed praise. In a nutshell, it's because every system and circuit within a G Series is designed to deliver astonishing audio clarity and a musically sympathetic response. The master bus compressor built in to the G Series is a case in point: whether it's configured to create a feather-light touch of smoothing or to crush your audio's dynamics entirely, the results just sound... well... *right*.

That said, the G Series bus compressor does have quite a narrow sweet spot to aim for –

if what you're after is a transparent compression that adds cohesion and glue without obvious volume pumping or squishing. This narrow window is a characteristic of all broadband compressors, and is the primary justification for using multiband dynamics processing. What would be ideal, then, is a multiband version of the G Series... and that's exactly what SSL has created with its new G3 MultiBusComp plugin.

Crossover dressing

As implied by the name, the G3 MultiBusComp offers three processing bands, each graced with

an individual compressor modelled on the G Series bus compressor. Bands can be enabled and disabled individually, and each can be solo'd so that you can hear clearly what it is doing.

The lower and upper crossover frequencies can be freely and easily adjusted to tune them to the material you are working on. Unusually, though, the low and high bands each have a Link option that disables their compressor and bypasses their crossover point, in effect combining that band's signal with the mid band for processing. Some great-sounding results can be achieved this way, for example processing

The narrow sweet spot of the original G Series bus compressor has been transformed into a wide, sugary plateau

the low end on its own for solidity, while processing mid and high frequencies, where all the sonic detail resides, as one for more cohesion. You can also link all three bands, leaving you with a conventional broadband G Series bus compressor.

Embellishments

The settings offered are the same for each of the three compressors, and are the standard fare of threshold, ratio, attack, release and makeup gain. To these, SSL has added a couple of very nice embellishments not normally seen on a multiband compressor. The first is a per-band distortion generator, modelled on the drive circuit found in all SSL 4K console preamps (the entire SL 4000 range, from the original A Series through to the final G Series). This does a great job of emulating the beloved SSL warmth, sparkle and even aggression. Being able to vary the strength of the effect on a per-band basis can yield spectacular results – just dial a load into the high band to see what we mean!

The second embellishment is that each band has its own individual wet/dry mix control. This may sound trivial, but it really isn't, because it gives so much control over how transparent or obvious the overall effect sounds, without sacrificing control over the most energetic parts of the material. There's also a conventional master wet/dry mix setting.

Approaching perfection

The results delivered by G3 MultiBusComp could not be more perfect, whether it's adding loudness to a full mix, making a drum submix sound huge, or laying a blanket of silky smoothness across a bed of backing vocals.

The G Series' quintessential character and musicality shine through from every pore, as

The visualisation makes it easy to understand what's happening in each band's sidechain path

Superb sidechaining

It's common for a compressor to allow an external signal to be connected to its sidechain, so that the main signal is processed according to that external signal's dynamics. Of course G3 MultiBusComp can do this too – but what's more unusual is that external sidechaining can be enabled on a per-band basis, making for some fascinating possibilities. The only downside is that there's only one external sidechain path shared by all bands that use it.

Sidechain filtering is much rarer on multiband compressors. This doesn't stop G3 MultiBusCompressor from including per-band sidechain filters, though, with each band including a bell-type cut or boost filter in its sidechain. Moreover, the low- and high-pass filters that control a band's crossover points can be disabled in a band's sidechain path, with the practical upshot of allowing a band to be tuned to respond to frequencies outside of its compression band.

This would all get confusing but for the intuitive sidechain visualisation view and the ability to solo each band's sidechain, both of which make it really easy to understand and conceptualise exactly what's happening.

does SSL's legendary attention to detail. Perhaps best of all, the narrow sweet spot of the original G Series bus compressor has been transformed into a wide, sugary plateau packed full of sonic possibilities. We have, without question, found our new favourite mix and mastering compressor! **cm**

Web www.solidstatelogic.com

A multiband G Series bus compressor, you say? Why has nobody thought of this before?

Alternatively

AMEK Mastering Compressor
$399
Modelled on a rare and revered hardware unit, this plugin delivers transparent loudness effortlessly

PSP oldTimerMB
$199
Three bands of PSP compressor make for great-sounding masters with a vintage flavour

Verdict

For Per-band saturation/drive and wet/dry balance
Sidechain filtering for each band
Attractive and easy to use
Clear, helpful interactive visualisations

Against All bands have to share the same external sidechain bus

By tripling up on a classic bus compressor, SSL has created a near-perfect submix, mix and mastering compressor

10/10