

INCLUDES AUDIO

WHAT IS IT?

A modelled guitar amp plug-in

CONTACT

Who: Plugin Alliance
Web: www.plugin-alliance.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Three great Rock amps
- 2 A lovely new Jazz amp model
- 3 Simple to use



Brainworx bx_rockrack | \$249

With its simple design, and small number of well-modelled amps, has the bx_rockrack come of age? **Stuart Bruce** sharpens his plectrum

SPECS

System Requirements:
PC: 2GHz Intel compatible CPU, 2GB RAM, Windows XP or higher, Pro Tools 7.0 or higher or VST compatible host
Mac: 2GHz Intel or Power PC CPU, 2GB RAM, OS X 10.5 or higher, Pro Tools 7.0 or higher or VST/AU compatible host

The original release of the rockrack was, as the name suggests, firmly rooted in the world of Rock and Metal.

And that's hardly surprising when you consider that Brainworx CEO Dirk Ulrich's other job is as a well-respected Rock producer and engineer. The latest release broadens the available palette of sounds with a clean and a crunchy Jazz amp and allows you to bypass the speaker simulations, so you can use other cabinet emulations or put it through a power amp and speaker setup for live use.

Simple samples

The rockrack's design ethos was to have a few (currently seven) very high quality emulations with the addition of a gate (essential for those shredders out there) and a simple delay. Dirk and the team have gone to a lot of trouble to use the best possible recording chains and the samples were all made in the Brainworx studio in Germany or The Mix Room in LA.

The straightforward plug-in interface stays the same for whichever amp you

select and, having clicked on the grille, gives you direct access to all the functions on one page. The gate does exactly what it should do and has more than enough variation to suit all users. Next to that are the pre-amp filters which allow you to shape the tone of the guitar before it hits the pre: particularly useful for removing right-hand muting thumps when using high gain settings or for backing off the top a bit. The simple delay has feedback and filter (Lo-Fi) controls. There's a tap tempo function but I'd like to see some modulation controls. As it stands the delay is good, but a bit boring.

The amp controls have exactly what you'd expect in terms of gains and tone-shaping with the addition of a five-band graphic. Depending on the model, there are two switches that appear to the left of the gain control which do different things as they would on the original amps.

Rock solid

As you'd expect, big distorted sounds are prevalent. The three lead emulations are just about as big and

dirty as you could desire. Backing off the input gains gives plenty of great crunchy tones and the temptation to play all your favourite Rock riffs is overwhelming. The different speaker cabinets and mic setups give plenty of tonal variation and it was easy to find a tone to sit in a track. The new Jazz amps are also very strong and the clean setting has real depth and punch. It's smooth without being dull, and if you flick through the cabinets you can quickly go from mellow to biting. Clean settings go from the classic metal shimmer of Metallica to some more weighty bluesy tones.

Overall, these are great simulations, well presented, simple to use and with a surprising amount of tonal variation from a relatively small selection of amps. Excellent and extremely user-friendly. **FM**

FutureMusic VERDICT

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|-------------|----------------------|
| STABILITY | ████████████████████ |
| VALUE | ██████████████████ |
| EASE OF USE | ██████████████████ |
| VERSATILITY | ██████████████████ |
| RESULTS | ██████████████████ |

A great Rock amp plug-in with enough features and tonal variation to appeal to a range of guitarists.