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MONARCH TAPE MACHINE

The **Monarch Tape Machine** is a faithful and modern musical tape machine designed for tone, weight, and control without the noise, drift, or maintenance of vintage hardware. It focuses on the sound of tape itself: head interaction, saturation, frequency shaping, and dynamics, while keeping the workflow fast and intentional.

Concept & Philosophy

Monarch is not about chaos, warble, or nostalgia-for-nostalgia's sake, it is stable, clean, and controlled. Monarch is closer to a perfectly calibrated mastering deck than a broken cassette machine.

Controls

Tape Type and Speed

- **CA-99**
Inspired by modern high-output, high-headroom tape, this setting has clear transient handling, tighter low end, and extended high frequency response.
- **CA-56**
Inspired by retro tape formulas from the 60s and 70s, the CA-56 has an earlier saturation onset, along with more dense low-mids and a softer, yet still snappy top end response.
- **30 IPS**
Faster tape speed with improved clarity, punch, and high-frequency extension. Delivers a tighter low end, faster transient response, and cleaner highs. Saturation occurs more gradually, making it ideal for subtle colour and bus processing.
- **15 IPS**
Slower tape speed with increased low-frequency weight and natural tape

compression. Emphasizes low-end density and glue, with a slightly softer high-frequency response. Transients are rounded more quickly, producing thickness, cohesion, and a sense of mass.

Other Controls and Elements

- **Input Calibration**
The Monarch is specifically calibrated for a healthy incoming signal, however should your source be too loud or quiet for your desired taste, you can calibrate it further with 18 db of input boost or trim.
- **Drive**
An automatic gain-calibrated drive control. The more you turn it, the more tape saturation will occur.
- **Trim**
An output trim for reducing the total output signal of the plug-in. If your signal is getting too close to digital 0, you can safely back it off with this.
- **LF Bias**
Adjusts the low frequency response into the tape saturation. Boosting or cutting this changes not only the frequency response of the low end, but the drive characteristics, resulting in a leaner low end to your left and a much more bloomed and pronounced one to your right. This bias response is unique to each tape type.
- **HF Bias**
Adjusts the high frequency response into the tape saturation. Boosting or cutting this affect the high end response of the tape, along with its distortion characteristics. It is also unique to each tape type, with the ability to smoothly shape the overall sonic characteristics of the machine.
- **VU Meter**
Calibrated for the input, the VU meter will show you when you are hitting a driving signal into the machine. The sweet spot is different on each tape, but objectively around -3 and 1 is fantastic.
- **Power**
Bypasses the plug-in.

Panel Features

- **Oversampling (OS)**
4x oversampling toggle to reduce aliasing at high input levels. This sounds great on something like a master bus, but is open for experimentation at the track level, as sometimes distortions can sound better with it off.
- **Preset System**
Save and recall your favourite settings. Also full of many artist presets designed to help you get an amazing sound quickly.
- **Resizable UI (Bottom Right)**
Variable resizing capability. Resize it bigger or smaller til you're comfy.
- **License Window (Canvas Audio Logo)**
Provides information about plugin version and activating/deactivating your license.

Tips & Tricks

Monarch is built with extreme ease and efficiency in mind. Its default setting is a perfect place to start for something like a mix bus. However with just a few tweaks, Monarch can open a world of saturation possibilities.

- **Drum Bus Drive**
Select the CA-99 and switch to 15 IPS. Dial in a taste of LF Bias, and cut just a bit of HF Bias. Start driving until your kicks and snares soften just a bit.
- **Vocal Bus Glue**
On CA-99, push just a bit of HF Bias and drive until you hear that sizzle on the loudest parts of your vocals. Back off a bit from there, that's the sweet spot. Experiment with CA-56 and cutting a bit of HF Bias for a different vocal vibe.
- **Snare Drum Saturation**
CA-56 is the perfect tape formula for drum shells, especially snare. Get heavy handed with the HF Bias and hit the snare with a hefty amount of drive until the low mids bloom, then back off a hair. If you feel the snare is just too pokey after this, switching to 15 IPS will help soften the top just enough to make your snares sit perfectly amongst the drums.
- **Heavy Guitars**
Set the tape to CA-56 and drive just around 3 o'clock. Boost the HF Bias to tastes

until the mid bite opens up the tone. Play with the 15 IPS to lock in a different vibe. Great for making amp sim guitars feel more alive.

- **Thick Synth Energy**

This is going to sound like a cop out, but any setting combination with a healthy amount of drive will really make synth elements huge. Synths love tape saturation, so go ham here and find what suits your taste! I don't think you'll be disappointed.