SONAR X1 Advanced Workshop with Craig Anderton - Chapter Breakdown

Section 1: Better Workflow and Creativity

Introducing Skylight: SONAR X1's new interface is all about optimizing workflow. This chapter shows the highlights of the Skylight interface, and how it streamlines the recording, editing, and mixing process.

Creating Screensets: Screensets go beyond the "layouts" in previous versions of SONAR by updating dynamically as you work with them—they even adapt automatically to the current project's workflow.

Editing with Smart Tools: The Smart Tool minimizes tool-switching by providing multiple functions, based on context and placement within a clip.

Object-oriented editing: If you've ever wanted to process just one note in one clip, SONAR's clip-based, object-oriented editing makes it easy to get as detailed as you want.

Entering the Matrix View: Find out the basics of SONAR's Matrix View—a powerful, improvisation-oriented way to create and re-arrange music—and also discover how to integrate it seamlessly with the linear-based Track View.

Arpeggiator meets percussion: Sure, arpeggiation is great for creating cascading sequences of notes . . . but wait until you hear what it can do with percussion.

Humanizing the Step Sequencer: Step sequencing lets you create parts fast, but with SONAR's implementation, you're not limited to the metronomic feel associated with step sequencing—you can even bounce back and forth freely between the Step Sequencer and Piano Roll View.

Section 2: Looping and Warping

Slicing loops for hi-fi stretching: The good news...you've found a great 125BPM drum loop. The bad news...you want to play it at 80BPM. Can you really stretch that much and retain superb fidelity? Choose the right AudioSnap function, and find out.

Creating a "looper": Loopers use super-long delays to create evolving, textural music with virtually unlimited overdubbing. Now you can build your own super-looper within SONAR, and even enjoy features not available in conventional loopers.

Processing Groove Clips: If you want to add processing to your audio groove clips, check out this chapter first to make sure that any processing doesn't affect the groove clip characteristics.

Optimizing Groove Clips: Unfortunately, not all groove clips from sample libraries are edited for optimum stretching. Fortunately, SONAR gives you to tools to edit any groove clip for optimized stretching—here's how to use them.

Perfect pad looping: Can you really take virtually any sustained pad and have it loop perfectly? Yes—if you follow the procedures described in this chapter.

Timbre-shifting with loops: Why be normal? Sometimes the "wrong" settings can produce some pretty cool effects, and as you'll see, the Loop Construction window can do a lot more than just edit groove clips for the best possible stretching.

Section 3: Mixing and Effects

Using FX Chains: Here's how to combine plug-ins to create "virtual multieffects" within SONAR, then save these as "FX Chains" so you can load them into any project, at any time.

Generating frequency-tracking automation envelopes: Did you realize SONAR has a plug-in that can create an overall amplitude-tracking envelope, along with four others for specific frequency ranges? This chapter reveals all.

"Virtual miking" for acoustic instruments: Stereo miking isn't always best, what with phase problems, extra preamp noise, and other issues. Mono miking can solve these problems, but don't settle for mono; this chapter tells how to create "virtual mics" and achieve extremely realistic, mono-compatible stereo imaging.

Using the PX-64 on bass tracks: The PX-64 is intended for percussion, but a bass can be pretty percussive—and the PX-64 can produce some exceptional enhancements for electric, acoustic, and especially synth bass.

Integrating external hardware effects: If you have a spare set of ins and outs on your audio interface, you can now integrate your favorite old stomp boxes and vintage effects with SONAR as easily as software-based plug-ins.

Using Perfect Space reverb for sound design: Perfect Space isn't just about reverb; it's a convolution engine capable of taking any two waveforms and doing the equivalent of a DSP mashup. The results can be stunning—from vocoder-like effects to eerily beautiful alien soundscapes.

Sidechaining for rhythmic effects: If you want the tightest rhythm section of all time, or just want some really great rhythmic effects, sidechaining lets you impart the rhythmic characteristics of one instrument to another instrument.

Section 4: ProChannel

Parallel compression: More and more engineers are using parallel compression to get the best of both worlds—the punch of compression, and the dynamics of dry sounds. SONAR's ProChannel builds this option right into the module itself; here's how to use it.

Adding Tube Saturation: Who would want to add intentional distortion to pristine audio? With SONAR's Tube Saturation, the answer could very well be you—it's a great way to add grit and character, from barely noticeable to over-the-top.

Emulating vintage phase shifters: Lurking deep within the ProChannel are some exceptional emulations of vintage phase shifters. This chapter reveals all about emulating not just one type of phase shifter sound, but several.

Optimizing amp simulators: You wouldn't just point a mic at a guitar amp and hope it sounds good—nor should you just load an amp sim and cross your fingers. This chapter covers several specific procedures to make amp sims sound sweeter and more "organic."

Creating vintage "wah" pedal effects: Although you've swept a parametric bandpass filter to create a wah effect, it just doesn't sound like that crusty old pedal you know and love. But the ProChannel can deliver that vintage character—once you know the secret to classic wah emulation.

Section 5: Mastering

Mastering inside SONAR: Over the past few revisions, SONAR has quietly added the tools and functions necessary to do quality mastering of your final mix. Find out why mastering with SONAR can produce results equal to, or even better than, conventional digital audio editing software.

Track down EQ problems with the Analyst: That track doesn't sound quite right. You can play around with EQ until you find the problem, but the Analyst plug-in can speed up the process of pinpointing problems.

Repairing clicks: You just did a fantastic take, but you weren't careful about setting levels and now there's a nasty click due to an overload. But you won't necessarily have to trash the track if you follow the sample-accurate editing procedure described here.

Maximizing loudness: It's not a well-known feature, but the Sonitus multiband compressor can do smooth, transparent loudness maximizing once you know which key button to enable, and how to set the parameters.

Assembling an album: One of the most important aspects of mastering an album is assembling a great song order. SONAR makes it easy to try our different orders, burn them to CD, and live with them for awhile to hear what works and what doesn't.

Section 6: Conclusion

Thanks for watching!