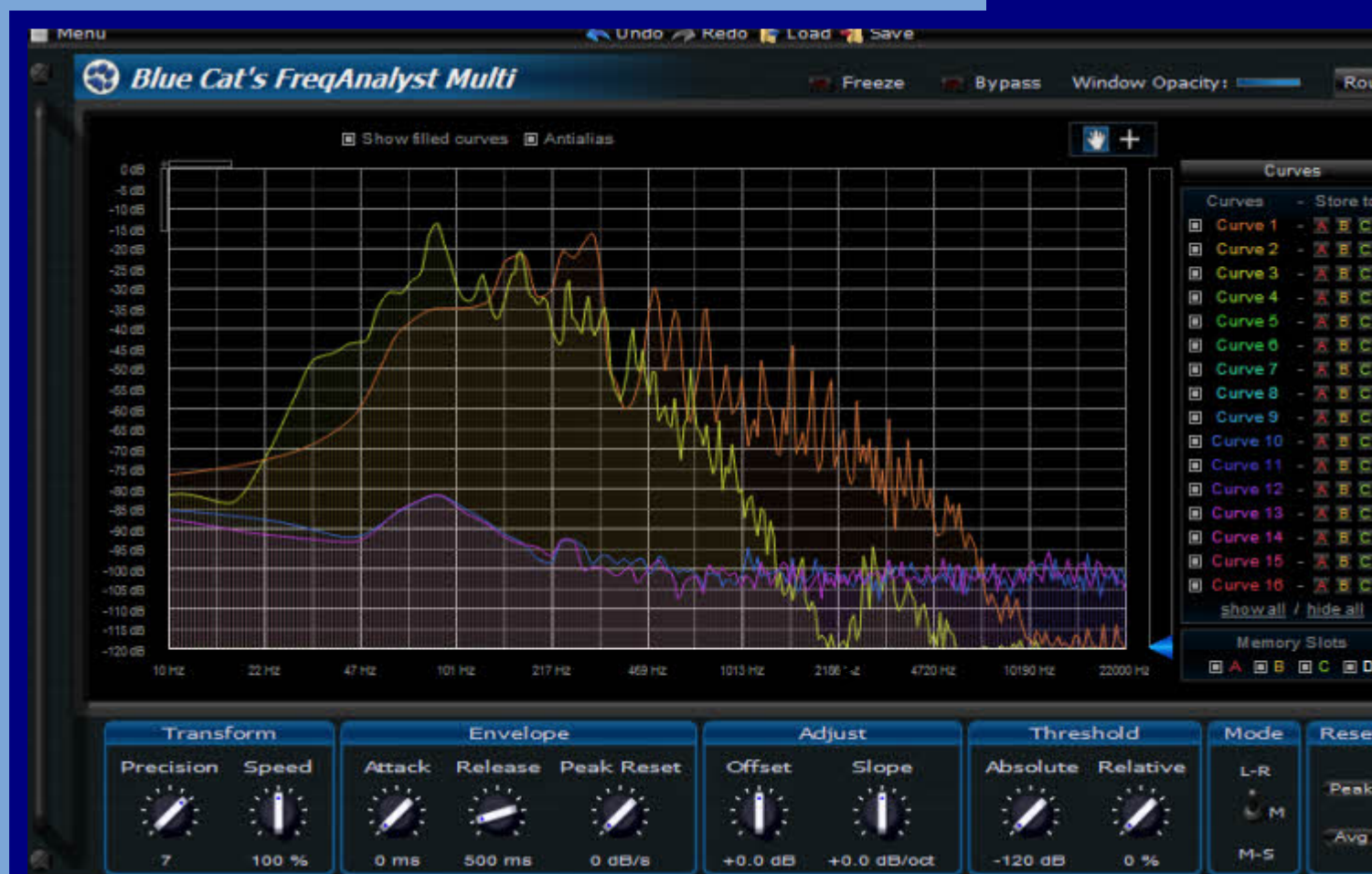
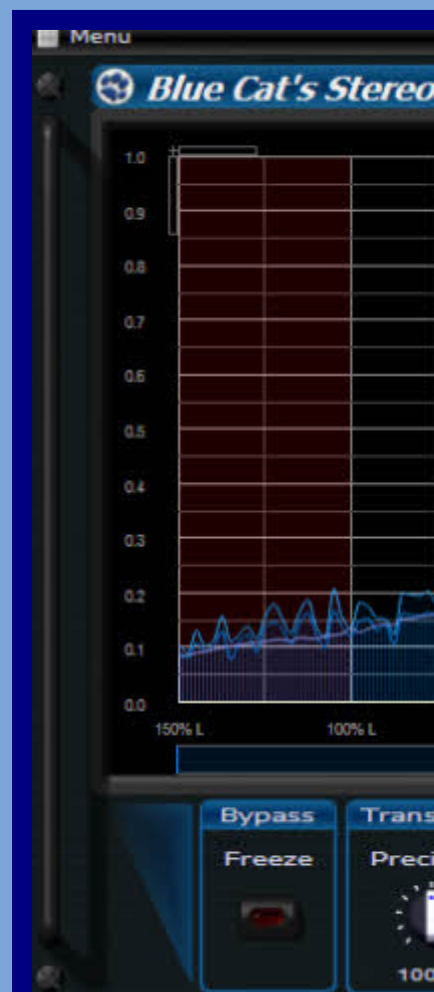
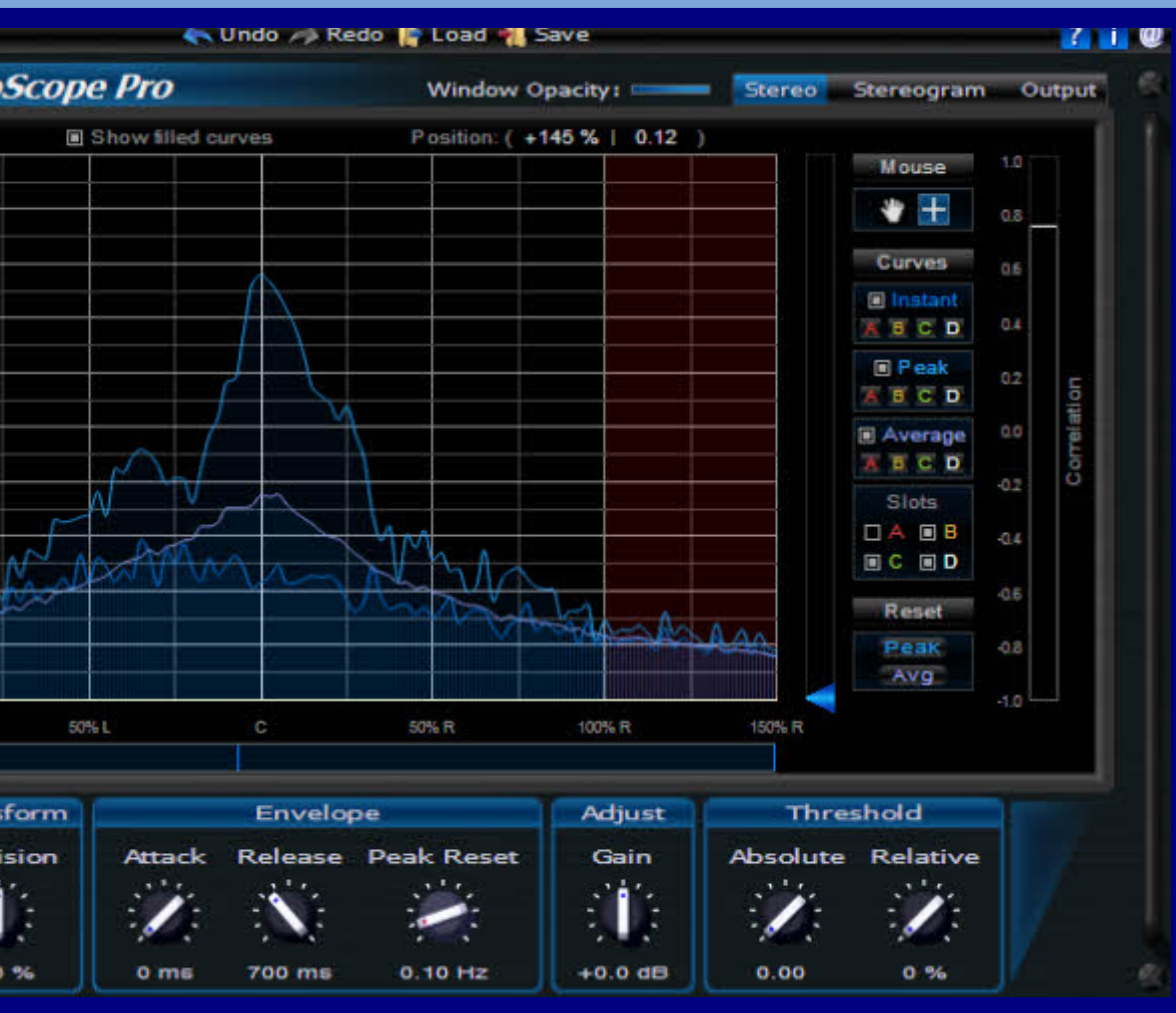


Analyse That

Blue Cat Audio

by Paul Evans





We have all heard the saying "mix with your ears." Now, I don't disagree at all but a good visualization can be priceless in helping to make it all work, especially when you have been holed up in a studio with music thumping all day and into the night. Your ears can and will get tired, sometimes to the point that you can't trust them. This is when audio analysis tools are essential.

There are many analysis tools, but Blue Cat Audio is quickly becoming the leader in this field. Over the last few months they have been releasing an onslaught of updates and new analysis tools - all with the handy interconnected features that make their plug-ins so useful and special. Not only do they analyse but they also can become internal controllers. These very well could be what you need to precisely deliver the perfectly shaped mix.

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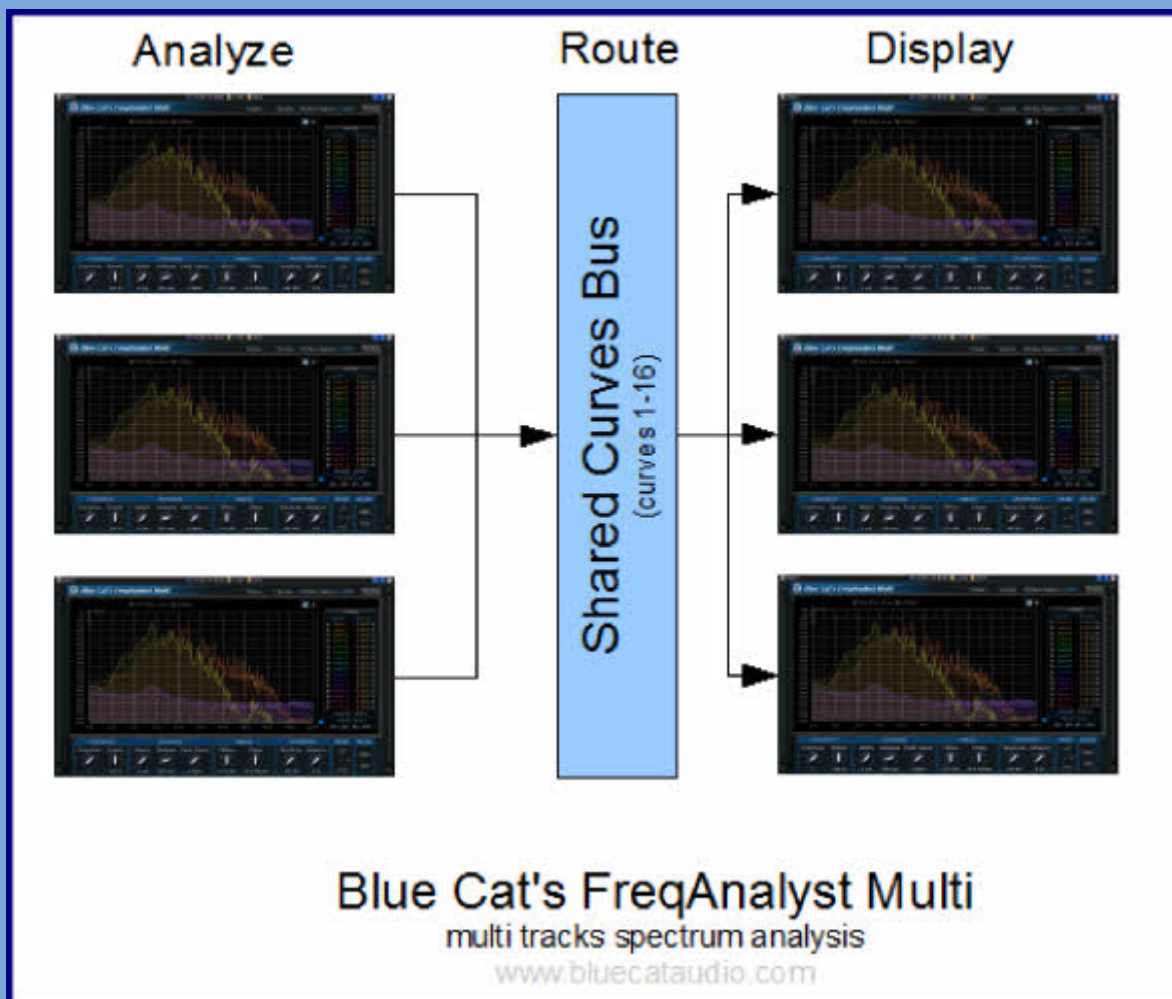


Blue Cat Audio (BCA) has six top-class analysis tools for use as a visual aid in your mixing environment: Stereo Scope Pro, Stereo Scope Multi, Freq Analyst Pro, Freq Analyst Multi, Widening Meter Pro, and Peak Meter Pro. Between these six tools you can measure any and nearly every aspect of your audio. All except Peak Meter Pro have similar parameters for defining and fine tuning the measurement and display of the analysed audio signal(s). They offer simple click-and-drag zooming capabilities to precisely zone in on areas of analysis. With ultra slick visual

feedback and super slick response, these are second to none. Unique analysing, such as the mid/side meter, enables you to see all aspects of your audio.

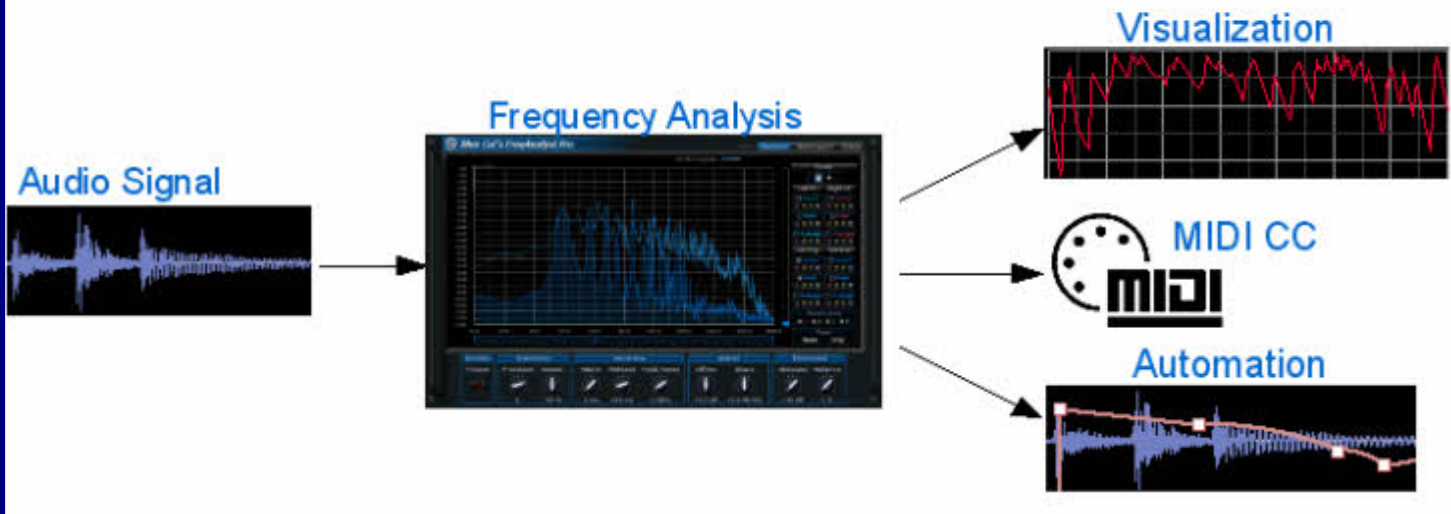
The multi versions are, in my opinion, the most unique of the tools. They offer up to 16 curves that are user definable. This gives you multi-track analysis on one screen. It is very simple to set up as well. For example, if you have four tracks to analyse, you simply load up an instance of the multi on each track.

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Blue Cat's FreqAnalyst Pro: transform audio to control



They also have a routing buss that you can go into and click on the curves 1 through 16. Now you can view all signals at once from one of the four instances. The routing bus offers four different ways to analyse the audio. Even more outstanding is the fact that each of the 16 curves can be named so that on the analysis view you know exactly which is

which. This is extremely helpful. Imagine having 16 curves without names. It would be very difficult to differentiate between them. The multi versions alone are enough to place them a cut above the rest. With control over the precision, and the speed of the display, you will not miss anything.

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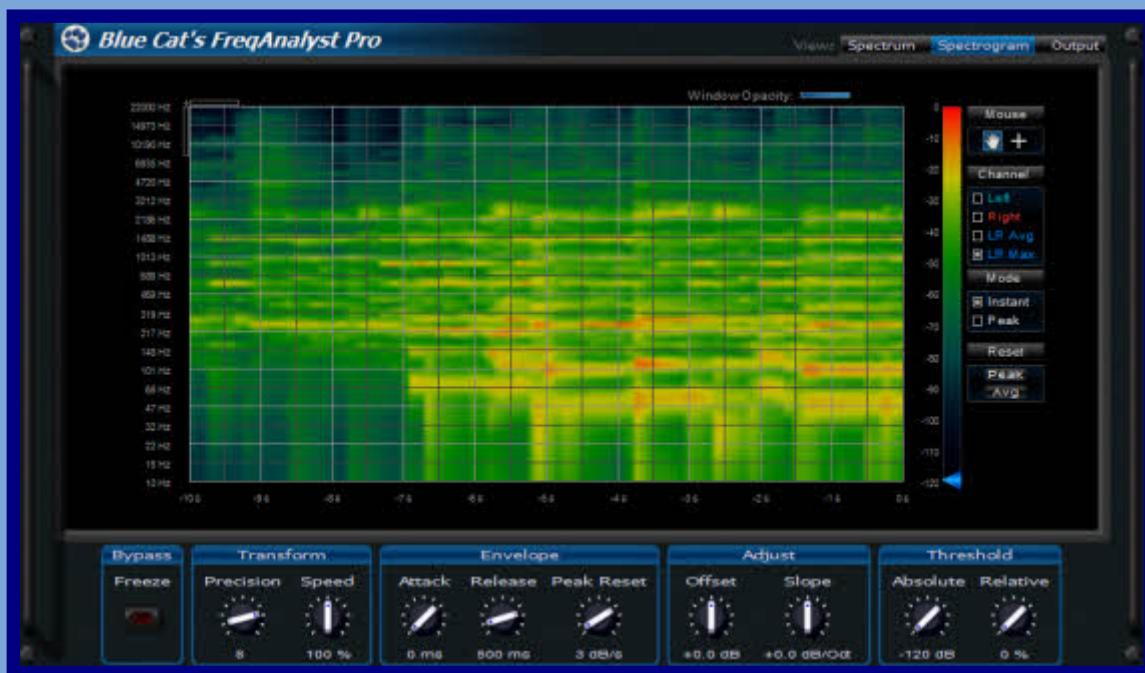
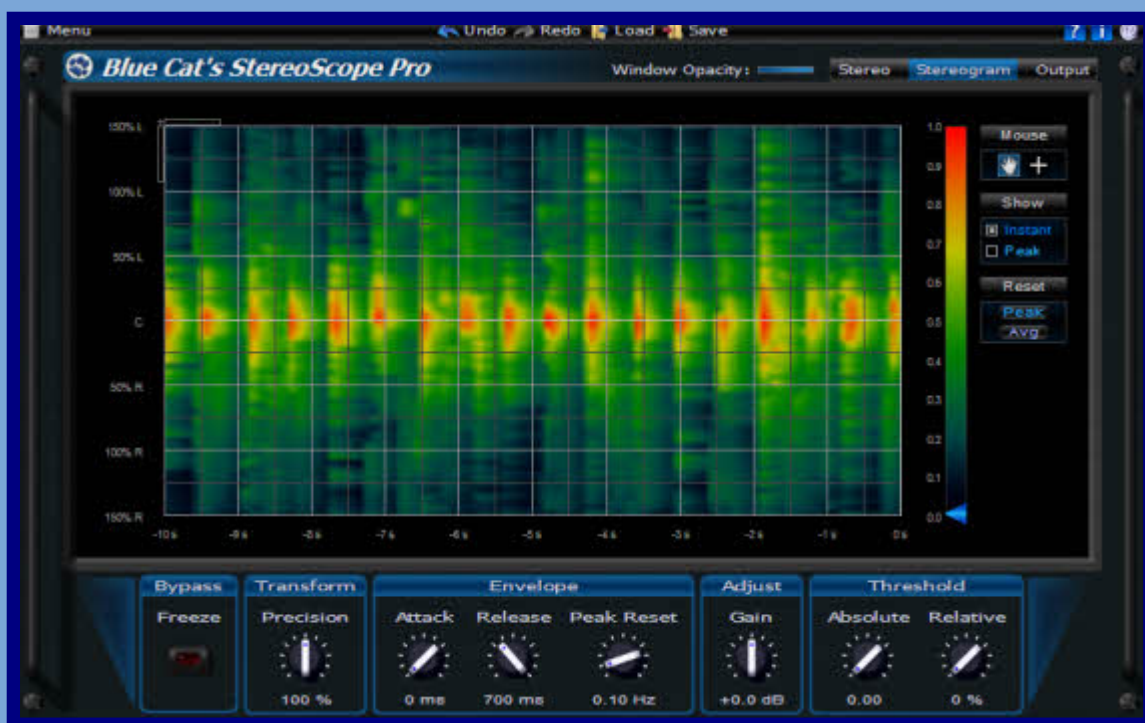
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The stereo scopes show exactly how a signal is spread across the stereo field. This is an amazing aid in keeping sounds and mixes balanced. Another key use for the Stereo Scopes is for uncovering phase issues. A lot of effects can cause phase problems. With the scopes, you are able to see how each effect is affecting the stereo field. This allows you to deal with phase issues at the root of the problem.

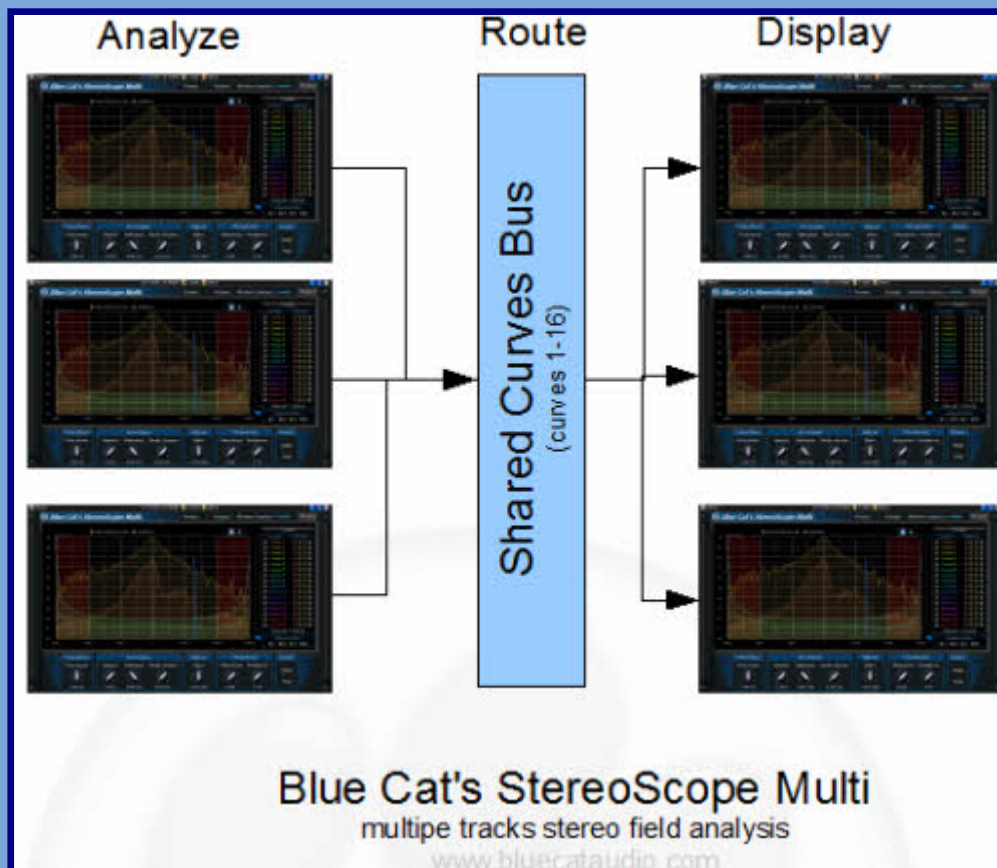
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The pro versions of the Stereo Scope and Freq Analyst offer three different views: spectrum (this is the multi view), spectrogram, and an output view. Forget the saying "mix with your ears," Blue Cat audio gives you the ability to mix with your eyes.

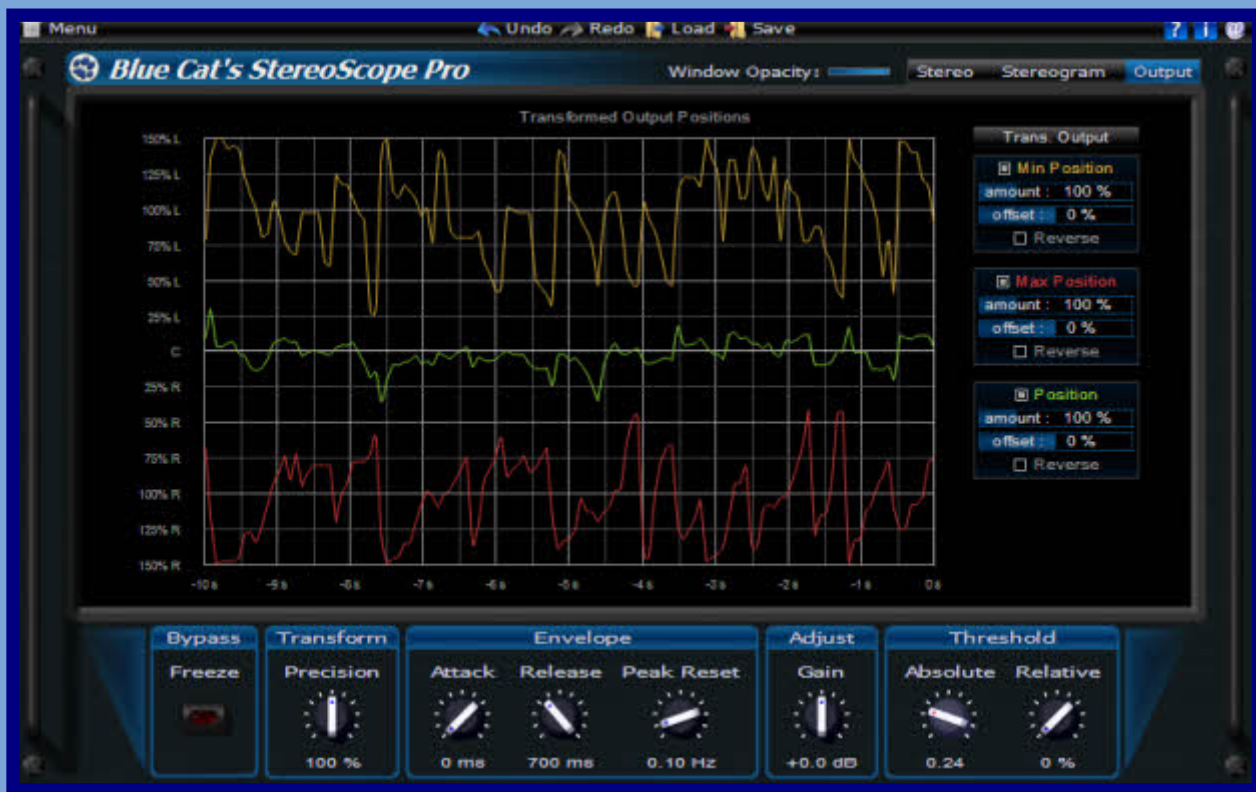
All of the BCA plug-ins can be connected with one another and in different ways. With these, you can use the audio signals' output for ducking, side-chaining, and controlling other effects. This is possible since the analysers generate an envelope that can be routed via midi.



Each analyser has envelope controls which allow you to adjust how your signal will control the other effects. An example (used on their website) is controlling a filter using the pitch from a studio signal. Ducking, for instance, can be achieved by simply using one of the analysers and BCA's freeware Gain Suite!

This is a remarkable set of plug-ins from BCA. This company impresses me more and more with each update and release. I believe these tools should define the standard for audio analysis. They are totally worth demoing to see if they can be of use to you. Before you say there are free alternatives, try the demo to see how precise and feature rich these are. I know of no free or payware plugs that achieve some of the unique things these particular analysers can.

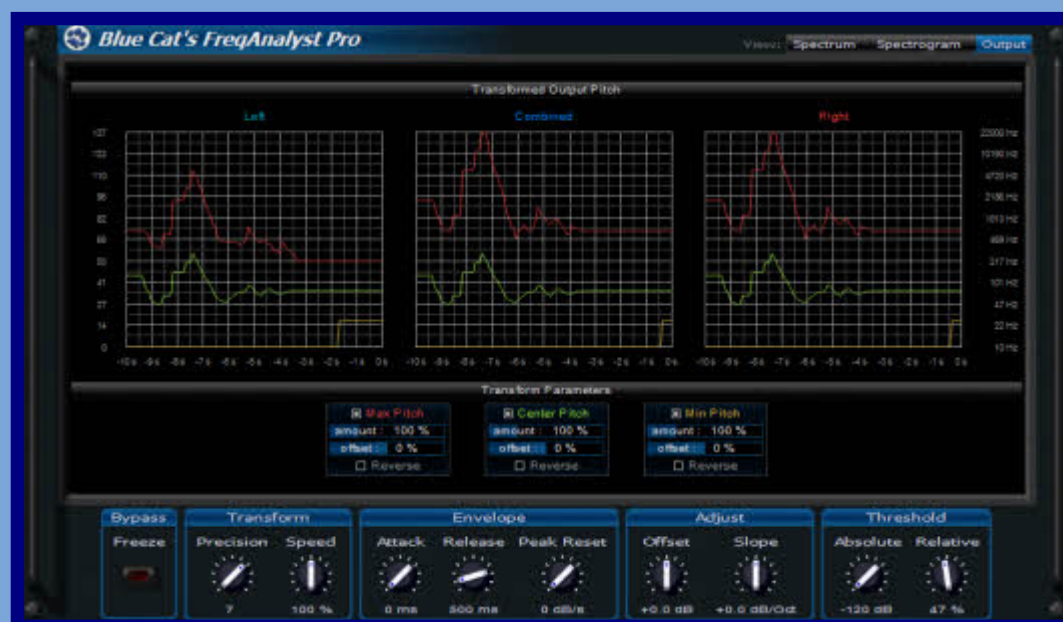
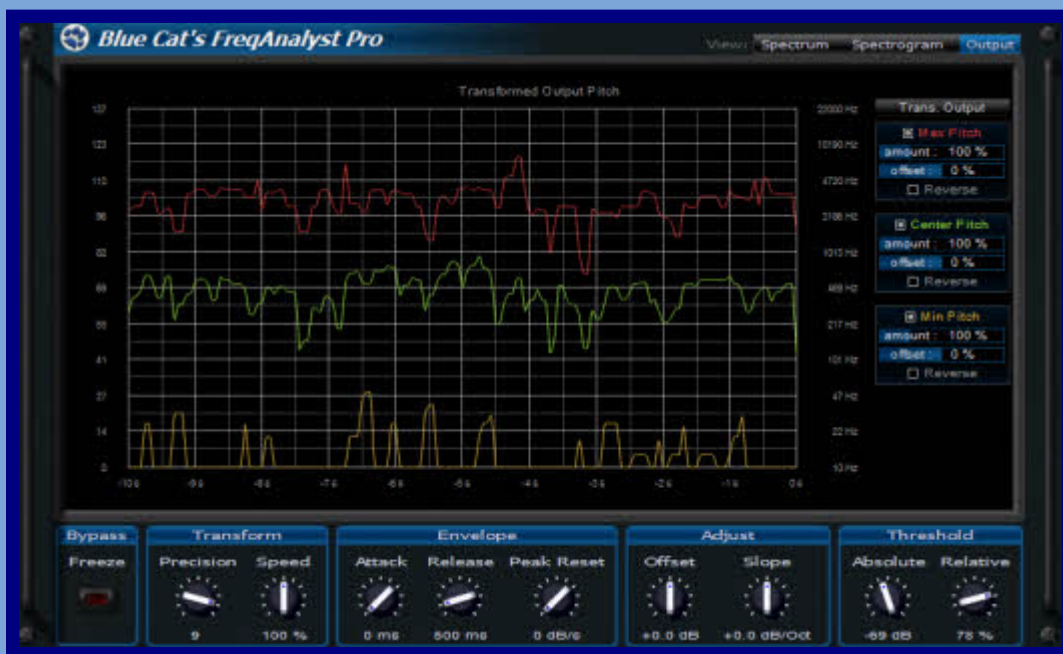
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They are not only analysers but internal controllers that can bring side-chaining to any host that does not support multiple input plug-ins. They present the ultimate visual perspective on audio - hands

down. Among the great quality and features is BCA's willingness to listen to customers. The mid/side analyser was born from customer requests, as was as the naming of curves for the analysers.



AnalyseThat

All are available in VST and DX format and are priced fairly. They can be purchased separately or in packs. Trust me - if you find one useful, you will find them all useful. In my experience, analysers are hit and miss. But the extreme control of the visual feedback and the smoothness of what you see, coupled with a multitude of ways to analyse a signal, make these a huge hit.

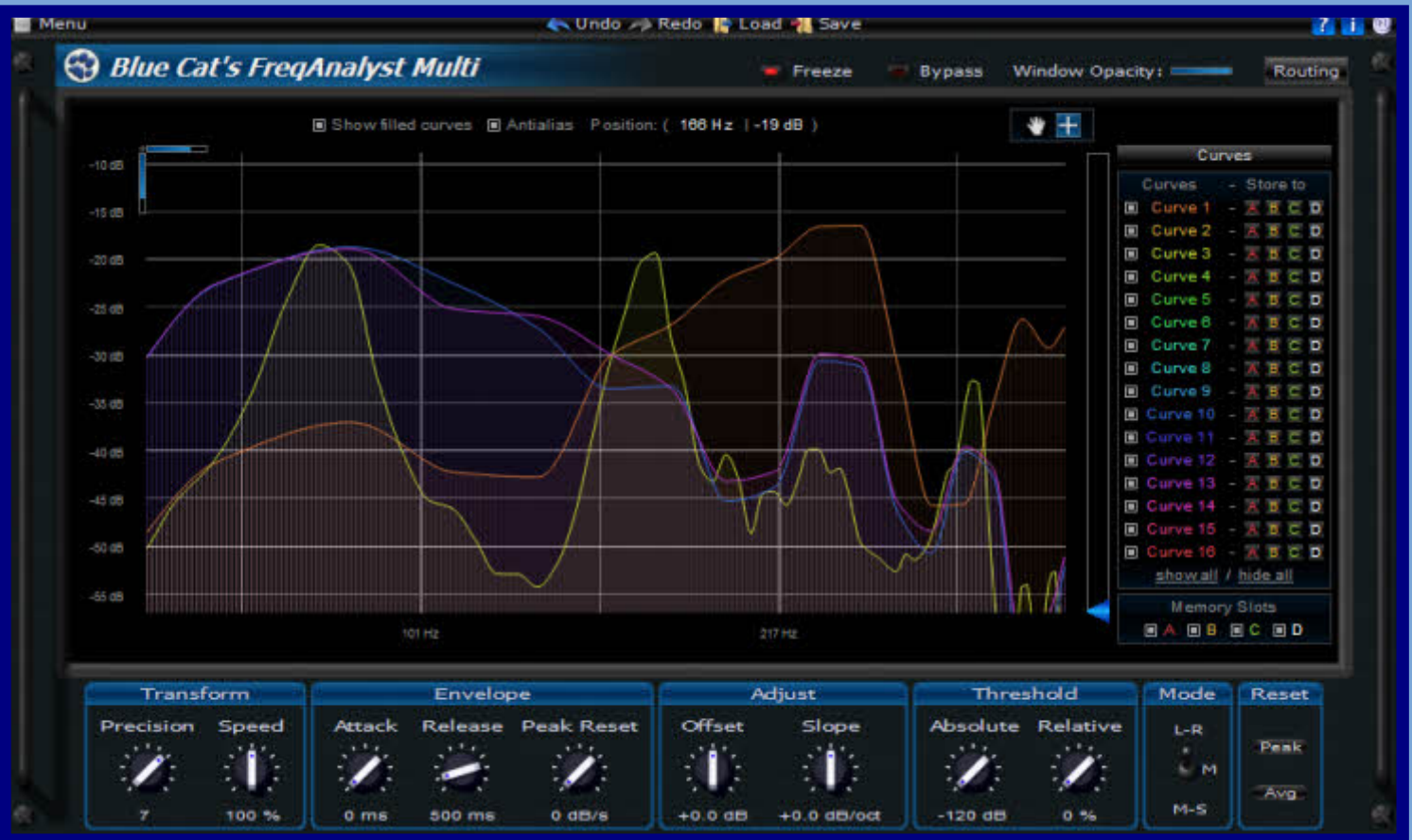
This company is quickly approaching the pinnacle of digital effects for musicians.





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Their site also has a slew of tutorials on offer for all of their plug-ins. These, as well as their other products, have so much potential but it could be wasted if you are not so sure how to use them. Thankfully, they are upfront and very understandable, and explain the advanced midi capabilities and envelop generation for controlling other effects and working together with their own plugs.

Head over to www.bluecataudio.com. There you will find pricing and very detailed and informative product information from Blue Cat Audio.

