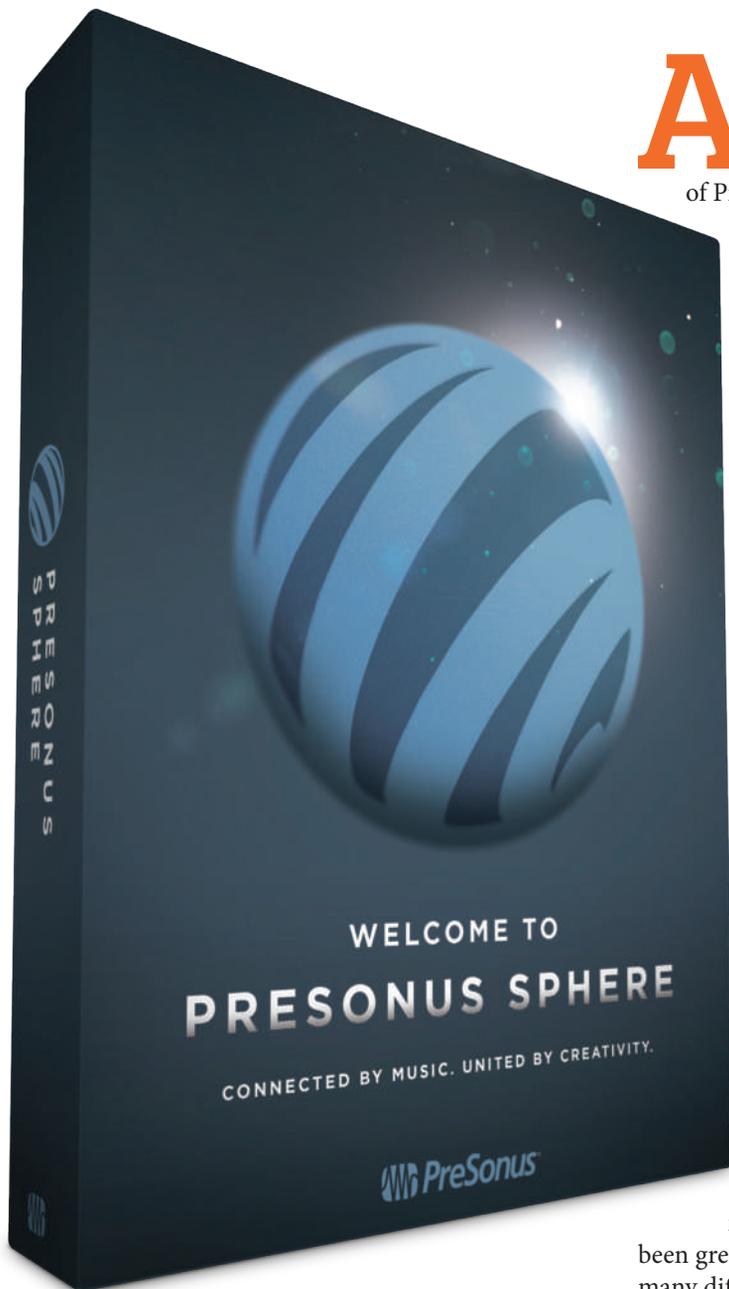


PreSonus Sphere

BY COLLIN MAKARIAK



As someone who has studied and is passionate about music composition, I was excited to be given the chance to review PreSonus Sphere. Sphere members enjoy access to a variety of PreSonus' top products from its flagship DAW StudioOne, to its notation software Notion, to dozens of plug-ins and libraries for each. In addition, members are offered several other benefits such as software upgrades, upgradeable cloud storage and access to collaborative workspaces. I am happy to tell you I had a great time working as a member of Sphere and was truly impressed with many aspects of it.

Before starting to work with with PreSonus Sphere, I had never used their software before. However, I did have experience with other notational software and DAWs so had at least some knowledge that was helpful to me. I was impressed with Notion and StudioOne within minutes of starting, as both felt intuitive and approachable. The layout of each made sense, and I was able to figure out how to input the exact sounds I wanted with ease. Many DAWs and notational software I have worked with in the past either suffered from having a slow workflow or felt limiting in what you could achieve. Although I had an initial learning curve to overcome, once I learned where settings were and understood the fundamentals, I found myself breezing through my work. It was obvious PreSonus had the user and their experience in mind when designing this software. I was also pleased with the quality of the instrument samples. I felt like I could accomplish anything I imagined with Notion or StudioOne and both were perfect for my needs. The experience I had would have already been great, but as a Sphere member I also got to enjoy using many different sound libraries, plug-ins and add-ons for free.



When you subscribe to Sphere, the benefits you receive extend far beyond being able to use PreSonus' flagship products. Members of Sphere will find new content every month ranging from plug-ins that are available, exclusive offers and even gifts just for being members. Anyone who has a subscription has access to PreSonus Sphere's online community. Those of us who are first timers to StudioOne can communicate with experts through chat and also have access to a significant amount of online training and support for the software is available. On top of this, there are exclusive events for and online workspaces for members to collaborate on projects together. Collaboration is the name of the game when it comes to Sphere and the transition to StudioOne and Notion was made even easier for me as a result. It was clear that PreSonus was mindful of how scary approaching new notational software and DAWs can be, especially for those of us who have had little to no experience using either. Because of all of these features, along with PreSonus having collaborative work at the forefront, there is no reason anyone should feel left behind.

I can't think of anything negative to say about PreSonus Sphere. The sense of community I felt as a member is a great perk to go along with licenses for top-notch software. I encourage you to take advantage of the training opportunities and to talk with the seasoned experts of StudioOne during your transition into the program. Every member is entitled to 30GB of cloud storage, with the option of upgrading to 100 GB for a low monthly fee. Having access to PreSonus' catalogue of add-ons and plug-ins for both Notion and StudioOne was the cherry on top of the cake, especially when the exceptional quality of the sound libraries are taken into consideration. I had total control of the atmosphere I wanted to make in my music, whether I wanted to recreate the intimacy of smaller rooms or simulate the scope and power of the acoustics in a cathedral.

Although I found the package being offered by PreSonus to be of immense value, it is important to be mindful that this is a subscription-based service. All of the features of Sphere, along with the license to use Notion and StudioOne,

are dependent on being a paying member. The idea of not owning the software could be something that might scare people away from trying PreSonus Sphere for themselves. If you want to fully take advantage of everything that Sphere has to offer, you should be someone who loves the creative process behind composing music. Whether the subscription is worth it to you will come down to how many of the features you plan to use. For me, the price of under \$20 monthly is a small price to pay for access to such outstanding products. The fact that Sphere is subscription-based will open the door to people who don't want to commit to spending thousands of dollars on software and accompanying plug-ins. I highly recommend people to give Sphere a try. Notion and StudioOne are truly magnificent products and the value is top-notch. I know I will be maintaining my membership for a long time to come. **T**

Collin Makariak is a recent composition graduate from Acadia University and is currently working on his Bachelor of Education, with his long-term goal being to become a Professor of Music and continue to compose original orchestrations and chorals.

COLLIN'S REPORT

FUNCTIONALITY:



STABILITY:



EASE OF USE :



COST:



OVERALL VALUE:

