**Ed Thorne Invests in Musical Creativity and the Hybrid Workflow with Flock Audio**

*Recording engineer and YouTuber on the value of learning analog and streamlining workflows with PATCH and PATCH APP DX*

**LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, December 19, 2023 -- Like many other musicians and pro audio professionals,** [**audio engineer Ed Thorne**](https://www.youtube.com/c/EdThorne) **found himself up against a wall during the pandemic. For five years he had made his living as a live sound engineer who dabbled in studio engineering on the side, but with the shuttering of venues around the world and work drying up, Thorne knew that he had to pivot his career to keep doing the work that he loved. Around the same time, Thorne had begun upgrading his home studio and documenting his process and experiences on YouTube. Three years later, Ed Thorne Music Production has grown into a thriving platform for exploring the changing nature of studio production and educating up-and-coming engineers on the latest tools and techniques available to them. As a strong advocate for hybrid studio workflows, Thorne has made the** [**Flock Audio PATCH**](https://www.flockaudio.com/patch) **digitally controlled, all-analog patchbay and the** [**PATCH APP DX**](https://www.flockaudio.com/patchappdx) **software a centerpiece of his work and content.**

**From engineer to educator and back**

Thorne’s investment in growing his YouTube channel has been part of a larger effort to make studio music production his primary focus. The opportunity to share his exploration and educate his fellow engineers on how to navigate the various pitfalls of setting up their own studios grew organically out of this. “There’s so much choice now in the type of equipment you can use to set up a studio, and I find the learning aspect of it all fascinating,” Thorne said. “Sharing it all on YouTube was a natural extension of that.”

“We really live in a world of luxury in terms of choice and as a YouTuber I take the responsibility seriously of helping to navigate these choices to get the focus back on making music and being creative.”

Part of Thorne’s journey has been his embrace of hybrid workflows in the studio and using his favorite analog outboard equipment alongside the latest digital plugins. Doing so not only serves his purposes from a sonic standpoint, but has also given him the opportunity to educate his audience who largely grew up without them, and don’t understand the connection between them and modern plugin technology.“There can be a real polarization on YouTube — and engineers at large, really — between analog purists and ‘in the box’ guys, and I think being either way misses some real advantages to both,” he explains. “Plugins have come a really long way and it’s unbelievable, but when you spend time with analog gear you start to understand where these classic sounds come from and why they work. It’s a very different, non-linear way of thinking at times, but once you wrap your head around it can be an incredibly creative thing to add back into the process of recording music.”

“There’s a depth of sound that you can’t replicate there, so I use the Flock Audio PATCH to bring those elements into my workflow.”

**Fueling creativity with a seamless experience**

Thorne has more than two dozen 500-series rack units which encompass his favorite analog preamps, EQs, and compressors. In his desire to integrate this seamlessly into his studio he began using Flock Audio’s PATCH system to ensure that the upgrade in sound quality and creativity didn’t hamper an otherwise speedy digital workflow. “The immediate benefit of PATCH was the sheer speed of using it,” Thorne said, “I was able to spend more time on the creative process rather than having to constantly plug and unplug things to put together the signal chains I wanted. It was amazing and fueled my desire to make analog more a part of what I do.”

“That speed is really critical because nothing kills a session faster than being slowed down by something that isn’t creatively driven. You’re competing against the ‘in the box’ mentality which values convenience more at times and can fuel a creative laziness, so anything that can get you ahead and focusing on what’s getting you excited to make music is essential. The PATCH makes this a lot easier to accomplish for that reason.”

Thorne has made best use of this in how he utilizes his favorite signal chains. Being able to instantly create and recall go-to combinations that have yielded his best results while also being able to document the knob settings with PATCH APP DX have allowed him to take advantage of these sounds without any compromises to his workflow. “Being able to audition any combination of my hardware instantly with my saved chains has been amazing to have,” he said. “I always have photos of the knob settings documented in PATCH APP DX for each preset as well. That’s an incredibly useful added feature that gets you right where you need to be quickly.”

“It blew my mind how convenient it could be once I was installed, and it’s become essential to what I do.”

With the industry constantly evolving and a new generation of analog equipment being made to compliment digital advancements, Thorne says that it’s more important than ever before to find interesting and creative ways to bring these two elements together when making music. As he continues to develop content for his channel, Thorne believes that an understanding of both will continue to fuel great recordings. “Understanding both is what helps you tune your ears and get a sense of why certain things exist,” he said. “ ‘Why do we have digital plugins that replicate the interfaces of these analog devices?’ ‘Why do we gain-stage things differently in analog?’ Keeping that desire to learn intact adds some joy back into the process and that’s what has kept me active on YouTube — the desire to learn more and share it.”

“The Flock Audio PATCH serves a strong purpose and provides a useful service to so many people by keeping analog in the picture, and it’s an important part of my studio because of that.”

For more information about the Flock Audio PATCH and PATCH APP DX, please visit: <http://www.flockaudio.com/>

**About Flock Audio**

Flock Audio Inc. is a pro audio manufacturer based in Kelowna, Canada, founded in 2017. The company is best known for its PATCH System Series, which is a Digitally controlled, 100% Analog Patch bay routing solution for professional audio environments.

For more information on Flock Audio and its products, please visit the company website at <http://www.flockaudio.com>.

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