ERB N DUB
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PRIME HARMONICS

RHYTHMIC VOLUME SHAPING

VOLUMEFORGE

Draw the movement. Shape the groove.

USER MANUAL / VERSION 1.0.0



NAVIGATION

FIND YOUR WAY

Start with the quick-start chapter, then use the reference sections as you work. Click a contents entry to jump to it.

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01 / RHYTHMIC VOLUME SHAPING

SHAPE THE LEVEL OF YOUR SOUND



VolumeForge with a one-bar example envelope, musical ruler and live input/output meters. The pictured settings are an example, not the startup defaults.

VolumeForge shapes an incoming mono or stereo signal with a drawable volume envelope. Create repeating tempo-synchronised pumping and rhythm, or trigger a one-shot envelope from audio, an external sidechain or MIDI. Use VST3 in a compatible macOS or Windows DAW, or Audio Unit on macOS. The visual scope follows the envelope while the external-sidechain trace provides an unprocessed timing reference.

QUICK START

Install the format supplied for your DAW and activate your free licence in Info › Licence. Insert VolumeForge after an instrument or on an audio track. Leave HOST SYNC on, MODE SYNC, RATE 1 BAR, DEPTH 100% and MIX 100%. New instances start with a short rise to full gain and 1 ms smoothing. Play, draw a shape and listen; compare with BYPASS at a comfortable level. No sample library is required.

READ THE GRAPH

Horizontal position is time within one cycle. The green envelope is 0-100% gain: the bottom is silence and the top is full gain before the input/output trims. Waveforms behind it have their own bipolar amplitude scale.

Installing or activating for the first time? See Install and Open, then Activate and Move Your Licence.

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DRAW AND REFINE THE ENVELOPE

POINTS

Drag points to move them. Double-click empty space or the shaper line to add a point, up to 32 total. Double-click or right-click an interior point to remove it. Endpoints cannot be deleted and stay at the horizontal ends.

CURVES

Drag empty space, Command-drag (macOS) or Ctrl-drag (Windows) or middle-button drag to bend a segment. Vertical trackpad scrolling or the mouse wheel also bends it; Shift-scroll adjusts finely. Very steep curves are supported.

SNAP AND GRID

SNAP locks point movement to the chosen grid and eighth-step gain positions. Hold Shift while moving a point to bypass snapping. The gear opens GRID AMOUNT: Off, 1/4, 1/8, 1/16, 1/32 or 1/64. Click outside settings to close them.

UNDO AND REDO

UNDO and REDO retain the latest 64 meaningful edits in this plugin instance, including curve and parameter changes and loading a preset. Command-Z (macOS) or Ctrl-Z (Windows) undoes; Shift-Command-Z (macOS) or Shift-Ctrl-Z (Windows) redoes when the editor owns keyboard focus. Text entry keeps its own undo.

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UNDO, REDO AND EDIT HISTORY

64 MEANINGFUL EDITS

One knob drag, one continuous wheel gesture, one curve drag, one menu or switch change, and one preset load each form one step. Point insertion, removal and straightening are also reversible. A gesture that returns to its starting value creates no entry.

SOUND AND DISPLAY CONTROLS

History covers controls edited inside VolumeForge: gain, depth, mix, timing, smoothing, trigger mode, length, grid and snap, plus scope view, channel, colour, intensity and Play Line. Preset loads restore all sound parameters and the complete curve together. There is no Randomise control.

WORKING THROUGH HISTORY

Undo returns to the previous state. Redo restores the resulting state. A new edit after Undo clears the Redo branch. Once 64 steps are retained, a new step removes the oldest. Buttons are dimmed when their action is unavailable.

AUTOMATION AND VIEWING

DAW automation and host-originated parameter edits do not fill this history. Undoing one control leaves unrelated automation alone. Hold, window resizing, opening panels, CONTROLS visibility, Save As and Show tooltips are viewing or application choices outside sound history.

MEMORY AND RECALL

History holds parameter values and the envelope points, with no copied audio or sample buffers. All 64 steps are available for the supported 32-point envelope. Closing the editor retains history; loading a DAW project or creating a new instance starts fresh.

04 / RHYTHMIC VOLUME SHAPING

TIMING AND TRIGGER MODES

TEMPO AND LENGTH

HOST SYNC follows tempo and transport. With it off, the host-exposed Internal BPM is used (initially 120). RATE offers beats, bars, triplets and dotted lengths up to 16 bars. Bar lengths follow host time signature. Triggered modes label the menu LENGTH. The ruler above the waveform labels bar.beat positions, adding fractional beat positions for short lengths. Below one beat it shows offsets in BEAT units from zero. In 4/4, a 1/32 note spans 1/8 of a beat. Ticks and labels stay above the waveform and reduce in density at longer lengths.

SYNC

Repeats the shape at host musical position.

AUDIO

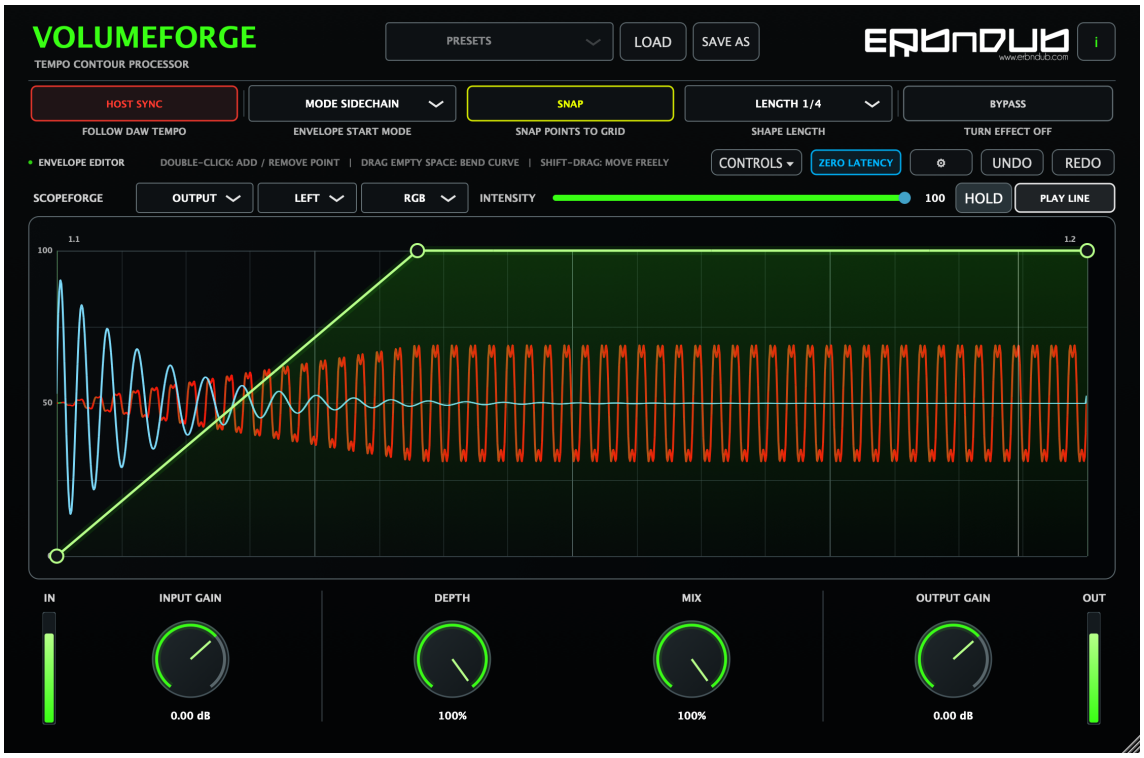
Detected transients on the main input start the envelope.

SIDECHAIN

Only the separately routed external input triggers it. Route the trigger track through your host's external-sidechain controls. An absent sidechain does not fall back to the main input; the detector is not mixed into the output.

MIDI

MIDI note-on starts the shape. MIDI routing depends on the host. A new trigger restarts the envelope; after a one-shot ends, its final point gain is held until another trigger. WAITING FOR MIDI NOTE appears when no trigger cycle is active. Changing trigger mode cancels the old source's cycle and waits for the new source.



In Sidechain mode, the kick trigger appears in blue and the green envelope shapes the output.

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LATENCY AND SMOOTH MOVEMENT

ZERO LATENCY

On initially. With it off, the plugin adds 5 ms lookahead and reports that delay to the host. Change this non-automatable option with playback stopped so compensation can settle.

ENVELOPE ADVANCE

The settings panel can advance the shape by up to 5 ms. Clicking the Envelope Advance dial switches Zero Latency off and enables lookahead. A click alone preserves the advance value; drag to adjust it. Change latency mode with playback stopped.

SHAPE OFFSET

Rotates the envelope through its cycle. Use it to shift where the movement falls within the rhythm.

SMOOTH / 0-30 MS

SMOOTH is in Settings (gear), lower left; new instances use 1 ms. In SYNC, a falling cycle boundary fades before the end over twice this time (at most a quarter cycle), preventing carryover into the next start. Updates from earlier versions preserve saved values; falling SYNC boundaries use this pre-fade instead of carrying the end level into the next cycle. Audio, Sidechain and MIDI retain their smoothing. At 0 ms, abrupt boundaries can click.

WAVEFORM GRID TIMING

In Settings, HOST GRID uses input presentation timing when the host provides it. GRID CORRECTION shifts the waveform against the musical grid in SYNC only; positive values move it earlier. Triggered modes use their trigger as the origin. These controls change the display, not the envelope or audio.

DISPLAY TIMING AGAINST SOUND

HOST DISPLAY uses reported output presentation timing. EXTRA DISPLAY DELAY adds visual delay, up to a total of two seconds. This is separate from waveform/grid alignment and is inactive for offline rendering. Support depends on DAW and format: unavailable or zero timing is not proof of compensation. Recheck after changing latency-producing plugins; no separate timing helper is supplied.

06 / RHYTHMIC VOLUME SHAPING

GAIN, BLEND AND WAVEFORM

INPUT AND OUTPUT GAIN / -24 TO +12 DB

Input sets level before shaping; Output sets final level. Double-click either gain knob for 0 dB, or type an exact value. Input changes ramp over 5 ms.

DEPTH AND MIX / 0-100%

Depth controls shaping strength. Mix blends shaped and unshaped signal. CONTROLS hides the lower controls/meters and expands the graph without changing sound.

IN AND OUT PEAK METERS

IN measures the main signal after the smoothed Input Gain and before shaping. OUT measures the resulting output. Lowering Input Gain lowers IN; the external sidechain is not included in that meter. Both meters are green below -6 dBFS, yellow from -6 dBFS to below 0 dBFS, and red at or above 0 dBFS. Red warns that the signal has reached full scale; VolumeForge does not automatically limit it.

SCOPE VIEWS

Choose Off, Input, Output or In + Out. Input is tapped after input gain/lookahead; Output is the final processed signal. In the combined view Input is grey and Output uses the palette.

EXTERNAL REFERENCE

In SIDECHAIN mode the raw external signal is light blue under the green envelope. It follows Left/Right/Mid/Side and Hold but is not reshaped by envelope or gain edits. OUTPUT gives the clearest comparison with the shaped main signal. Scope Off hides every trace.

COLOUR, CHANNEL AND INTENSITY

Left, Right, Mid or Side selects the display channel. RGB, Heat, Ocean, Green and Grey change appearance only. Intensity is display strength, not signal gain.

HOLD AND TRANSPORT

Hold freezes only the display: audio and envelope editing continue. Timing/channel changes release Hold to avoid a stale view. Stopping in Sync retains the last trace; later cycles continue updating. Play Line shows capture position.

07 / RHYTHMIC VOLUME SHAPING

PRESETS, PROJECTS AND SIZING

USER PRESETS

SAVE AS stores a .vforge file in the VolumeForge user preset folder. LOAD can open a .vforge file from that folder or another location. A preset load is one reversible edit; it retains the current window size and CONTROLS visibility. PRESETS lists your saved user presets and refreshes each time you open it.

DAW PROJECTS

The host stores settings, shape, width and CONTROLS state. Undo history survives closing and reopening the editor while the instance is alive. Restoring a DAW project starts a fresh history; history is not stored in presets or projects.

RESIZE

Drag the bottom-right corner. Fixed-aspect content sizes range from 960 x 632 to 1800 x 1184 logical pixels; normal is 1120 x 737. Screen space further limits the window. Use a desktop area of at least 1280 x 800 at normal host zoom.

OLDER SESSIONS

Sizes below the readable minimum are raised; larger recalled sizes fit the screen. Curves beyond the earlier curvature range need a recent build. Abrupt older Input Gain automation now ramps over 5 ms and can affect Audio trigger detection during that transition.

OUTER WINDOW POSITION

The DAW manages the outer frame. Use its window-recovery commands if a disconnected monitor leaves the editor off-screen.

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YOUR PRESET FOLDER

FIND YOUR PRESETS

Open PRESETS and select Show Presets Folder… to create and open the same folder used by SAVE AS and the user browser. It opens in Finder on macOS or File Explorer on Windows. The plugin creates this folder for the active user; no administrator access is required.

MACOS

~/Library/Audio/Presets/ERB N DUB/VolumeForge/
The ~ symbol means your home folder.

WINDOWS

‹your Documents folder›\ERB N DUB\Presets\VolumeForge\
VolumeForge uses the Documents folder configured by Windows, including redirected, OneDrive-managed and non-English locations. Show Presets Folder… opens the resolved location.

SAVE SAFELY

SAVE AS starts in this folder. Choose a .vforge filename inside it; use names that work on both platforms. Spaces, apostrophes and non-ASCII letters are supported. Path separators, reserved Windows names and trailing dots or spaces are refused. Confirm replacement only when you intend to overwrite a preset. If saving fails, the previous file is retained.

FACTORY AND USER CONTENT

FACTORY PRESETS contains seven included sounds: RAMP DOWN, RAMP UP, SIDE CHAIN KICK, SIDE CHAIN KICK PRE, SIDE CHAIN MIDI, SIDE CHAIN SNARE and SIDE CHAIN SNARE PRE. They are built into the plugin on both platforms. User presets remain separate. Browser names appear in capitals; your user files are not renamed. Loading either kind is undoable and keeps the current editor size.

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IMPORT, TRANSFER AND PROTECT PRESETS

IMPORT AN EXISTING SOUND

PRESETS > Import Preset… copies a selected .vforge file into the user folder and loads it. If you edit the sound while the file dialog is open, your edits are kept and the imported file is available in PRESETS. LOAD opens a file directly without copying it. Original files stay in place. A different preset with the same filename receives a numbered "(imported 1)" suffix; importing identical content again does not create another copy.

EARLIER PRESETS

Earlier versions allowed saving anywhere chosen in the file dialog. VolumeForge does not search Documents or other disks automatically. Use Import Preset… for the files you want in the browser. Existing .vforge files and saved projects retain their parameter values and compatibility defaults; the SYNC smoothing change is described in Latency and smooth movement.

EXPORT, RENAME AND DELETE

Use Show Presets Folder… to copy a .vforge file for export or backup, or rename/delete it in Finder or File Explorer. These file actions are outside plugin Undo/Redo. Keep the .vforge extension. Reopen PRESETS to refresh the list. Removing a file does not remove the sound already saved inside a DAW project.

MAC AND WINDOWS TRANSFER

Copy the .vforge files to the other computer, then import them into VolumeForge. Presets contain parameters and envelope points, not audio samples or external sample references. They require no sample library. Use a compatible VolumeForge version and keep any DAW instruments, MIDI routing and sidechain sources with the project separately.

BACK UP YOUR WORK

Copy the user preset folder and your DAW projects to your normal backup location. Keep the original files until the copies have been opened successfully. Updates and uninstalling the plugin should leave user presets in place. A preset file does not contain your DAW's routing or audio clips.

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INFO, MANUAL AND TOOLTIPS

OPEN INFO

Click i for the information panel. It shows VolumeForge 1.0.0 and the running plugin format, with ERB N DUB primary branding and the Prime Harmonics range mark. Close with X or Escape to return to the editor.

SHOW TOOLTIPS

Descriptive tooltips start OFF when no preference has been saved. Open Info and enable Show tooltips for hover help after about one second. Switching off dismisses the hint immediately. Numerical control values, units and essential labels remain available.

REMEMBERED FOR VOLUMEFORGE

VolumeForge remembers your explicit choice across editor reopening, DAW restarts and plugin updates. Existing instances follow changes. This product preference is separate from sound, presets, DAW project state and Undo/Redo.

USER MANUAL

USER MANUAL opens the matching local PDF without an internet connection, using your computer's PDF viewer. Keep the complete plugin bundle intact. On macOS a matching copy is also installed with the product documentation. Reinstall the matching package if the manual is missing.

WEBSITE, SUPPORT AND COPY SUPPORT INFO

Website opens https://www.erbndub.com and Support opens https://erbndub.com/contact/. COPY SUPPORT INFO copies the product name, version and running format for your support request. These actions run only when selected.

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TROUBLESHOOTING ON EITHER PLATFORM

THE PLUGIN DOES NOT APPEAR

Restart or rescan the DAW. Confirm the installed version, selected format and scan location. VST3 is used on macOS and Windows; Audio Unit is macOS-only. Check that the plugin and DAW support the computer's operating system and processor architecture. Keep one copy per format. On macOS, check the DAW's Audio Unit validation result where applicable.

PRESET FOLDER OR PRESET UNAVAILABLE

Choose Show Presets Folder… to create or locate the folder. If opening fails, open the labelled location manually in Finder or File Explorer. Confirm write permission and free disk space. Make redirected or cloud-managed Documents files available locally on Windows. Use a valid .vforge file; a renamed unrelated file is not a preset. Restore a backup if a preset is damaged.

NO TRIGGER OR UNEXPECTED LEVEL

Confirm MODE, the external-sidechain or MIDI routing, DEPTH, MIX, input/output trims and BYPASS. SIDECHAIN waits for the external source rather than using the main input. Check for a second VolumeForge instance in the chain. VolumeForge has no samples to locate; missing audio or instruments belong to the surrounding DAW project.

DROPOUTS, CPU OR TIMING

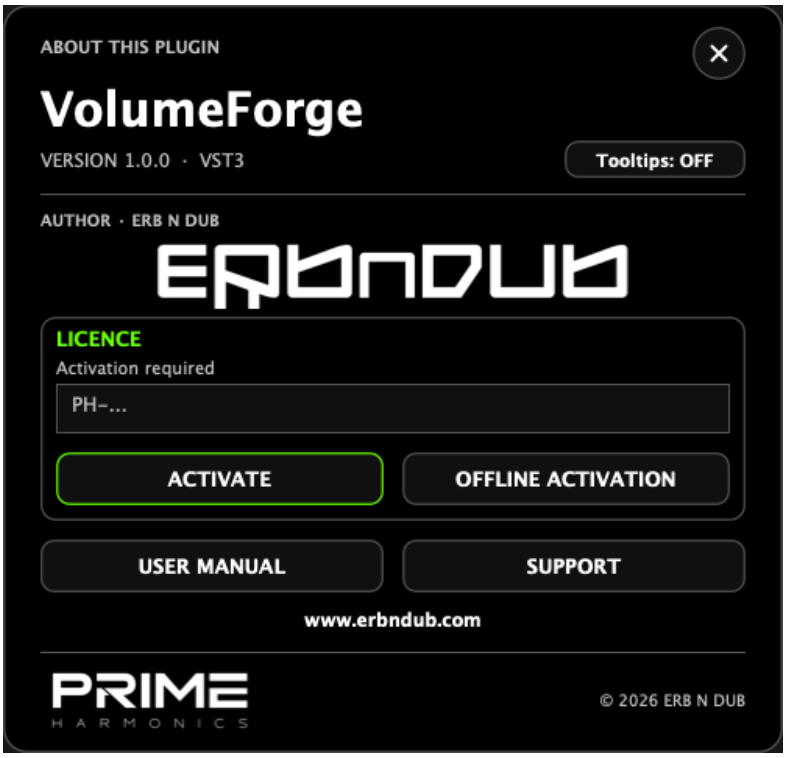
Try a larger audio buffer, a supported sample rate and a simple mono or stereo project. Compare with BYPASS and Scope Off. Check other plugins and confirm whether the problem occurs in an empty project. For waveform timing, distinguish grid alignment from display timing against what you hear; see Latency and smooth movement.

PROJECT RECALL DIFFERS

Check that the same VolumeForge version and format are loaded. Confirm automation, sidechain/MIDI routing and other plugins. Reopen a copy of the saved project before overwriting it. Host automation can change a restored setting immediately. The DAW manages outer-window position; use its window-recovery command after disconnecting a display.

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INFO AND TOOLTIPS



The VolumeForge Info panel before activation.

INFO AND LOCAL MANUAL

Open Info (i) for the product name, version and running format. Choose User Manual to open the included PDF offline.

SHOW TOOLTIPS

Descriptive tooltips start off when no preference is saved. Open Info and use the tooltips control to switch hints on or off. The plugin remembers your choice. Numerical control-value readouts remain available with tooltips off.

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INSTALL AND OPEN

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Use a compatible 64-bit DAW and check the product download page for supported operating-system versions. VST3 is available for macOS and Windows where supplied. Audio Unit is macOS only.

MACOS

Save your work and close your DAW. Open the downloaded .pkg installer and choose VST3, Audio Unit (AU) or both, depending on what your DAW supports. Both formats contain Intel and Apple Silicon code. Keep one active copy per format.

WINDOWS

Save your work and close your DAW. Extract the downloaded ZIP. Copy the entire VolumeForge.vst3 bundle into C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3. Keep all files inside the bundle together. Windows may ask for administrator permission to copy it.

OPEN IN YOUR DAW

Reopen your DAW and find VolumeForge in its plugin browser. Rescan plugins in your DAW if it does not appear. Load it on an audio track or after an instrument.

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ACTIVATE AND MOVE YOUR LICENCE

YOUR LICENCE

VolumeForge is free and uses a permanent licence. Your free licence code lets you activate up to two computers. Once activated, you can use the plugin offline.

FIND YOUR LICENCE CODE

Sign in to My Account at https://erbndub.com/my-account/ using the account you used to get the plugin. Open the licence area and select the product to view or recover your code. If you receive a licence email, you can also use the code it contains.

ONLINE ACTIVATION

With an internet connection, open Info (i), enter your licence code in the Licence section, then select Activate. If your edition opens a separate Activate licence form, enter the code there and select Activate this computer.

OFFLINE ACTIVATION

On the computer you want to authorise, open Info and choose Offline Activation, then Save Computer Request. Transfer the request to a computer with internet access and follow Offline Activation Help to obtain a signed licence file. Transfer the file back and choose Import Licence File in the Offline Activation panel.

MOVE OR RECOVER YOUR LICENCE

On your old computer, choose Info > Manage Licence > Deactivate This Computer and follow the prompts to free a slot. Install and activate on the new computer with the same code. If you lost your code or cannot access the old computer, use My Account / Recovery or contact ERB N DUB support.

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UPDATE, REMOVE AND REINSTALL

UPDATE OR REINSTALL

Back up your projects, presets and any content folders before updating. Close the DAW and follow the installation instructions for your platform. After updating, confirm the version in Info and open a copy of an existing project before saving over it.

REMOVE ON MACOS

Close the DAW and remove only VolumeForge.vst3 and/or VolumeForge.component from /Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3 and /Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components respectively. If you installed a user-only copy, check the equivalent folders inside your home Library.

REMOVE ON WINDOWS

Close the DAW and remove only the VolumeForge.vst3 bundle from the folder where you installed it. Keep your projects, presets and any separate sample libraries.

ACTIVATION AND REMOVAL

Removing plugin files does not free an activation slot. Use the deactivation steps in this guide before moving your licence.

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ABOUT AND SUPPORT

SUPPORT

Visit https://erbndub.com/contact/ and include the plugin version, operating system, DAW, plugin format and steps to reproduce the problem. Keep your licence code private.

ERB N DUB CONTACT

studio@erbndub.com | https://www.erbndub.com

PRIME HARMONICS CONTACT

info@primeharmonics.audio | https://www.primeharmonics.audio/

THIRD-PARTY NOTICES

See the notices supplied with your download.

DESIGNED AND DEVELOPED BY ERB N DUB (PETER CHAPMAN)

Drawing on over 20 years of experience as an artist, producer, DJ, and drummer, Erb N Dub brings his expertise in sound design, synthesis, and audio processing to the development of innovative audio software.

Combining his creative vision with augmented technology, Peter translates his tried-and-tested production techniques into intuitive tools that help producers create music with greater sonic weight, clarity, and impact.