

MAGNETIC

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MY TOOLBOX: ANDY CALDWELL

With a new album out today, Andy Caldwell breaks down the most important pieces in his expansive studio arsenal.

RYAN MIDDLETON · AUG 5, 2021

Producer, DJ and instructor [Andy Caldwell](#) has released his new album *Genesis* about going back to his roots. "Going back to my roots, I wrote this album purely for my own artistic expression. If it sells, streams, or just one person likes it, that's icing on the cake," explains Caldwell.

The [IO Music Academy](#) founder has re-found his spark with this new album, largely from opening the production school, which helped him find new "inspiration and perspective as to why I chose a career in music in the first place," says the DJ. His first LP since 2009's *Obsession*, he puts together a seven track album packed with collaborations that unveil a world of dreamy house music & club-ready records.

Since Caldwell is a music instructor and a lover of all things production, we wanted to see what he has in his studio to use when making music. He drops in for a [My Toolbox](#) feature to show off his essential pieces of gear and also lists all of the other things at his disposal. As one might expect, there is a lot here. Pick up your copy of *Genesis* [here](#).

1. Ableton Live DAW

This is the best DAW out there in my opinion. I was a loyal ProTools user for many years but after working with [Ableton](#) there was no way I was going back. It's incredibly flexible and allows me so much creative space. Session view allows me to sketch out arrangements before committing to them, it's an ingenious approach.

2. Apollo 8 Interface

My trusty Apollo 8 gets heavy use when it comes to mix downs. I have a quad unit, as well as a duo PCI, which gives me a ton of headroom and allows me to run some sizable UAD plugins like Capitol Chambers for instance. The UAD stuff is just awesome, I'm a big fan of the Studer A800 Tape Emulator and the Neve 1073 channel strip.

3. Roland Juno 60 (Photo 1, Photo 2)

I bought this synth in 1993 for \$200 and I'll probably take it to my grave. I know this synth like the back of my hand and can get virtually any sound I want from it. On "Like A Ghost," every bass and synth sound was created on this classic gem.

4. Arturia V Collection

By far, one of the best Vintage Synth Emulator packages available. The Yamaha CS80 is such a joy to play but my two favs are the DX-7 and the Synthie V. Convenient, fairly easy to use and excellent sound quality make this plug-in package a must have!

5. Requisite Audio PalPlus

This is a hand built vacuum tube compressor with a tube preamp stage. The specs are mastering grade with point-to-point gold soldering. It's based off of an LA-2A, but includes a really warm and punchy pre-amp. It's a beautiful piece of equipment for tracking vocals.

6. Empirical Labs Distressor w/Britmod

This is my secret weapon for bass and drums when I want to make my beats really pop. I use the "slow attack" setting (usually around 7) with one or two of the distortion buttons enabled. When I want that secret sauce I use the Britmode switch for that extra bit of punch.

7. CAD E300 mic

This is my go to mic. A while back, I did a mic shootout with some U67 & U87 Neumanns and a vintage Telefunken C-12 as well as a few others, but the CAD held its own. Not quite as punchy and bit bright on the top end but a quick adjustment on the EQ and it's right there. For the money, it's incredibly tough to beat.

Outboard:

MacPro 5,1 6 core 3.33mhz
Dynaudio (2x) AIR15 with AIRBASE 1 Sub
UAD Apollo 8 FireWire
Apogee Rosetta 800
Avalon (2x) U5
Avalon M5
Warm Pultech
Warm 76

Synths:

Roland SH101
Roland TR909 (photo)

Clavia Nord Lead 1
Roland JV2080
Dave Smith Prophet 6
Pioneer Dave Smith AS1
Behringer Crave
Yamaha FB01
Kora M3r

Mics:

CAD E300
Sure sm57 beta
AKG c220
MXL R144
Aston Origin

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