User Guide

FINISHER

NEO

Version 1.1

Welcome to Finisher NEO

Finisher NEO

Welcome to Finisher NEO!

The Finisher series is UJAMs take on creating innovative effects that inspire and get results. They're designed to deliver the power and flexibility of a full rack of audio processors and effects with the instant gratification of one single plug-in, with the spontaneity and ease of use that is the signature of UJAM products.

The Finisher series wants to be your companion in your music creation, always coming up with a fresh idea, never failing to inspire you and never leaving you with bland and boring tracks ever again.

A Finisher is not a Chorus, not a Reverb, Compressor or EQ – it is all of that and way more, because it is built from up to 40 different effect types and combines them into entirely new complex effect chains – there's an endless world of Finisher effect combinations that are not available in any other form of effect – plug-in or hardware.

Finisher NEO offers you professional audio quality and sound design inspiration packed in a sleek, modern and easy-to-use design.

Go ahead putting Finisher NEO on your tracks and play with it – we hope it'll become a staple in your toolbox and provide joy and inspiration for years to come!

What's new in Version 1.1?

Finisher NEO was our very first Finisher. As we developed its successors Finisher VOODOO and Finisher FLUXX, we introduced features that our users asked for:

- two more Vari Knobs,
- a Mode Browser
- the ability to run on mono tracks.

Version 1.1 simply catches NEO up with its siblings.

If you have used NEO before, you will enjoy the better browsing experience, additional creative options via Vari 1 knob and the Highlighter filter (Vari 4) that lets you create rises and drops.

Any risk updating?

No! You can safely install Finisher NEO 1.1 and it will still sound the same in your old sessions - even the Presets will still work. The new Vari Knobs 1 and 4 are merely add-ons to the existing Modes, everything else remains the same.

Why Finisher?

We at UJAM are musicians, and Finisher was born out of our frustration with always tediously having to construct effect chains for every track - compressor, EQ, chorus, delay .. whatever it takes for a certain kind of instrument or vocal.

Like, know that feeling when you got a great basic track laid down, but you just can't get it to sound interesting? Sure you do, we do too, and that's why we designed Finisher.

Finisher is a one-stop solution to that problem, designed to make this process fast and easy and keep the inspiration high.

A Finisher functions like a complete mixer channel with insert effects, except you also got a dozen hands tweaking hundreds of controls at the same time as you tweak three simple knobs.

Until now, you'd open a bunch of plug-ins and often get lost in possibilities, while all you would want is a dash of inspiration – finding a great-sounding treatment for your instrument that inspires you, tweak it a little, maybe automate it, and move on happily.

Now you got Finisher!

Installing Finisher NEO on your system

Installation is straightforward – double click the installer you got with your trial or purchase download and follow the instructions.

We have designed the entire process of downloading, activating and authorizing Finisher NEO with a strong focus on simplicity. It's important to us to make it as easy as possible for you to get your hands on Finisher NEO – and make it your own if you like it.

Trying, Buying, Authorizing

We only want you to spend money if you're absolutely happy with Finisher NEO. Therefore, we grant you a 30-day trial period, during which the plug-in will run without any limitation. When opening Finisher NEO during the trial period (or when clicking the Authorize button in the menu bar), you will see this overlay which shows

- displays information about your trial status,
- provides a link to the product page where you can purchase a permanent Finisher NEO license after or during the trial period,
- allows you to enter your credentials and authorize Finisher NEO once you've purchased it.

User Interface Overview

1. Preset Area: Select, Load and Save Presets
2. Mode Title
3. Mode Selector Arrows
4. Category Name
5. Mode number in Category
6. Mode Dropdown Menu
7. Mode Description
8. Input Level Meter and Slider

9. Vari Knobs 1-4
10. Vari Knob Labels (individual per Mode)
11. Big Knob
12. Big Knob Label (individual per Mode)
13. Output Level Meter and Slider

Adding Finisher NEO to your track

After installing Finisher NEO, it will appear in the effect plug-in menu of your VST-, AU- or AAX-compatible digital audio workstation.

Here you can select it as an insert for any stereo audio and instrument tracks or busses.

Finisher NEO on Mono Tracks

Finisher NEO 1.1 will now also appear in the plugin selection of mono tracks in your DAW.

Make sure to update if you're still using Finisher NEO 1.0 and run into this problem.

First test

Let's give it a first try:

- Put Finisher NEO into a track.
- Click on the large lime-green title left-center and from the menu select the Mode SPREAD: "Infinity"
- Send audio into Finisher NEO and while it plays, turn up the Big knob.

You will hear that as you turn the knob, the signal gradually gets filtered, becomes wider and more blurry, and a higher octave is added to it.

How does this work?

The effects used to create the Infinity Mode are Grain Pitch, Chorus, a Highpass filter and Reverb.

The signal gets sent through all these effects, and the Big knob controls different things for each of them:

- The Chorus is set to a full, rich chorussing effect. That signal is mixed in, and the Chorus rate and depth are increased as the Big knob goes up.
- The HP12 (12 dB Highpass Filter) Cutoff Frequency and Resonance are set to zero and get turned up with the Big knob, resulting in the filtering effect that makes the signal thinner and more resonant.
- The Grain Pitch is set to a Granular Delay pitched an octave upwards. The Big knob mixes the effect signal in.
- The Reverb effect is set to a very long reverberation that is inaudible at the lowest position of the Big knob, and turning the Big knob mixes the Reverb in.

Now try the following:

- Adjust the Vari 1, 2 and 3 knobs, and notice what they do to the effect character.

- Adjust Vari 4 - it's a UJAM-unique filter that we call the Highlighter - when turned left, it lowpass-filters (or dampens) the signal, when turned right, it highpass-filters (or thins out). Vari 4 is the same in all but one Modes, allowing you to always add a nice riser, intro or outro effect.

- Switch to a different Mode by either clicking the lime-green title and choose one from the browser, or use the little arrows. Note how by switching the Mode, the knob settings are not affected!

- Go to the top of the UI (right next to the UJAM logo) and select Presets the same way you select Modes. This time the knobs move with every Preset. Presets are settings of the entire user interface - Mode, Knobs and Levels.

All 5 knobs are set up individually for each of the 50 Modes, and designed to give you access to the qualities of the effect that are musically most useful.

The four smaller knobs let you adjust the two most important qualities of the effect signal, while the Big knob really shines when moved in real time or automated. All five knobs in combination provide for a large variety of effects for each single Finisher Mode.

What's inside Finisher NEO?

You could think of Finisher NEO as a mixer channel strip with almost unlimited slots for effect processors, all of which can be activated and adjusted at a simple click on the Mode selector.

Finisher NEO features 27 different effect types – from simple Chorus to Multiband Distortion, from Convolution to Grain Pitch, from Multimode Filters to Multitap Delays - with a total of over 60 Effect Slots distributed across 3 Busses plus a Master Bus. That's quite some real estate if you'd try to build that in hardware.

The Big Knob can be wired to every parameter of every active effect, in varying degrees. No worries – this has already been done for you.

For example the Big knob can dramatically speed up the phaser while introducing a little distortion and mixing in a dash of reverb.

The same is true for the Vari 1 - 4 knobs which you can use to adjust the effect to your scenario or taste, but which you can also automate.

Every Mode and its Knob assignments are a complex sound design piece to create one particular "change of scene" for your track.

That you can't see all the hundreds and hundreds of parameters under the hood is deliberate. It enables you to focus on complex sound changes as simple knobs, encourages you to use your ears and your openness to be inspired.

Switch Modes, turn the knobs – and make your tracks more beautiful, interesting, bigger, tougher, or change them entirely. Achieving the same dynamic and motion in conventional effect plugins would require dozens of automation lanes and diminish serendipity altogether.

Finisher NEO Reference

Loading Presets
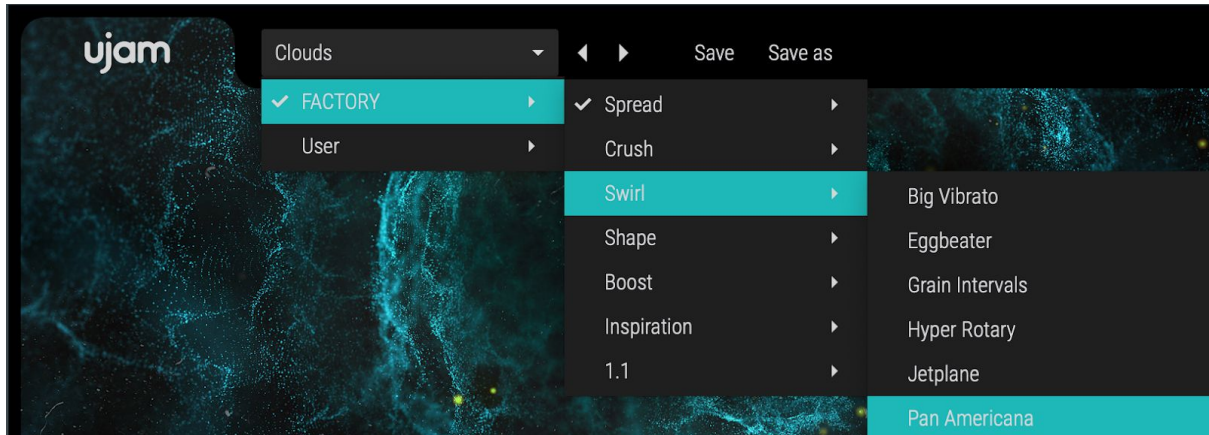
Finisher NEO Preset Menu

The Preset Menu at the top of the plugin window lets you easily select from and step through the over 100 included Presets.

You can either

- click the Arrow buttons tothe right of the Preset name to step through the list,
- or click the current Preset Name or the little arrow to open the Menu.

If you're new to Finisher NEO, we recommend you set up a track and just go through a lot of Presets to get an impression of what it can do.

Factory Presets

Finisher NEO comes with over 130 Factory Presets:

- At the top there is one Preset for each Mode with the default settings for that Mode. Go through these to explore what the Modes are originally meant for, and then start tweaking. These Presets are sorted into folders named like the categories you'll see above the Mode titles.
- The "Inspiration" category offers over 80 settings of a Finisher Mode and the three knobs and demonstrates how much variation there is in those three knobs. Also, that's the category you want to step through if you're looking for an … erm ... inspiration.

Saving Presets
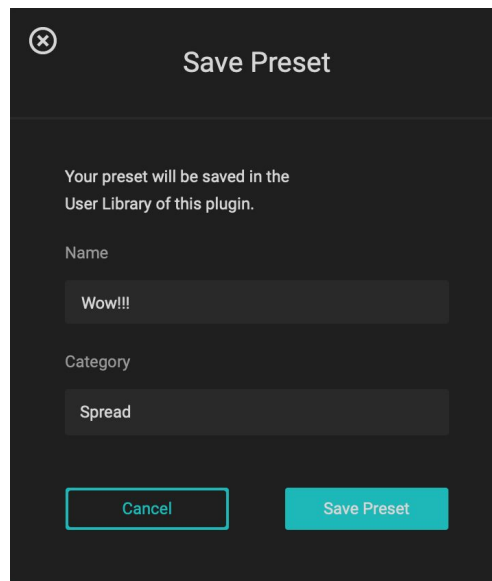
Once you have made changes to a Preset, you can save it in various ways:

- You can overwrite User Presets using the Save command. This way you can create your own custom version with your preferred default settings for every preset.
- You can also save User Presets under a different name using the "Save as…" command.
  You can not overwrite Factory Presets. Please use the "Save as…" command to create a new version of that Preset in the User Library.

Either way, when saving a Preset, you can choose one of the Categories which are the same for Modes and Presets, and which you will also find in the User Library.

Managing the plug-in

Trial Period

Like any other UJAM plugin, you can download Finisher NEO and try it without limitations for 30 days.

During that time, the menu bar of Finisher NEO will show "Trial Period, X days left" and an Authorize button.

After the Trial period is expired, you will need to purchase Finisher NEO to keep using it. After the purchase, click either the Authorize Button or open the About Page directly to enter your credentials and authorize Finisher NEO.

Update

The little Bell icon in the menu bar of Finisher NEO informs you about available updates. When an update is waiting, the Icon will show a dot and a dialog is opened where you can choose to download now or later.

Although we do our best to ensure that updates do not break any existing projects, we usually recommend to keep your previous installer in case you updated in the middle of a project and something's wrong.

About Page
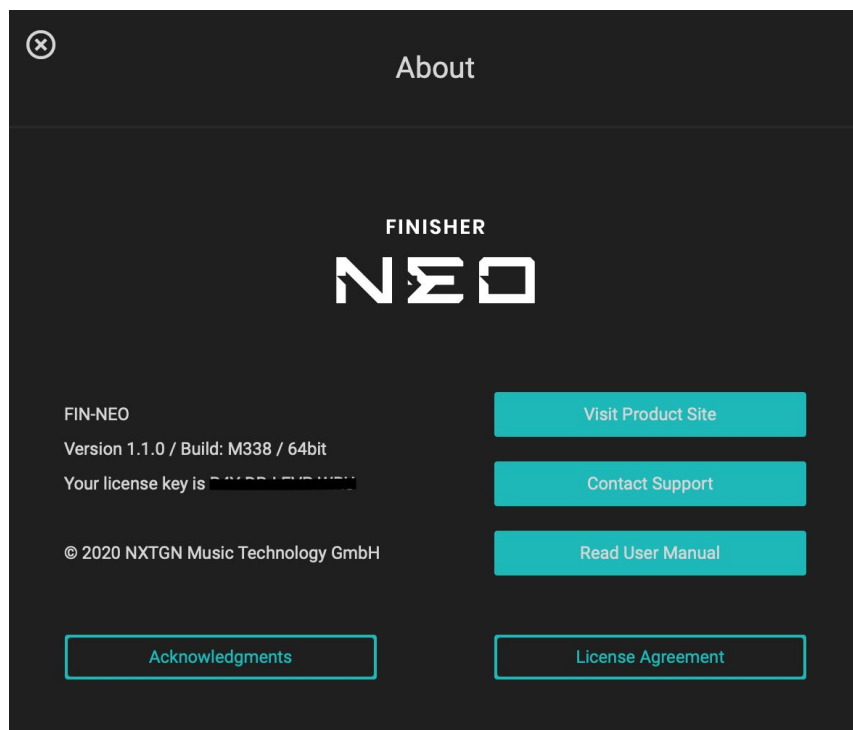
The circled "i" symbol to the right of the menu bar gives you access to various types of important information:

- Acknowledgments - the people behind Finisher NEO

- Visit Product Site - Product Page with demos, information and more

- Contact Support - when you have a problem with Finisher, we're here to help!

- Read User Manual - opens this manual …

- License Agreement - opens the license agreement if you ever feel like it.

User Interface Concept

Here's the user experience concept of Finisher NEO in a nutshell:

- At the heart of Finisher NEO is the *Mode*. It sets up the entire machinery under the hood – the effect algorithms and their routing as well as the macro assignments for the big *Big* knob and the 4 *Vari* knobs.
- Modes are sorted into categories. They're merely for organizational purposes. Finisher NEO offers SPREAD, CRUSH, WHIRL, SHAPE and BOOST effects.
- In each Mode, the Big Knob is always programmed for the #1 interesting change in the effect that will also work great if automated.
- The Vari knobs allow you to adjust the effect to your scenario or taste, and can be automated as well.
- When you select a Mode, you will find text descriptions of the Mode itself as well as the assignments of the Knobs on the user interface.

The MODE Section

Mode Section: Categories (left), Title, Description and Arrows (center), Knob (right)

When going through Modes, we recommend you set the Big knob at least to center position so you can hear the effect while stepping through.

Modes are carefully sound-design effect configurations in Finisher NEO, each with its individual parameter settings, and a custom macro-assignment of parameters to the *Big* knob as well as the *Vari 1 - 4* controls.

In Finisher NEO, the *Modes* are sorted into 5 descriptive Categories.

Categories

In Finisher NEO, Modes are organized in five descriptive categories are as follows:

| Name	Description	Typical effects
SPREAD	Expand and widen your signal adding ambiences, echoes and granular harmonics.	Reverb, Delay, Grain Pitch
STIR	Modulation Effects that modulate and stir up some frequency, phase or other aspect of the signal	Chorus, Phaser, Flanger, Rotary
CRUSH	Destroys, degrades and distorts the signal in multiple creative ways from distortion to frequency	Distortion, LoFi

	range reduction to adding noise.	
SHAPE	Shape the spectral character of the signal using filtering or other strong effects changing the spectrum of the signal.	EQ, Filter, Convolution
BOOST	These Modes help boosting the signal in the mix by dynamic or frequency changes	EQ, Dynamics, Multiband

Category and Position Display
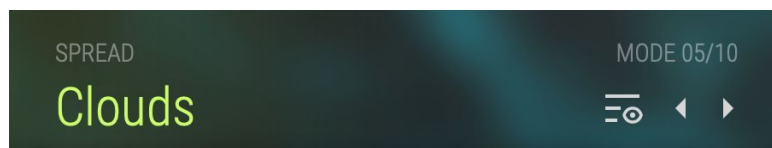
The Category of the currently selected Mode is displayed above the Mode title. Also, the position of that Mode within the category is shown - each Category has 10 Modes.

Selecting Modes
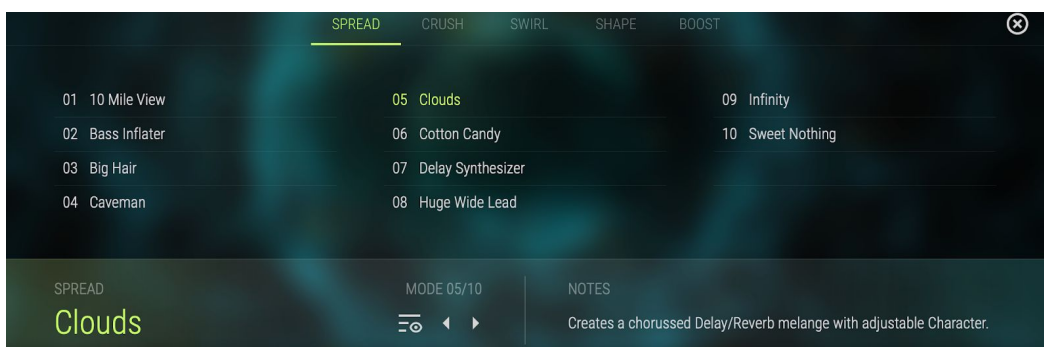
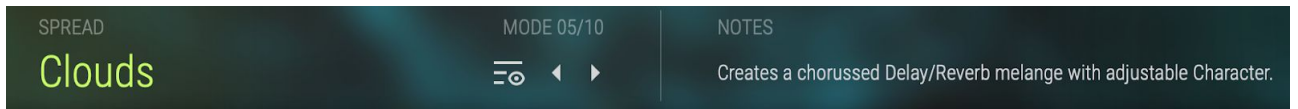Mode Selection Menu with Category Folders

Finisher NEO lets you select Modes in two ways:

- Clicking on a Mode name or the dropdown arrow to open the browser, and selecting a title from the menu
- Clicking on the arrows to step back and forth through the Modes

Please note that when switching the Mode using the Mode Browser or arrows, the settings of the Big and Vari knobs remain unchanged.

To change Modes including knob settings, switch Presets.

Mode Description

SPREAD   MODE 05/10   NOTES
Clouds   Creates a chorussed Delay/Reverb melange with adjustable Character.

Mode Description (to the right)

Since Finisher NEO Modes aren't conventional effects with learned names, but each one is a total individual design, you will find a short description and/or instruction right next to the Mode title to help you make the best out of that effect configuration.

The Big Knob

Mix

The Big Knob

The Big Knob is the center control in Finisher NEO. It is a super powerful macro control, multi-wired into all effect algorithms under the hood, and carefully set up for each individual Mode.

The Big Knob is not just another one-knob thing that you set up and leave to tweak the effect – although you perfectly could do just that.

Actually, you are encouraged to play with the Big Knob and automate it to create arcs, transitions and modulations over the length of your track. We strongly encourage you to assign it to a MIDI Controller like a Wheel or a Pedal if you can play and record along your song and create dynamic tracks that will sound alive and interesting.

The function of the Big Knob in each Mode is shown as a label underneath the Big Knob that changes as you select Modes.

Vari 1 - 4

Vari Knob with Label

The four smaller knobs left and right of the Big Knob are designed for allowing adjustments to the overall effect and the dynamic changes created by the Big knob, but you might as well automate and "play" them too.

Like the Big Knob, Vari controls are entirely MODE-dependent - they are always programmed to perform the musically most useful function in any given MODE.

Also, like the Big knob, these knobs are pre-assigned to multiple parameters, each with its own scaling and range, to create complex changes, and their function assignment is shown as a label right underneath each knob.

Vari 4

The Vari 4 knob is - in all but one Mode (Filter & Distroy) - a Highlighter Filter. This is a unique filter module that is both a Lowpass and a Highpass Filter:

- LP24: Turn the knob left from center to decrease the Cutoff frequency of a resonant lowpass synth filter
- HP12: Turn the knob clockwise from center to increase the Cutoff frequency of a resonant Highpass synth filter

While the technical description may sound a bit complicated, the actual sonic impact is very self-explaining. There's only one way to find that out, so …

Vari Knob Types

From left to right: Unipolar knob (zero position left), bipolar knob (zero position center), three-way switch, four-way switch

Depending on the Mode, all four Vari Knobs can either be a unipolar or bipolar continuous control as well as 2-, 3- or 4-way switches. The user interface will reflect the respective control mode. When in Switch mode, the knob doesn't turn but jump to the pre-programmed positions.

Checking and Setting Levels

Input Level and Meter

Output Level and Meter with dB display while slider being dragged

The Input Level Meter and Slider to the bottom left let you attenuate or boost your signals' input level into Finisher, and the Output Level elements to the right do the same for Finisher NEOs output signal. A few tips:

- Signals are at optimal level if they are around the little calibration marks on the slider. Adjust them if they're not.
- Optimal input levels are important particularly for those Modes that use distortion, compression or any kind of dynamic treatment.
- Optimal output levels are particularly important if you use subsequent processing in the same track, and to avoid clipping.

Note that while you drag a slider, the resulting change will be displayed in dB.

Finisher NEOs is optimized to alter the signal's level as little as possible from input to output, but depending on the frequency content of the input signal and the processing applied (e.g. sub bass on kick drums, high resonant filters on mid-rich signals) this is not always avoidable.

Automating Controls

Finisher NEO can be fully automated and you will realize quickly that that is big fun and significantly adds to your music. Create stunning intros or risers slowly rising the Big Knob e.g. in the Infinity or Comb & Space Modes, build cool step-sequences by switching the Mode every beat or add breath to vocals by fading in delays only on last words.

Automatable Parameters

The following parameters can be automated via DAW Automation and - with the exception of Mode - using MIDI Control Change events:

- Effect
- Variation 1
- Variation 2
- Variation 3
- Variation 4
- Mode*
- Input
- Output

*Mode automation is implemented as an experimental bonus, not a feature complying to UJAMs high UX standards. Please handle with care! When automating Mode, please be aware that only the bottom quarter of the automation curve will be used.

DAW Automation

To automate a parameter using the automation of your DAW, just find where you activate automation - usually that's a menu in the track inspector - and choose the parameter. The Finisher NEO automation menu in Logic looks like this:
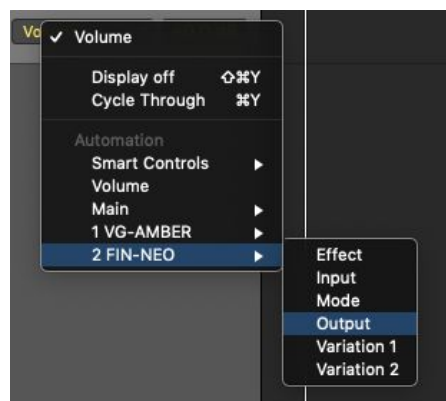
Caution: MIDI Controllers
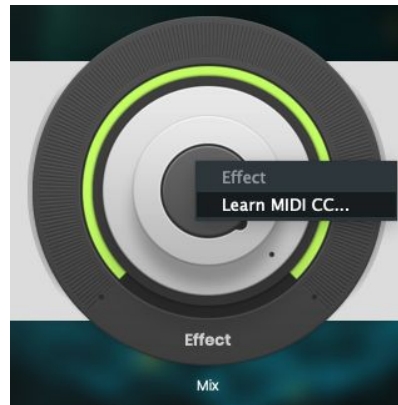
MIDI Learn dialog for the Big Knob

ONLY if your DAW permits MIDI control of effect plugins - Logic or Ableton Live for example don't, but Reaper does - you can use any MIDI controller that sends MIDI CC# events to automate Finisher NEOs parameters - knobs on a masterkeyboard, sliders on a push controller, pedals.

To assign a NEO parameter to a control, open the MIDI Learn dialog (usually per right-click) and move the controller you want to assign.

Effect Algorithms

The 50 Modes in Finisher NEO are built using 27 different effect algorithms as building blocks. There are three parallel busses fed into a Master Bus, plus a Dry Bus that feeds the unprocessed, but level-adjusted input signal to the Finisher plug-in's output.

Algorithm	Description
Beat Cutter	Various glitch and gating effects
Bus Compressor	Punchy compressor with configurable envelope detection
Chorus	Multivoice Chorus for a thicker, fatter sound
Compressor	General-purpose compressor for controlling dynamic range and shaping transients
Convolution	Processes the input signal with an impulse response to add reverberation or character of another audio device, acoustic space or signal chain.
Distortion	Stereo distortion/overdrive effect with multiple modes and curves

EQ	Four-band Equalizer with parametric mid bands
Flanger	Flanger effect based on a modulated delay line
Frequency Shifter	Bode frequency shift (inharmonic shift in Hertz, not pitch)
Grain Pitch	Granular Pitch Shift and Delay
Guitar Amp	Models of three classic guitar amps
Limiter	Safety Limiter to keep levels in check
LoFi	Sample Rate and Bit Rate Reduction
Master Filter	Lowpass/Highpass "Seesaw" filter
Multiband Compressor	Separate compression of low, mid and high frequencies
Multiband Distortion	Stereo Mix of four distortions each preceded by a multimode filter
Multimode Delay	Stereo Delay with multiple feedback modes
Multimode Filter	Synthesizer Filter with 9 modes and resonance
Pan	Pan, Stereo Width and Phase adjustment
Phaser	Phaser effect with up to 8 poles (4 peaks/notches)
Reverb	Algorithmic reverb emulating a digital reverb unit.
Rotary	Rotary Speaker simulation with separate Drum/Horn channels
Saturation	Subtle harmonic distortion
Sub Bass	Generates a sub-octave signal like an octave divder pedal
Transient	Accentuates or reduces the level of signal transients
Tremolo/Pan	Tremolo and/or Auto Pan Effects

I have questions! Where can I send them?

Please send any questions to support@ujam.com.