

# UNION AUDIO

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AREA.6



## PRODUCT USER GUIDE

## Area.6 User Guide Issue 1

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To the best of our endeavors, we believe the information contained in this user guide to be true and accurate but we do not assume responsibility for inaccuracies or omissions, and reserve the right to make any changes deemed necessary.

This product has been designed to comply with the applicable standards, regulations, and directives for the countries where the product is marketed.

**NOTE:** Changes or modifications to this mixer, or its associated power supply, could negatively impact compliance and the user's authority to operate it.

Designed and manufactured in the United Kingdom by:

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### **Limited One -Year Manufacturer's Warranty**

**Union Audio** warrants the product and accessories contained in the original packaging against defects in materials and workmanship when used in accordance with this user manual for a period of One (1) YEAR from the date of original purchase by the end-user purchaser ("**Warranty Period**").

Repair or replacement under the terms of the warranty does not provide right to extension or renewal of the warranty period. Repair or direct replacement of the product under the terms of this warranty may be fulfilled with functionally equivalent service exchange units.

This warranty is not transferable. This warranty will be the purchaser's sole and exclusive remedy and neither **Union Audio** nor any approved service centres shall be liable for any incidental or consequential damages or breach of any express or implied warranty of this product.

#### **Conditions of Warranty**

The equipment has not been subject to misuse either intended or accidental, neglect, or alteration other than approved by **Union Audio**. The warranty does not cover potentiometer wear and tear, nor cosmetic damage to paint or screenprint. Any necessary adjustment, alteration or repair has only been carried out by **Union Audio** or distributor or appointed service agent.

The defective unit is to be returned to the place of purchase, an authorised **Union Audio** distributor or agent with proof of purchase. Please discuss this with the distributor or the agent before shipping. Units returned should be packed in the original carton to avoid transit damage.

Check with your **Union Audio** distributor or agent for any additional warranty information which may apply. If further assistance is required please contact **support@unionaudio.co.uk**

Any changes or modifications to the equipment not approved by **Union Audio** could void the compliance of the product and therefore the users authority to operate it.



# Safety Instructions

## Please read and retain these instructions

- Only use the product for the purposes it is intended and heed all warnings.
- **WARNING** - To prevent the risk of fire or electric shock do not use this mixer near water, or in locations where it is likely to be exposed to rain or moisture.
- Always ensure that liquids cannot get spilt over the mixer or its power supply, and keep all objects filled with liquids, such as vases, drinks glasses, etc. well away from the apparatus.
- Ensure adequate ventilation and ensure all ventilation openings are not blocked or restricted.
- Do not connect the output of amplifiers to this apparatus. Always use the correct, high quality cables to connect the mixer to audio sources and power amplifier inputs.
- Do not install the mixer or power supply near any heat sources such as radiators, stoves, amplifiers or other apparatus that generates heat.
- Do not place sharp or heavy objects onto the mixer or power supply as these could damage the controls or cosmetics. Avoid rough handling and protect both units from vibration. Retain the original packing in order to protect the unit during shipping or transit.
- Refer all servicing to qualified personnel. Servicing is required if liquids are split onto the mixer or its power supply, objects have fallen into the apparatus, the unit has been dropped, or does not function normally.



# Safety Instructions

- Do not remove any covers, either on the mixer or the power supply.
- Install only in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Always use a power adaptor appropriate to your local mains supply, and ensure the power supply is correctly specified for the local mains voltage.
- Protect the DC lead from being walked on, pinched, or stretched.
- Unplug the power supply and mixer during electrical storms.
- Do not leave the apparatus unattended for long periods when powered on.



To prevent the risk of electrical shock do not open the mixer or power supply or remove any covers. no user serviceable parts inside. Refer servicing to qualified service personnel only.

**These symbols are internationally accepted symbols to warn of potential hazards with electrical products.**



This symbol indicates that a dangerous voltage constituting a risk of electric shock is present within this unit.



This symbol indicates that there are important operating and maintenance instructions in the literature accompanying this product.

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# About Area.6

The area.6 is a premium six-channel analogue performance mixer designed for artists working with Eurorack, modular synthesisers and hybrid electronic music setups. Combining Union Audio's analogue mixer design expertise with carefully selected creative tools and extensive CV control, the Area.6 is designed to provide exceptional audio quality while offering an intuitive and highly responsive approach to live performance and mixing.

Each of the six input channels features dedicated Level control, Tilt EQ and Auxiliary Send, providing fast and musical control over the mix. Channels can be configured for mono or stereo operation, allowing the Area.6 to accommodate a wide variety of instruments and signal sources.

Extensive CV connectivity allows key parameters including Channel Level, Pan and Auxiliary Sends to be controlled from external CV sources, enabling the Area.6 to become an integral part of any modular performance system.

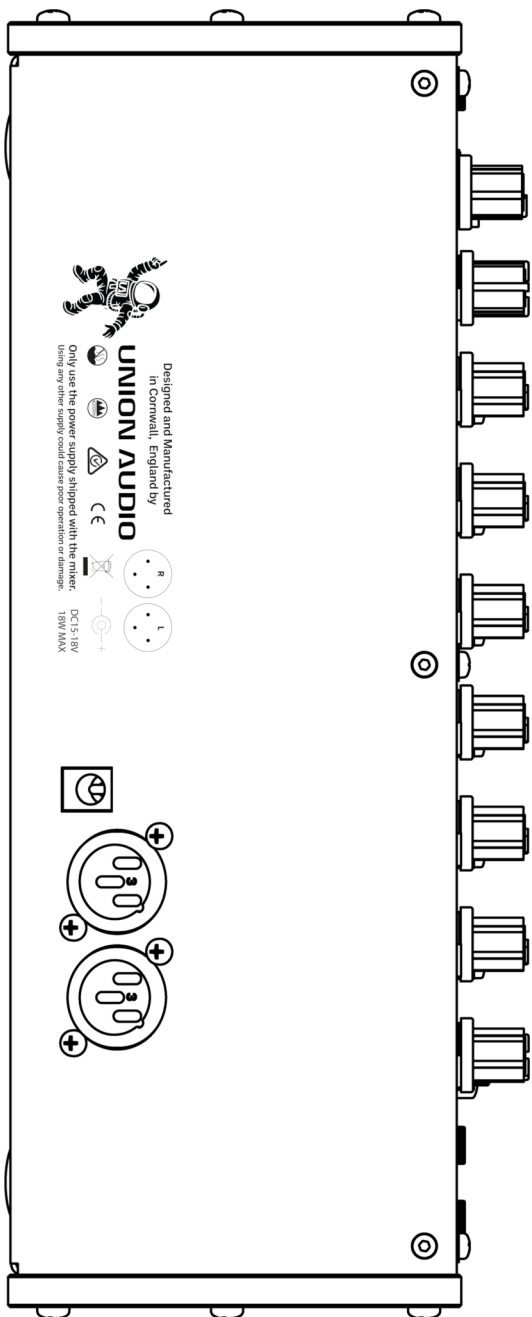
For creative sound shaping, channels can be routed to the Filter section. Featuring High-Pass and Low-Pass filtering, plus, resonance control. Together with Drive for adding anything from subtle analogue character to more pronounced saturation and distortion. Filter CV input further extends the creative possibilities, allowing the Filter section to be dynamically manipulated as part of a performance or patch.

The Area.6 also features an integrated analogue compressor, providing powerful control over mix dynamics. Dedicated Threshold, Ratio and Make-Up Gain controls allow the compressor to be used for subtle mix cohesion or more obvious dynamic processing. A Sidechain input enables external signals to control the compressor. While the CV output allows the compressor's envelope to be used elsewhere within a modular patch. Two Auxiliary Sends provide flexible routing to external effects and processors, with dedicated stereo returns allowing processed signals to be brought back into the mix. A Master Insert provides an additional connection point for external processing across the main mix. Designed with live performance at its core, the Area.6 combines the immediacy of a dedicated hardware mixer with the flexibility and control of the Eurorack environment. Supplied as a standalone desktop unit with studio aesthetic wooden side trims. The Area.6 can also be installed within a Eurorack system, making it equally at home at the centre of a studio setup or as part of a fully integrated modular performance rig.

## Key Highlights

- Mono or stereo channel operation
- Tilt EQ on each input channel
- Channel Cue/Mute system.
- CV control of Channel Level, Channel Pan, Auxiliary Sends and Filter frequency.
- Assignable analogue Filter section with High-Pass/Low-Pass filtering and Drive
- Integrated analogue compressor with external Sidechain input
- Compressor CV output for integration with modular patches
- Two Auxiliary Sends and stereo returns
- Master Insert for external mix-bus processing
- Balanced XLR master output
- Dedicated headphone output
- Desktop format with wooden side-trims
- Modular Eurorack compatible





# Input Channel

The Area.6 features 6 stereo input channels. Each channel incorporates a dual Auxiliary Send, a Tilt EQ Control, Channel Level Control, and a Filter Routing Switch. The nominal Input level is set to +10dBu to match typically high Eurorack modular output levels. An Input Signal level of +10dBu will indicate OVU on the Master Meters when a Channel Cue is activated.



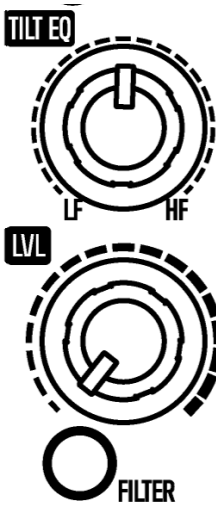
**L/MONO** — Connecting a Mono source to the Left Jack Input only automatically routes the signal to both Left and Right channels. For Stereo operation, connect Jacks to both Left and Right Inputs

**AUX** — Sends the channel signal (Post Tilt EQ) to either Aux 1 or Aux 2 mix Buss. The Aux Level is normally POST Channel Level, but can be set to PRE Channel Level by moving an internal jumper link - See page 18. Pressing the button below the Aux Level control selects either Aux 1 or Aux 2. When Aux 2 is selected the LED will be illuminated.

**SIGNAL** — This red LED illuminates when the channel is receiving an audio signal. It is normal for it to pulse with the signal.

**CUE/MUTE** — Pressing this button routes the pre-fade channel signal to the Headphone monitor section so you can audition the channel signal before bringing it into the mix. The LED will illuminate Blue to show a Cue is active. When a Cue is active the signal level will also be displayed on the Master Meters. This button works in conjunction with the CUE/MUTE button in the Master Section (See page 14). When the MUTE button is Active (red LED ON) pressing this button will Mute the Channel signal, and the LED will turn RED.

# Input Channel Continued

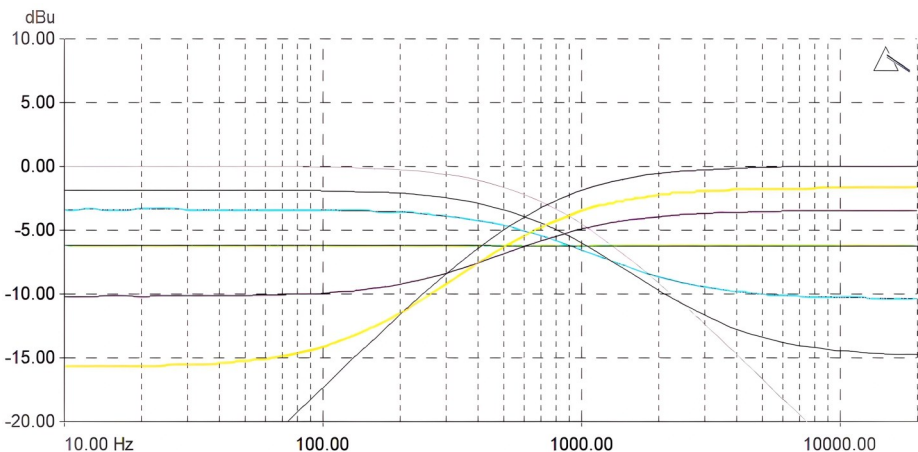


**TILT EQ** — This control adjusts the tone of the signal level sent to the Mix. Rotating the control counter-clockwise will attenuate the higher frequencies and boost the lower frequencies.

Rotation the Tilt control Clockwise will attenuate the lower frequencies and boost the higher frequencies.

This Graph below illustrates the change in frequency response when using the Tilt EQ.

**LEVEL** — Adjust the amount of signal level sent to the main Mix, from  $-80\text{dB}$  of attenuation to Unity Gain.



# Filter Section

**CV IN** — Input for external CV control of the Filter cut-off frequency. This works in parallel with the Frequency control knob, so for total external filter control, set the control knob fully CCW. Control voltage range 0V to +5V.

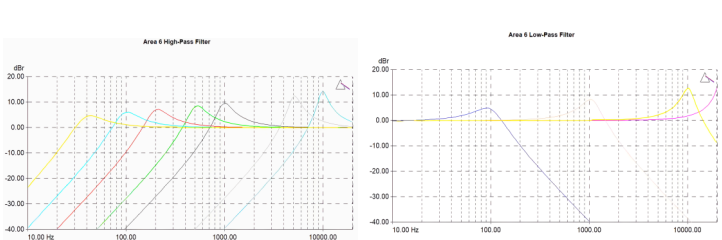
**Filter to Aux** — Sends the output of the Filter and Drive circuit to the Aux 1 Mix buss.

**Drive** — Progressively clips the audio level, post the Filter section. The more the control is rotated CW the more the audio will be clipped (distortion). The control shaft will illuminate brighter the more the control is rotated.

**Resonance** — The Resonance control adjusts the Q or sharpness of the Filter at its cut-off point. Fully CCW Q is very wide, resulting in a subtle Filter roll off. Fully CW the Q is narrowed resulting in a significant resonant peak, just below self-oscillation, giving a sharp roll-off and a resonant, characterful sound.

**HPF/LPF** — With the switch in the Up position (High-Pass-Filter) the output of the filter will attenuate frequencies below the cut-off point. With the Switch pressed in (Low-Pass-Filter) frequencies above the cut-off point will be attenuated.

**Frequency** — Sets the cut-off point of the filter. Turning the control CW raises the cut-off frequency of the filter.



**Filter ON** — When pressed the Filter will process any audio signal routed from the channel strips, and the button will illuminate Blue.

Filter activation is “soft-switched” to minimise audio disturbance when switched On or Off. Turning the Filter Off also deactivates the Drive Control



# Compressor Section

**COMP.**



CV OUT



AUDIO  
S/CHAIN  
IN



-1



-3



-6



-12



GAIN



RATIO



T.HOLD

The Area.6 features a built in, stereo Audio Compressor, featuring a “soft knee” to smoothly compress signals above the set threshold, and peak signal detection.

The Ratio control is unconventional in that it automatically combines Parallel Compression at higher Ratios.

**CV Out** — Control voltage derived from the compressor side-chain control circuit. 5V = zero compression, while increased compression levels will lower this voltage.

**Audio Side-Chain IN** — Connecting an audio source to this socket bypasses the Mix buss signal, allowing the compressor to be controlled by an external audio source.

**Compression Level Meter** — The four LEDs allow visual monitoring of the compression level.

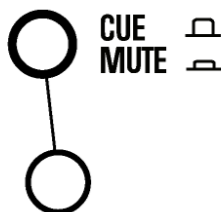
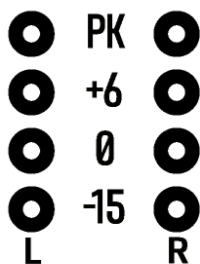
**Gain** — Adjusts the output signal level from the compressor circuit. This control is centre-detented at Unity. Control range is approximately +/-20dB.

**Ratio** — This control sets how aggressively the signal is reduced once it exceeds the threshold level. Signal reduction is expressed as a ratio, i.e. 2:1, 4:1, etc. Higher ratios equal stronger dynamic compression. Turning the Ratio control from fully CCW to centre, adjusts the ratio from 1:1 to about 2:1. From centre to 2 o'clock, the Ratio changes from 2:1  $\approx$  4:1. Further CW rotation causes the Ratio to go into negative compression, while at the same time gradually adding the dry (uncompressed) signal in order to the to create parallel compression.

**Threshold** — The threshold control sets the level at which compression begins. It is usually measured in dB (e.g., -20 dB, -12 dB). Any signal louder than the threshold gets compressed according to the ratio setting.

Fully CCW set the threshold at -25dB, and fully CW to +10dB

# Master Section



The Master section features controls for output level, mix buss metering, the Cue/Mute control, and Headphone Monitor.

**Master Level** — The Master Level control sets the final combined signal level of all channels after they've been mixed together. Raising the Master Level increases the volume sent to the attached amplifier and speakers.

**Meters** — The four-point level meters indicate the Mix Buss signal level, and not the Master Output level. When a Channel Cue is activated the meters automatically switch to show the pre-fader Channel level.

OVU indicates a Mix Buss level of 0dBu. The Peak LED will illuminate with Mix Buss levels above +10dBu.

**Cue Mute** — When the button is in the up position, the associated LED will illuminate Blue when any Channel Cue is activated to show that the Master VU Meter is reading the pre-fade channel signal level. When the button is pressed down, the LED will change to Red, and any Channel Cue active LED indicator will also turn Red to Indicate that the Channel is now Muted and not feeding the Mix. This provides a quick way to Mute individual channels, or assign a group of channels and Mute them simultaneously for either Mix monitoring or as a performance tool.

**Phones** — Adjusts the level of the headphone output. The mixer is fitted with a headphone amplifier optimised for use with headphones with an impedance of 250 Ohms and above. Headphones below the recommended impedance should be avoided, and in particular low impedances (below 100 Ohms) could cause damage to the circuitry.

**WARNING!** Avoid operating the mixer with headphones at high volume or for extended periods of time as this can contribute to severe hearing loss!



# Output Section



**Master Insert** — The Master Insert is a dedicated send/return point in the signal path, after all individual channels are summed but before the final main output. The connections follow the convention of Tip = Send, Ring = Return. These connections are for adding additional outboard equipment for master buss processing, like compression, limiting, EQ, saturation, or tape emulation to the whole mix at once.



**Mix Out** — The Mix Out is an unbalanced stereo output of the main mix buss, and is post the Master Level Control.

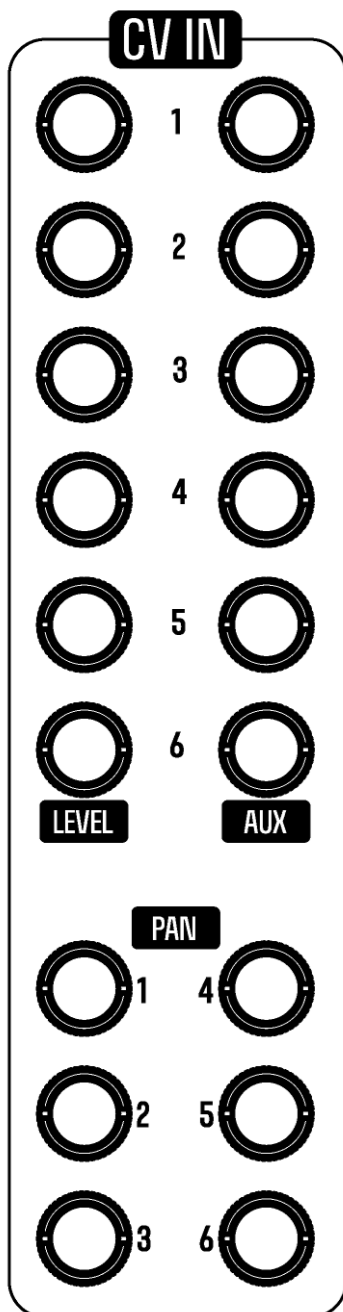


**Aux Sends** — Aux Sends 1 and 2 Outputs (also called Auxiliary Send or FX Send) are dedicated Mono outputs that lets you send a copy of one or more channel signals, set by the Channel Aux level controls, primarily for sending to external effects processors, such as Delays or Reverbs.



**Stereo Returns** — Stereo Returns (also called Aux Returns or Effect Returns) are dedicated inputs primarily for bringing stereo signals back into the mix after being processed externally. The Area.6 comes supplied with 3.5mm adaptors that will convert these Inputs to Mono.

## CV Section



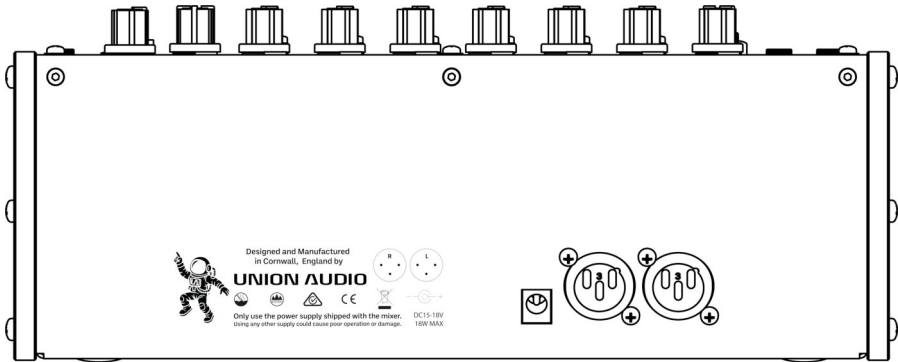
**CV IN LEVEL —** The Level CV inputs allow for external level controls of all six stereo channels. They follow the convention of 0V = fully attenuation +5V = Unity. The CV input levels are summed with the Channel Level controls, so to allow for full external control, the channel rotary fader should be fully CCW.

**CV IN AUX —** As per the Channel Level controls, the Aux CV Inputs allow for external control of each channels Auxiliary Send level. They follow the convention of 0V = fully attenuation to +5V = Unity. The CV input levels are summed with the Channel Aux Level controls, so to allow for full external control, the channel Aux controls should be fully CCW.

**CV IN Channel PAN —** The Channel Pan CV inputs allow for external panning of all six stereo channels.

They follow the convention of -5V = fully Panned Left - 0V = Panned Centre to +5V = Fully Panned Right

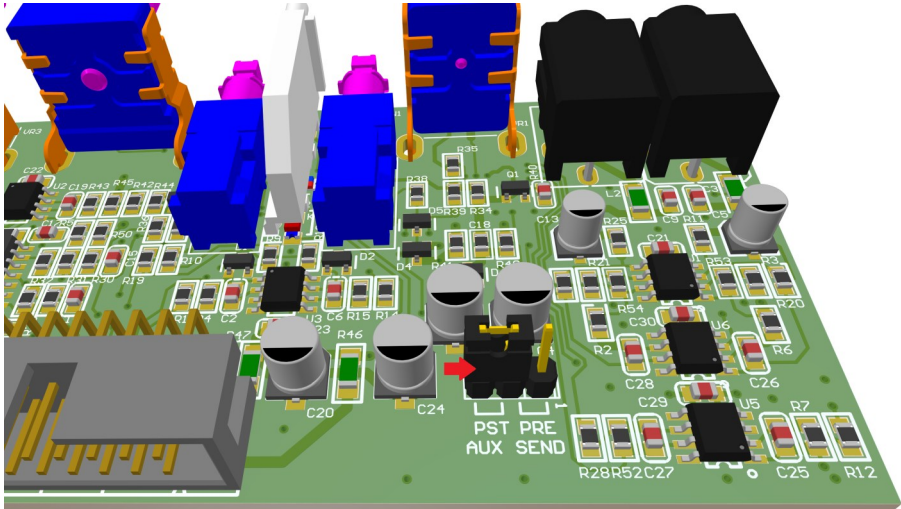
# Rear Panel Connections



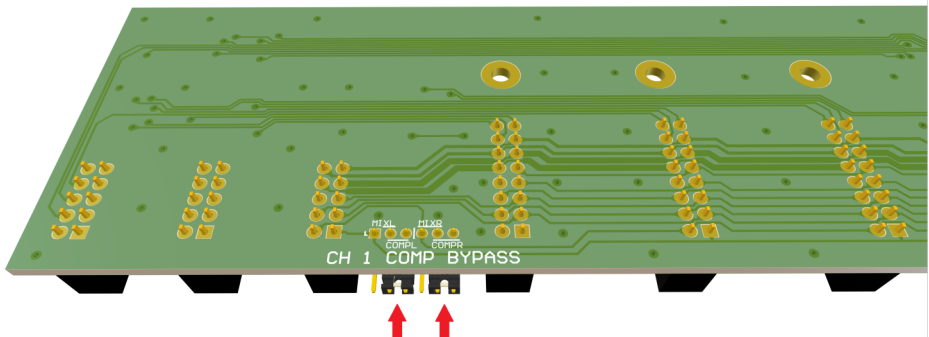
**XLR Outputs** — The XLR outputs sockets on the Rear Panel, are connected in parallel with the same signals that feed the Top Panel Mix Out 3.5mm Socket. The XLR Output is electronically balanced and follow the convention of Pin 1 = Ground, Pin 2 = Hot (positive phase) Pin 3 = Cold (negative phase). Balanced outputs generally are used to reject noise and interference over longer cable runs.

**DC Power In** — The Area.6 is supplied mounted in strong, steel, desktop case fitted with an internal DC-DC power supply. The Internal Power supply generates the +/- 12V (24 total) power rails that supply the Mixer's analogue circuitry. The internal PSU is powered by the universal power adaptor included with the mixer. For external supply in desktop mode. The mixer requires an 18V 1A centre positive DC supply, which the unit ship with.

# Internal Jumper Options



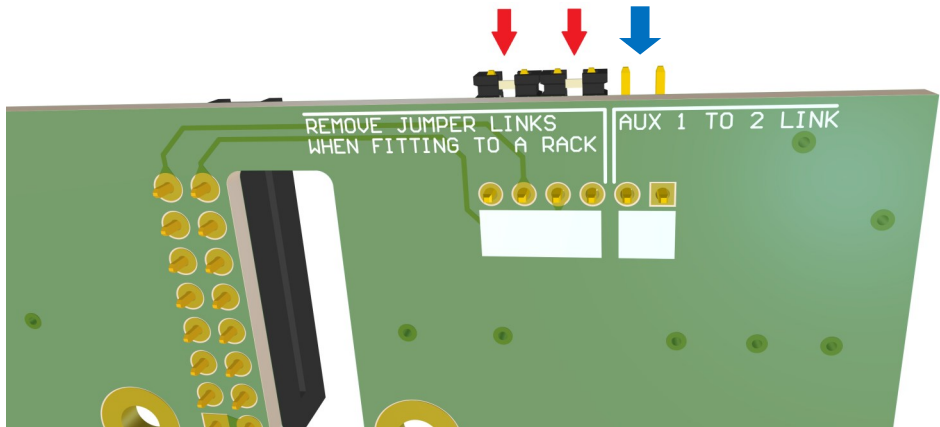
**Input Channel AUX PRE/POST** — The default channel Aux Send configuration is Post Fade, meaning that the Aux output level will be affected by the Channel Fader. If required, this can be changed so that the Aux Level is independent of the Channel Fader (Pre) by moving the Jumper Link (illustrated by the Red Arrow) across to the next Pin.



**Channel One Compressor By-Pass** — By default all channels are routed to the Compressor section, but Channel One can be configured so that it by-passes the compressor and routed directly to the Main Mix by moving the Jumper Links shown to the next position.

NOTE - Even with the Jumper Links configured to by-pass the compressor, if channel one is routed to the Filter it will then be affected by the compressor.

# Internal Jumper Options continued



**Fitting to a Eurorack –** If the Area.6 is removed from its chassis to be fitted into a Eurorack module, it is important to remove the two jumper links illustrated by the Red Arrows. These jumper links feed the Mix Output signals to the PSU board that also incorporates the balanced output drivers. Some Eurorack units connect these pins to ground, so not removing the Jumper Links could result in the mix output being shorted to ground.

**Aux 1 to 2 Link –** The two Aux mix busses can be linked so that both levels can be controlled at the same time. This is achieved by fitting a Jumper Link (supplied with the mixer) to the position shown by the Blue Arrow

# Specification

## **Distortion plus Noise (THD+N) un-weighted**

0dBu, 20Hz to 20kHz, Line In to Mix Out 0dBu 0.02%

## **Frequency Response**

Line in to Mix Out +0/-2dB 10Hz - 50kHz  
+/-0dB 20Hz to 25kHz

## **Shutoff and Crosstalk**

Fader Shutoff > -90dB  
L/R Crosstalk Line in to Mix Out 1kHz <-75dB

## **Noise 22Hz to 22kHz Un-Weighted**

Line In to Mix Out Unity <-85dBu  
Maximum Output Level Balanced Out +25dBu  
Maximum Input Level +22dBu

## **Filter Frequency**

HPF Sweep Range 30Hz - 10kHz  
LPF Sweep Range 100Hz - 20kHz

## **Compressor**

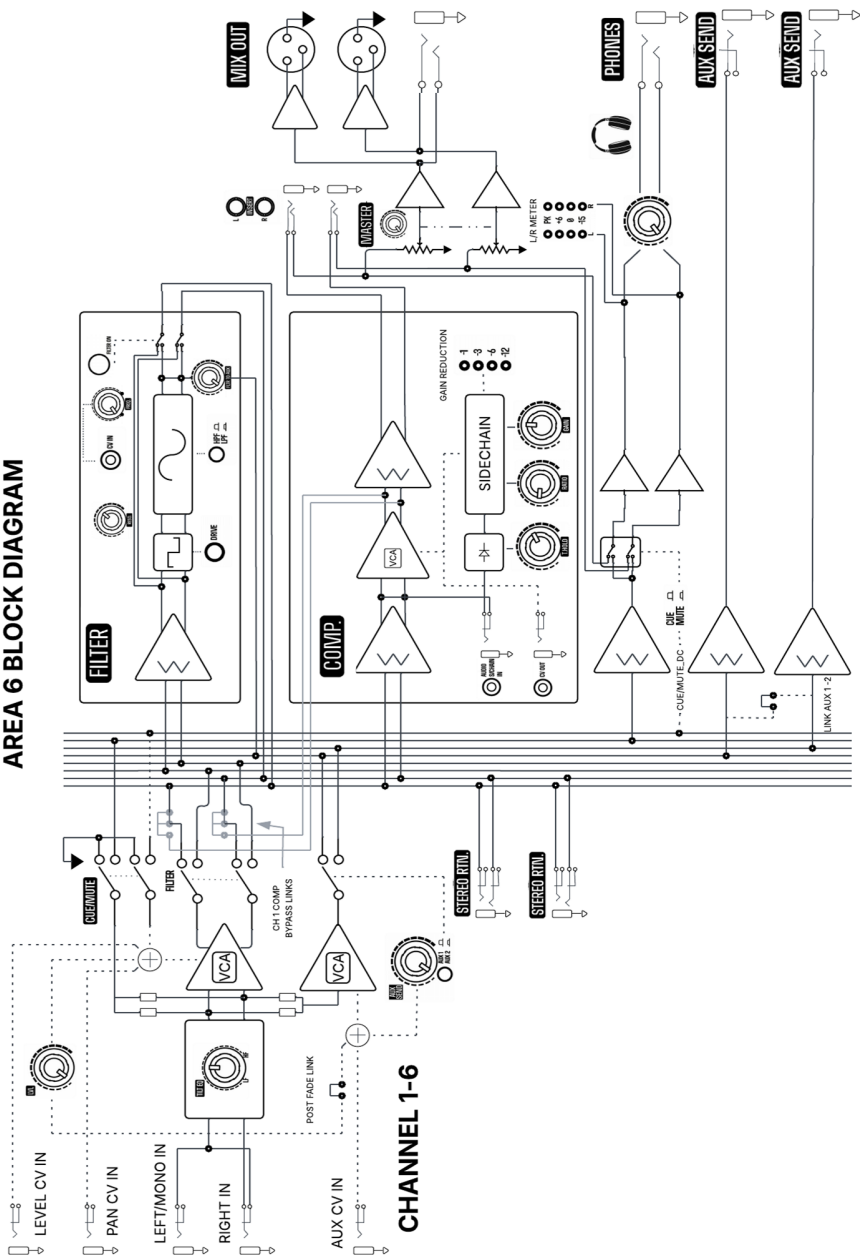
Make-Up Gain +/- 18dB  
Threshold -20 - +10dB  
Attack/Release (Fixed) 30ms/150ms

## **Power Supply**

Desktop Power Requirement 18V DC 1A  
Eurorack Power Requirement +/-12V DC  
Current Maximum +430mA/-330mA  
Mains Voltage range 90-260VAC  
CV Levels 0 to+5V  
CV Pan -5V (Left) +5V (Right)

# Block Diagram

## AREA 6 BLOCK DIAGRAM



# Dimensions

## Dimensions Area 6

### Mixer (desktop)

|        |             |
|--------|-------------|
| Height | 103mm       |
| Width  | 280mm       |
| Depth  | 132mm       |
| Weight | 1.8kg (4lb) |

### Mixer (Euro rack)

|        |                |
|--------|----------------|
| Height | 75mm           |
| Width  | 265mm          |
| Depth  | 129mm          |
| Weight | 0.85kg (1.9lb) |

### Packed Dimensions

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Size L x W x H | 39cm x 28cm x 20cm |
| Weight         | 4kg (8.8lb)        |

