

# SSL BiG SiX £2,199

Is the latest SSL mixer worth the step up from its little brother, the SiX? Rob Redman takes a look

**CONTACT WHO:** SSL **WEB:** [solidstatellogic.com](http://solidstatellogic.com) **KEY FEATURES** Four SuperAnalogue™ stereo line level inputs with dual mono switching, up to 18 inputs at mixdown, 100 mm console grade faders, classic SSL channel dynamics processing, essential version of G-Comp Bus Compressor with 'Auto' release, rack mountable, USB class compliant





**F**or those of you familiar with SSL's SiX, you'd be forgiven for thinking this is just a larger version of that device, and to an extent there is some truth in that. It clearly follows the same design language and I'm sure many of the components are the same and, well, the name suggests as much. It is the SiX but BiGgEr. However that isn't the full story. This isn't just an expanded SiX with more channels. The BiG SiX is far more than that.

Although the physical similarities are obvious, there are a few differences. The biggest is the size, which is slightly larger than a 19" rack but the end-cheeks are removable, ready for the fitting of rack ears, allowing for mounting in any standard rack. The main fascia has a handful of IO for quick access, including four XLRs for the first four channels, plus things like headphone outs. The rest of the IO is on the back panel, which is heavily recessed, a good move for those mounting this in a rack, and handy for those keeping it on a desk too.

## Numbers game

The next big change – and the one that really makes the BiG SiX stand apart from its smaller sibling – is the smattering of buttons with 'USB' in the label, along with the USB port on the rear. Because, yes, the BiG SiX is also a class-compliant USB audio interface. The SiX, that I've been using since its release, is a fantastic bit of kit but I've always felt that it's a shame I have to run audio into another device when working in my DAW. The BiG SiX fixes that, and some, in this regard. Class compliance negates the need for any drivers to keep updated which can be a real headache. It also makes it a much simpler task for not just managing a room but for recording and mixing two ways. It's a real joy to work with multiple synths (which I do a lot) and being able to mix stems, as well as record via the usual inputs, is a big advantage and takes just a simple click of a button to choose the USB behaviour of the BiG SiX.

As mentioned, there are four XLR inputs on the top panel, feeding the first four channels, all mono, with EQ, single-knob compressor and a



fader with LED ladders for level. The controls all provide a good level of resistance and are colour coded. The interface is intuitive to navigate, with everything falling to hand.

## BiG buCKs well spent?

There's an awful lot of functionality at hand with the BiG SiX. So much so that I won't go into it here. That's what the manual is for after all. However, I will say that everything is rock solid, as you would expect from SSL. There are many options for signal flow and, of course, there is the legendary SSL compressor quality on board too. The preamps sound fantastic and the device runs at up to 96kHz.

The SSL BiG SiX isn't the cheapest mixer out there but you get a heap of quality and functionality for your investment, along with some

solid industrial design. I would highly recommend it to anybody looking for the combo, and even for those only looking for a mixer and for whom the interface might never be used. **FM**

## FM VERDICT

# 9.0

**Full of functionality and quality. BiG SiX marries two key devices in a way that makes it hard to justify keeping them separate ever again. Worth the money**

## THE PROS & CONS



Excellent build

Easy integration with your DAW

The bus compressor is brilliant



Not cheap