

**DVD
INSIDE**

**Learn new DAW
tricks TODAY!**
Full Logic, Live and
Cubase tutorials INSIDE

3332
NEW SAMPLES
Ambient, Soundtrack & FX
Xtreme Guitars AND MORE



IN THE STUDIO

Rex The Dog

See him build a track
PLUS Grab his incredible
sample kit on our DVD!

FutureMusic®

Issue 225
Making the future since 1992

Technique and technology for making music

WORLD'S FIRST REVIEW

**Kaossilator
Goes Pro!**

TOUCH THE SOUND OF NOW

EXCLUSIVE

Akai MiniAK

Can it beat the
microKorg?

REVIEWED

Pioneer CDJ-900
PreSonus Studio One
PMC DB1S-All monitors
Wacom Nextbeat digital DJ
Lexicon PCM Native Reverb Plug-in
AND MANY MORE!

Mix Faster & Better

Split your frequencies for a perfect mix

Fix Your Acoustics

How to make any room sound great

musicradar.com™



FM225 April 2010

£5.99

04>



9 770967 037098



ACCESS ALL AREAS

Gui Boratto

Discover the gear behind
his Minimal Techno sound

Depeche Mode

EXCLUSIVE On tour with the
biggest hi-tech band in the world

Our reputation precedes us.



CHAMBER | CONCERT HALL | HALL | PLATE | RANDOM HALL | ROOM | VINTAGE PLATE

PCM NATIVE | REVERB BUNDLE

A COLLECTION OF UNIQUELY CRAFTED REVERB PLUG-INS

Heard on countless gold and platinum records, and every major motion picture over the past 40 years. The most trusted name in reverb introduces a collection of 7 signature plug-ins.



www.lexiconpro.com



Distributed in the UK & Eire by Sound Technology Ltd | 01462 480000 | www.soundtech.co.uk | info@soundtech.co.uk

www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

EDITORIAL

Editor

Daniel Griffiths, daniel.griffiths@futurenet.co.uk

Art Editor

Phil Cheesbrough, phil.cheesbrough@futurenet.co.uk

DVD Editor

Will Seelig, will.seelig@futurenet.co.uk

Reviews/Features Editor

Chris Barker, chris.barker@futurenet.co.uk

Production Assistant

Declan McGlynn, declan.mcglynn@futurenet.co.uk

BIG THANKS TO...

Zen Dai, Dan 'JD73' Goldman, Gavin Roberts, Amanda Thomas, Oli Bell, Robbie Stamp, Doug Kraul, Martin Delaney, Jono Buchanan, Stuart Bruce, Danny Turner, Greg Scarth, Bruce Aisher, Simon Lees, Andy Short, Marc '01', Paul Eastman, Andrew Sterling, Matt Esau, Paul Eastwood of Universal Acoustics, Mrs Boratto

Group Senior Editor: Julie Tolley

Group Art Director: Ian Miller

Creative Director: Robin Abbott

Design Director: Matthew Williams

Editorial Director: Jim Douglas

ADVERTISING

Senior Advertising Sales Manager: Matt King, mking@futurenet.co.uk

Advertising Sales Manager: Andrew Tilbury, atilbury@futurenet.co.uk

Sales Executive: Leon Stephens, lstephens@futurenet.co.uk

Sales Executive: James L'Esteve, jlesteve@futurenet.co.uk

Advertising Sales Director: Claire Dove, cdove@futurenet.co.uk

MARKETING

Campaign Marketing Manager: Charlotte Pratten, cpratten@futurenet.co.uk

Promotions Executive: Madeleine Umpleby, mumpleby@futurenet.com

CIRCULATION

Trade Marketing Manager: Verity Travers, vtravers@futurenet.co.uk

Trade Marketing Director: Rachael Cock, rcock@futurenet.co.uk

PRINT & PRODUCTION

Production Co-ordinator: Ian Wardle, iwardle@futurenet.co.uk

Production Manager: Rose Griffiths, rgriffiths@futurenet.co.uk

Head of Production: Richard Mason, rmason@futurenet.co.uk

LICENSING

International Licensing Director: Tim Hudson, thudson@futurenet.co.uk

Tel: +44 (0)1225 442244 Fax: +44 (0)1225 732275

FUTURE PUBLISHING LIMITED

Publisher: Rob Last, rlast@futurenet.co.uk

Publishing Director: Mia Walter, mwalter@futurenet.co.uk

Chief Operating Officer: Simon Wear

Chief Executive: Robert Price

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Phone our UK hotline on: 0844 848 1602

Subscribe online at: myfavouriteemagazines.com

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE... Tuesday, 20th April 2010

Printed in the UK by BGP Ltd on behalf of Future.
Distributed in the UK by Seymour Distribution Ltd,
2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1A 9PT. Tel: 0207 429 4000

Want to work for Future?

Visit www.futurenet.com/jobs



A member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations



Future produces carefully targeted magazines, websites and events for people with a passion. Our portfolio includes more than 180 magazines, websites and events and we export or license our publications to 90 countries around the world.

Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange [symbol: FUTR].

www.futureplc.com

Chief Executive: Stevie Spring
Non-executive Chairman: Roger Parry
Group Finance Director: John Bowman

Tel +44 (0)20 7042 4000 (London)
Tel +44 (0)1225 442244 (Bath)

© Future Publishing Limited 2009. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used or reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in England and Wales. The registered office of Future Publishing Limited is at Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. All information contained in this magazine is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. Readers are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/services referred to in this magazine. If you submit unsolicited material to us, you automatically grant Future a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in all editions of the magazine, including licensed editions worldwide and in any physical or digital format throughout the world. Any material you submit is sent at your risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents or subcontractors shall be liable for loss or damage.



We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from well managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. Future Publishing and its paper suppliers have been independently certified in accordance with the rules of the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council).



When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

Welcome

Special Kaoss



We love Korg's Kaoss products. It's amazing that they exist. While other companies flounder for innovation and shelve experiments seen as too cutting edge, you can always rely on Korg to whip out another amazing touchscreen box that – simply put – makes music happen. Half an hours jamming with the Kaossilator Pro (exclusive review 80) is enough

to kickstart four of five new tunes that you couldn't otherwise have created.

There's plenty of other cool kit in the mag this month too. Akai's ballsy MiniAK keyboard, the superb Pioneer CDJ-900 and PreSonus smart Studio One DAW all delighted us. Meanwhile we get software heavy with our guide to band splitting (page 68). We guarantee it'll make you think differently about your next mix.

Things get rather more physical when we spruce up a local studio with some expert help (see page 34) then illusive once more in our big *In The Studio With Rex The Dog*. How do we do a feature and video with an artist that never appears in person? See page 40, and our DVD to find out! Thanks to Gui Boratto for letting us into his front room studio on page 54 and to Depeche Mode for letting us backstage at their recent O2 gigs (page 24).

All in all I guess you could say it's been quite a month. Hope you enjoy our exertions!

Daniel

Daniel Griffiths, Editor
daniel.griffiths@futurenet.co.uk

EXPERT CONTRIBUTORS THIS MONTH...

Jono Buchanan
engineer, producer



Like a studio Sweeney Todd, Jono arms himself with a selection of software scalpels and dissects and bisects a mix

into manageable chunks in our feature on Band Splitting on page 68.

Dan 'JD73' Goldman
artist, producer



The man with the fastest (and funkiest) fingers in studioland got his hands on Akai's impressive MiniAK microsynth this month.

Does the Korg microKorg finally have something to worry about? Find out on page 80.

Greg Scarth
music scientist



Greg loves a bit of Kaoss and was our first choice for first dibs on the new Pro pad. His joy, excitement and helpful suggestions about improving its MIDI implementation are laid bare on page 80.

Contents

Issue 225 | April 2010 | UK Edition



Rex The Dog

40 In an exclusive, first-ever face-to-face interview, we investigate the studio of the synth-wielding dog lover

FutureMusic

Technique and technology for making music

Exclusive

From p80 We take Korg's new Kaossillator Pro and give it the full FM test

Technique

From p34 Learn new techniques to give your productions the edge



Packed DVD

p6 Thousands of samples and demos including an exclusive Rex The Dog sample set

Reviews

p79 Exclusive review of the new mini synth and vocoder from Akai

Full Access!

p24 Step inside Gui Boratto's studio and go backstage with the amazing Depeche Mode

Reviews

ON THE DVD

Korg Kaossilator Pro

80 Will touching the surface of Korg's latest noisemaker excite and inspire? We go hands on...

ON THE DVD

OTO Biscuit

84 Boutique minimal design but with maximum sound. This 8-bit, lo-fi chunk of hardware effects processor gets sequenced.

PMC DB1S-All Monitors

86 Will version two of PMCs stalwart nearfield monitors come out smelling of roses?

ON THE DVD

PreSonus Studio One

88 Is there any room left in the ultra competitive and mega-crowded DAW market?

Pioneer CDJ-900

92 Can the little brother of Pioneer's flagship get the attention it deserves from the future DJ market?

ON THE DVD

Akai MiniAK

94 Is this a fresh take on compact synthesis, or another yawny rebranding exercise? We get busy with the gooseneck and find out.

Wacom Nextbeat

98 Two decks, a mixer, sampler and effects unit in a 12-inch square box... Too good to be true?

ON THE DVD

Lexicon PCM Native Reverb Bundle

100 The original algorithms of the hardware reverb pros finally comes directly to your DAW. But at a hefty price...

Newmann Retro NR47

102 A quirky homage to a microphone's past or a genuine recording pleasure? Let's set up the mic stand...

Focusrite Saffire 6

104 Small and affordable with the extra ability to work hard in the DJ booth. Another Saffire hits the shops.

p86 PMC DB1S-All



p88 PreSonus Studio One

p94 Akai MiniAK

The issue...

Filter

Analogue Solutions Europa

8 Hardware sequencing is back and it's much easier to use, more flexible and painted in a lovely white finish. Bingo!

SPL DrumXchanger

10 Whip those sloppy drum recordings into shape with an incredible new plug-in from SPL that replaces your drum hits phase-accurately.

Classic Album

16 Aim reveals the pedantic techniques used on his critically-acclaimed debut *Cold Water Music*.

Studiofile

20 The *Future Music* team open the doors to Blueprint Studios, one of the few pro studios left in Manchester.

Technique

ON THE DVD

Logic Tips

48 The second part of our MainStage tutorial.

ON THE DVD

Knowledge Base: Sampling

52 Part one of our KB on the history of sampling.

ON THE DVD

Cubase Tips

62 We explore creative use of Cubase's delay plugs.

Knowledge Base: Mastering Part Two

66 The second part of our KB on the mastering.

ON THE DVD

Band Splitting

68 How multi-band processing can reinvigorate your mix.

ON THE DVD

Ableton Live Tips

74 Part two of our ReWire tutorial focuses on Reason.

Features

Fix Your Acoustics

34 Get your room sounding fantastic, no matter what!

ON THE DVD

Rex The Dog

40 Hardware synths and animated fun as we delve inside Rex's London studio.

Gui Boratto

54 The melodic Minimal master talks gear and career.

REGULARS

- 6** DVD Contents
- 31** Album Reviews
- 106** Mini Reviews
- 108** Q&As
- 115** Reader Demos

FMDVD

Issue 225 | April 2010 | UK Edition

INSIDE STORY



DVD Editor Will Seelig's inside track on the making of FM's DVD



This month's highlight was a pretty unusual experience. It's not often that you end up In The Studio with an animated producer – and I mean in the two-dimensional sense. Rex the Dog was definitely a first and probably, I'm guessing, a last requiring careful shooting so that we didn't get his genuine persona on camera. This didn't detract from the session though – we got to see how he works and got a good look at his impressive collection of hardware!

Enjoy the FM DVD?
Want to see your favourite artist on video? Then email us at fmdvd@futurenet.co.uk



DVD HIGHLIGHTS

From the Vaults: Assorted Samples

2300 This month, we dig up a huge retro selection of Soundtrack, Sound FX and Rhodes samples for your collection. Plus our legendary Country Crunk. Do not miss!

Knowledge Base

This month's *Knowledge Base* audio examples help you get to grips with the lost art of sampling

Band Splitting



Hear our examples of how splitting frequency bands can enhance your mix

Rex the Dog Samples

We've got an exclusive sample pack from Rex himself, featuring lots of loops and one shots from his tracks!

PLUS OUR SPECIAL BONUS SAMPLES COURTESY OF

Sounds/To/Sample

200+ demo sounds for you to use and enjoy. If you like what's here then bag the full collections from soundstosample.com. They're instantly downloadable online!

MOTION SAMPLES 80'S DRUM BEATZ



"The ultimate '80s lower rhythm compilation, featuring 244 drum loops in 38 all-original Disco-heaven beats from popular '80s music. All beats were recorded in pure analogue and programmed live to achieve that famous phat drum swing found in '80s dancefloor hits."

GENERAL MIDI FUTURE ELECTRO



"From the twisted imaginarium of veteran producer General MIDI comes *Future Electro* – 200MB of filthy, overdriven basslines and sleazy synths. Straddling between Electro-House, Breaks and French House, *Future Electro* is engineered for rapid inspiration."

REIMANN AUDIO KOLLEKTION 04 TECH HOUSE BEATS



"Riemann Kollektion mark their eagerly anticipated return, pushing sampling boundaries with their fourth collection – back in bigroom Tech-House territory with a 250+MB of drum loops, tops, one-shots, ambience, basslines, percussive grooves and construction kits."

DRUMDOG XL KICK DRUMS



"Drumdog return with a selection of massive kicks custom-made for massive hits. Drumdog's XL Kick Drums brings you 150 pristine pumped and punchy bass drums. With more than enough bass to fit Minimal and Tech-House styles, the hits are further processed using Empirical Labs' infamous Distressor."

Sample Techniques

Each month, our sample creators work tirelessly to bring you original content for use in your music. As always, they go that extra step to make sure that the samples are both unique and usable...



Double Mic Double Track

"There are many ways to get a fruity sounding double track guitar, so here's my current favourite. Mic up the amp with two different mics (here I have used a large diaphragm condenser and a ribbon for that light/dark contrast) making sure they are as phase coherent (same distance from the source) as possible, though this is not totally essential.

"Record your part(s) as a stereo file with one mic per channel and then repeat. Pan the stereo channels just shy of hard left/right positions so that the takes have a different mic blend bias with relation to the stereo field but are not totally separate. Keeping them panned the same and just swapping left/right channels on one of the tracks will also yield a nice stereo effect."



GEAR USED



Ambience
Groove Criminals
use: Software reverb



"Whether it's rich and warm, short and gated or the vintage sound of a spring, we really are spoilt by the amount of great sounding software reverb available. We spread the net wide and used several throughout the samples."



Xtreme Guitars
Cyclclick Samples
use: Danelectro Dano '63 baritone guitar



"Baritone guitars are often tuned B to B or A to A, i.e. a 4th or 5th flat from a normal guitar tuning, and though were most often heard in country music recently they have become vogue through the Heavy Rock. Their inherently deeper tone makes them very useful for doubling basslines or for creating a thicker harmonic structure when layered up with normal guitars."



THE MAKING OF YOUR UNIQUE FM SAMPLES...

String Theory

FM serves up some alternative guitar therapy

This month's samples have two very different flavours. The Groove Criminals transported themselves

back into time to recreate some classic sounds of the early 90's Ambient scene (think FSOL/The Orb/William Orbit). Meanwhile Cyclclick was pulling out some rather unusual stringed instruments for the Xtreme Guitar collection. We caught up with Cyclclick to find out exactly what these guitars were capable of.

"This collection centres on my two favourite instruments at the moment: the baritone guitar and the lapsteel. These two six-string beauties are most commonly identified with country

music, though that's not what I've been using them for. Their distinct tonal characteristics set them apart from standard electric guitars. The baritone is just a slightly longer guitar with thicker strings on, so it can be tuned down a 4th or 5th (i.e. B to B or A to A – I've used both in this sample collection). It still plays like a guitar, but it twangs in a far more guttural way, especially when cranked up through some filthy distortion.

"The lapsteel is a slide based instrument, the simpler little brother of the pedal steel. It is played with a heavy steel tone bar while resting on the player's lap or on a stand."

Stereo field

"This collection consists of loops made in two and four-bar lengths in four tempos (95, 105, 120 and 130bpm) while the keys are linked to the lowest note on the baritone guitar and a 3rd or 5th above. The single track loops are a simple panning hard left and right of the two mics used, with the brighter mic being panned left. The double-tracked loops use two stereo takes which were then panned to a stereo group. Hard panning them just made them sound too separate, but this way they are as wide as possible (without resorting to artificial means) and yet 'glued' together."

1,000 samples

Highlights this issue.

10 Based on SPL's
Transient
Designer technology,
this new plug will
replace your drum hits.

11 NI release a beta update to their popular groovebox, adding MPC60 and SP-1200 emulations.

12 Analogue lovers
NHO announce
two new rack-mounted
processors designed to
saturate your tracks.

16 takes a look at the story behind AIM's seminal debut *Cold Water Music*.

20 head to Manchester to investigate the facilities at Blueprint Studios.



Europa, Europa!

One of our favourite analogue synth boffins, Tom Carpenter of Analogue Solutions, has fired up his lab to full steam and released another slick product

Analogue sequencers have been back in vogue for a while, with everyone from indie wobblers Simian Mobile Disco to the Berlin minimalists of Ricardo Villalobos getting their kicks from sequencing with hardware. We caught up with the Analogue Solutions' top dog, Tom Carpenter for a chat about this new white wonder and what it can do.

FM: Tell us why you decided to build this new sequencer?

Tom Carpenter: "Just about all my projects are devices that I personally want to use in a studio/music setup. They are devices on my 'wish list'. This is certainly true for the 'control' side of things, i.e. sequencers.

"When I think about, for instance, what modulation routings should be available on one of my synths, I choose the routings that I like to use that are nearly always lacking on the original old school synths. Same thing with the sequencer, I think what's missing, what do I need? Then I'll design the product around that.

"Now I am older and have kids and other new responsibilities. I find I just don't have the time or patience any more to learn how to use new digital gear. I wanted a MIDI sequencer that would be like my analogue sequencers, where you can see what's going on, get in there and change a note quick, and takes very little time to learn."

What sets it apart from other hardware sequencers on the market?

"There are 'XOX' type sequencers out there that claim to be easy to use. I bought them and had a go, and it just wasn't true. I spent too much time with my nose in the manuals. I truly believe mine is the simple one to use.

"Take drum programming for example. No one can argue programming a drum pattern into a TR-606/808 uses the simplest method. Well that's the same as how Europa works. There are no convoluted setup procedures. Then what I did is extended the methodology to work in a similar way for entering notes. If you can program a TR-808 then you can program the Europa, notes and all."

Tell us some of the coolest features and what you think people might use them for.

"Europa was designed for live interactive use. You can chain patterns together of course to create a song, but the most fun can simply be to first program your pattern (drums and notes). Then hit play.

"While running you can change the mix using Mutes. Or, for more fun, you can transpose the sequencer using the little keyboard and that will create musical movement, or you can select individual tracks and transpose them up or down by whole octaves. Instant Kraftwerk. But I think really the coolest feature is just the whole

programming method. You can know out a great sounding pattern in less than 60 seconds (check out some of my YouTube demos). I think you'd struggle to do that with software, MPCs or monomachines.

Does it have a MIDI-CV converter?

"No MIDI-CV. Why? Because there are literally dozens of converters out there, all offering a variety of features. MIDI-CV is expensive and would add significantly to the cost. Different people have different wish lists, and not everyone needs MIDI-CV!

"Though there is no MIDI-CV, I have included some analogue features. It has analogue clock I/Os and analogue triggers. This means you can clock the Europa however you want using your modular.

"It has MIDI so will fit into any studio. For musicians doing Dance or Electronic music, it could become the main sequencer. Europa isn't necessarily intending to replace your main sequencer, though. I see this sequencer as a creative tool, almost an instrument in it's own right."

And does it swing?

"Of course, there are twelve levels of swing per pattern." **FM**

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

UK price is £586 and you can buy direct from analoguesolutions.com or check the website for international dealer list such as Schneiders Buero



SPL DrumXchanger

A new plug from SPL looks set to take over your beat editing and processing in the studio

Mainly famed for their incredibly useful and creative Transient Designer plug, SPL have pooled their boffinry in this transient technology and are set to release their new SPL DrumXchanger. Based around two transient designers and a sample player, the DrumXchanger aims to replace drum samples in multi-track sessions, phase accurately and in real time, much like the Drum Replacement tool in Logic Studio 9.

Now, because it's built on the same technology as the transient

designers, SPL claim that all hits, despite their level, (so even ghost notes) can be replaced, and there's the option to blend, replace or duck the original sounds with the samples for added creative scope.

Furthermore, the two fully-operational Transient Designers work for the original, sampled and output signals as do the high-pass and low-pass filters. Built in to the SPL is a basic multi-sampled drum library containing three different kits.

Every multi-sample is made up of up to 80 sounds in sixteen dynamic levels and five variations with the kits

exclusively recorded on SPL kit in 24-bit/96kHz. SPL also include the ability for you to load in your own WAV and multi-samples as well as MIDI I/O capabilities.

Looks like it should be in every remixer's arsenal and could bring back to life grotty old drum recordings you might have lying around. More of these thoughts when we do the full review as soon as the Xchanger comes out of beta testing.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Pricing is set to be around 300 Euros. Full specs and updates from SPL.info

Diary

Events, festivals and gigs...

Daedelus

When: 1 April
Where: Fabric, London
fabriclondon.com

Loco Dice

When: 3 April
Where: Matter, London
matterlondon.com

Sebastien Leger

When: 3 April
Where: Plug, Sheffield
myspace.com/sebastienleger

Heidi

When: 4 April
Where: Mulletover, London
myspace.com/heidivandenamstel

Anti-Pop Consortium

When: 7 April
Where: Stealth, Nottingham
myspace.com/antipopny

Jack Beats

When: 17 April
Where: Concorde, Brighton
myspace.com/jackbeats

DJ Food, Live AV Set

When: 11 April
Where: Big Chill House, London
djfood.org

MJ Cole

When: 16 April
Where: DQ, Sheffield
myspace.com/mjcole100

LCD Soundsystem

When: 27 April
Where: 02 Academy, Leeds
seetickets.com

Zinc

When: 29 April
Where: Leeds Uni, Leeds
myspace.com/bingozinc

MUSIC TO OUR EARS

The FM Playlist

What we're listening to this month...



TV Rock

In The Air (Grum Remix)

Everything Grum remixes is gold. Check the Goldfrapp *Rocket* mix too. **Chris, Reviews Editor**



Holy Ghost! vs Friendly Fires

On Board/Hold On
Two cool kats do each other a solid with a dual cover project. Top. **Declan, Prod Assistant**



Scritti Politti

White Bread Black Beer
Been re-loving this all over again. Hey. New album please. Thanks. **Daniel, Editor**



Various Artists

Music For Our Future
A free compilation inspired by the SciFi series *Caprica* offers a fantastic glimpse into future music. **Will, DVD Editor**

More Maschine

Native Instruments take Maschine up a notch by adding even more incredible features.

Not content with their already top-notch product, Native Instruments have pushed the Maschine software to version 1.5. Although it's still in beta stages, the promises of what the new software can achieve are very impressive.

Probably the most exciting enhancement is the vintage sampler emulation, which models the sampling engine of classic E-mu SP-1200 and Akai MPC60 samplers. Maschine can also now directly import MPC programs, something we're eager to try with its MPC emulation. Other additions include support for drag-and-drop MIDI and

destructive sample editing. Maschine can also now import REX files and automatically makes a chromatic piano roll file of the slices. Macro controls have also been introduced, allowing you to simply right-click on any control and assign this to one of eight different Macro controls. Once set up, they can be assigned MIDI controls and then automated from your DAW.

Loads of bug fixes, workflow improvements and other tweaks are also including, making this free update highly anticipated. Full review of this new update as soon as the beta testing is complete.

native-instruments.com



How Do You Get Your Kicks?



For free, that's how. Head over to the Wave Alchemy website and you can grab yourself Club Kicks 2, a new pack which serves up 65 speaker-shaking kick drum samples. All kicks are from the lovely Jomox's AIRBase 99 drum machine and have been compressed and processed using some serious outboard loveliness, including the fantastic Thermionic Culture Culture valve distortion, Empirical Labs Distressor and API 512c pre-amp. All samples are ready for download now! wavealchemy.co.uk

www.timespace.com

Delivering inspiration for over 15 years...

Download Store

www.timespace.com/downloads

PROJECTSAM
cinematic sampling

CONCERT HARP

A beautifully sampled concert harp with multiple playing techniques. Fully updated for Kontakt format with new options and features.

£99.00 2.3Gb

Also available - Organ Mystique and Flute & Piccolo FX

NEW

Loopmasters
Jon Carter & Alex Blanco: Block Party Essentials

Multiformat
650Mb
£24.95 each

Tonehammer
Riq Drum

Kontakt
1.38Gb
£33.95

NEW

Producer Loops
Liquid Drum and Bass

Multiformat
1.7Gb
£19.95

Toontrack
Library of the Extreme - Blasts & Fills

100+ individually played midi files
£15.00

cinesamples

Iron Guitars

Kontakt
161Mb
£39.95

Drums of War

Kontakt
921Mb
£68.95

NEW

Producer Loops
Classic Bollywood Vol 1

Multiformat
1.98Gb
£39.95

Waveforms
Ian Boddy: Drumalogue

Wav, Kontakt
362Mb
£24.95

Tonehammer
Forgotten Voices: Cait

Kontakt
1.81Gb
£68.95

Bluezone
Ibiza Lounge

Wav, Aiff
616Mb
£19.95

Deepest
India

Wav, Acid
783Mb
£49.99

Wave Alchemy
Drum Tools 01

Multiformat
£39.95



NIIOlithic Revolution

Analogue lovers NIIO release two new hardware processing tools. From thickening to grit – there's something for everyone

Sending your pride and joy out of the box into the cruel world is becoming more and more popular with once-boxed-up producers. NIIO Analog are huge

believers in the pure analogue signal path and suitably, both their new rack-mountable beasts are not only full-analogue but are made specifically to add some grit and gold to your stems and masters.

First up is Track Thickener – a comprehensive saturator with VCA control and a dual-band sweepable EQ. AllIO have really gone to town with the saturator here, with a HP Dry/LP Sat LP Sat/HP Dry crossover switch and sweepable filter control to saturate your highs without affecting your lows and vice-versa. There's also a great-sounding EQ section with fairly broad band-shaping options, to round off or boost anywhere you feel your signal needs it.

From the video demos we've seen, it definitely sounds controlled and warm – yet again demonstrating the quality of the full analogue circuitry. The VCA section allows for simple gating which can affect the saturated signal or both the saturated and dry signal together, depending on

your preference. All in all, a comprehensive option to give your stem or track a real analogue grit and tone. Next up is the IOTINE CORE, an all-inclusive analogue mixing and processing tool over 2Us and plenty of knobs and switches.

Starting with the ENV section, the IOTINE shapes and moulds your sound, either the left and right channels separately or combined with the second ENV taking control of filter shaping, with a further option of external triggering.

The filter and saturation sections give heaps of control over sound-shaping, with an external modulator signal option and six different types of filter and saturation circuits.

Plenty of routing options mean that the IOTINE is as much of a creative sound designing processor as it is an analogue mixing tool. Both units seem high-quality and we can't wait to try them out.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The NIIO Analog is expected to retail at 859Euros while the IOTINE sits at 1,200Euros. Visit their website for more and expect a review soon. niioanalog.com

Bird's The Word

Here's a new 1-inch capsule condenser mic from Kel Audio, interestingly titled the Song Sparrow.

Aimed at acoustic tones and smooth female vocals



it seems like it could be a good choice for any acoustic guitar needs or singer-songwriter duties.

According to Kel, it's a dual FET transformerless circuit and a high-grade signal path and should avoid any of the harsh grit usually associated with budget vocal mics.

Finished in a simple matte black design, this little bird might be worth checking out if you're in the market for a robust mic. The package includes an aluminum case, shock mount and is priced around \$350. kelaudio.com

Keys Are Good

When we first read this story, it did sound a bit like a bad April Fool's joke, but apparently NI are releasing a sample pack titled *Alicia's Keys*. The pack samples Yamaha C3 Neo grand piano, a rare instrument that was built to celebrate Yamaha's 100th anniversary and was recorded in Key's own studio. Well, jokes aside this does sound like quite an impressive pack. native-instruments.com



GENELEC®

REFERENCE CENTRES

Genelec Reference Centres combine a studio-quality demonstration environment with knowledgeable personnel who can help you choose the right Genelec monitoring solution for your room.

Absolute Music Solutions

Poole
T: 01202 684500

Andertons

Guildford
T: 01483 456777

Digital Village

West London
T: 020 8992 5592

Digital Village

North London
T: 020 8440 3440

Digital Village

East London
T: 01708 771991

Electro Music

Doncaster
T: 01302 369999

Guitar, Amp & Keyboard Centre

Brighton
T: 01273 665400

KMR

(Genelec DSP specialist)
North London
T: 020 8445 2446

Production Room

Leeds
T: 0845 539 3000

Red Dog Music

Edinburgh
T: 0131 229 8211

Gear4Music

York
T: 0871 309 0800

Reverb

Bristol
T: 0117 934 9955

Reverb

Birmingham
T: 0121 248 5868

Rubadub

Glasgow
T: 0141 221 9657

Sounds Live

Newcastle
T: 0191 491 3185



NEW 8260A

3-way DSP system with
Minimum Diffraction Coaxial
(MDC™) Technology

Industry standard monitoring from the desktop to the control room

Wherever there's sound, there's Genelec. From the desktop to the control room, audio professionals depend on the one indisputable truth that is Genelec reference monitoring. And because every model shares Genelec's core design principals, it means that whether you're running a modest bedroom studio or working in a multi-room commercial facility, you can count on the extended frequency response, ultra-low distortion and bulletproof reliability that only Genelec can deliver.

To find out more, visit your nearest Genelec Reference Centre.



GENELEC®

www.genelec.com

SOURCE

UK distribution by Source • www.sourcedistribution.co.uk/genelec • T: 020 8962 5080

www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net



VonStroke REMIX WINNER!

We announce the winners and runners-up in our huge Claude VonStroke remix competition. 32nd note share roll please!

After months of deliberating we can finally announce the winners of the Claude VonStroke remix competition. After *Vocal Chords* became a Beatport smash and one of the major successes of VonStroke's album, *Bird Brain*, VonStroke was after something special from the entries in our remix competition.

"There were a lot of great entries", explained VonStroke, who personally waded through the hundreds of entries "but many missed the mark in some way or another. For example – some were well produced but didn't really use the samples creatively while others had great ideas that weren't produced as well."

After much beard-rubbing the lucky winner of Propellerhead's Reason and Record software goodie bag goes to David Veith and his Rooster Mix. Von Stroke told us, "David Veith's Mix had

super snappy production and very creative use of the samples."

Here are some other comments from VonStroke about the runners up:

"Kevin Skaggs had the emotional vocal approach I was expecting to hear from a lot more entries. It eventually has too much going on and the over-production ruins the melodic deep vibe.

"Karol Jaskowski almost had me believing in his slow-cooked down-tempo mix until a questionable piano breakdown and then overall non-use of the samples in almost the entire back-half of the track. But this one was very good, and really creative

"Josh Bates turned in a very creative Drum 'n' Bass style mix but the production samples were not tight or well sequenced. This could have easily won but it was too sloppy overall. Even so, I really liked the concept and ideas in this mix.

It would have won with more attention to the sequencing.

"Ivan Shopov turned in a great 'sounding' mix, but in the end I decided that the original samples weren't really used that well."

Firm but fair words from a master. Thanks for entering!



**ALSO
AVAILABLE
FROM**

 **PreSonus**



StudioLive
Digital mixers for studio & live performance



AudioBox
2x2 USB Recording System



DigiMax D8
8-Channel Preamplifier with
24-bit ADAT Digital Output



Monitor Station
Desktop Studio Control Centre

FIRE WIRE

FireStudio MOBILE

10 INPUTS AND PRISTINE SONICS FOR THE ROAD.



Jim Odom and his jambalaya-fueled engineers have done bus-powered FireWire interfaces right.

The new 10-in / 6-out FireStudio™ MOBILE has the most inputs and the best real-world, verifiable audio specifications of any bus-powered portable interface.

It's the only compact, portable interface to deliver true +48V phantom power for condenser microphones.

And it's the only one to come with Studio One™ Artist, PreSonus' new, highly innovative, unlimited-track-count DAW that seamlessly integrates with FireStudio MOBILE right out of the box.

From its Class A XMAX™ mic preamps, new 64-bit drivers and Universal Control software to the solid metal chassis and detented, sealed controls, FireStudio MOBILE delivers studio-quality audio performance anywhere you can lug your laptop!

Get the details on our Web site or at your nearest PreSonus dealer today.



Studio One
INCLUDES STUDIO ONE ARTIST RECORDING AND PRODUCTION SOFTWARE FOR PC AND MAC



PreSonus

www.presonus.com • Baton Rouge USA

SOURCE

Exclusively distributed in the UK & Ireland by Source • www.sourcedistribution.co.uk/presonus • T: 020 8962 5080

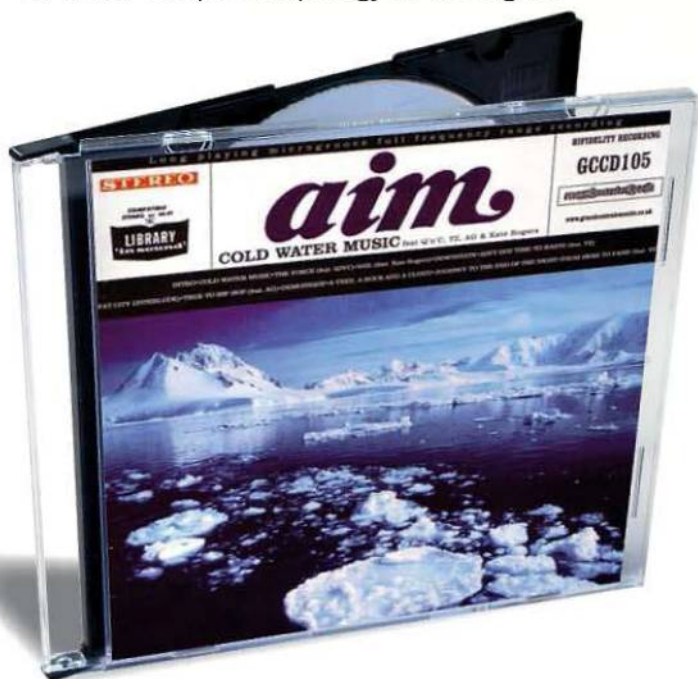
www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

THE
CLASSIC
ALBUM

Aim Cold Water Music

Grand Central, 1999

Barrow-in-Furness beatsmith hits the target with his debut LP. **Roy Spencer** puts this masterpiece in down-tempo sampology in his sights



With influences ranging from Golden Era Hip Hop, VHS 'Video Nasties', kebabs, weed

and The Smiths, the world of Aim's debut album was always going to be a strange and wonderful place to visit. Armed with a head chock full of ideas, lungs freshly filled with sticky icky, and a stash of dusty vinyl

purloined from local charity shops, Aim set to work crafting a collection of samples, beats and rhymes as crisp and icy cool as the glaciers that graced the album's cover.

Still, beneath this relaxed fog of smoke he laboured under a code of ethics. "I only sampled something if it was in time and key naturally," says Aim. "I'd adjust the tempo and

chop stuff up 'till it worked, but I never time-stretched."

He'd never use breaks or samples if used before, and only sampled original vinyl, never re-issues, compilations, and never off CDs. "I also didn't use effects that sounded like effects, and I kept things sounding natural and organic, whatever that means."

On an average day circa *Cold Water Music* he'd wake at Grand Central boss Mark Rae's, have breakfast, then drive to engineer Steve Christian [of Rae & Christian fame] at the studio.

"It was a case of turning the gear on, listening back to what I'd worked on the day before, nipping next door for a morning curry, work, smoke some weed, listen back and work 'til late," says Aim.

"Then we'd drive home via Abduls for a chicken kebab, sleep and repeat."

Grand Central

Back then Aim's home studio boasted a Commodore Amiga with MED, a four-track sequencer and a Turbo Sound sampler stuck in the back. The Grand Central studio had more gear to play with. Its Akai MPC60, E-mu SP-1200, Drawmer compressor and EQ, Yamaha O2R desk, Focusrite Red 5 and PC running Cubase, formed the backbone of an album that ended up timeless, while treading new ground. "I knew I had an ear for combining samples, and that it hadn't been done before in exactly the way I was doing it," says Aim. "It amazed me that you could find a load of disparate sounds and melodies from random records that fit together perfectly, be it musically or rhythmically, as if they were just waiting to be brought together."

The album became a benchmark in downtempo beats. Up there with Mr. Scruff, DJ Food, Fila Brazillia, and even Rae & Christian.

Aim followed *Cold Water Music* with 2002's equally epic *Hinterland*. In 2005, Aim felt Grand Central had lost direction and set up his own label, Atic Records, dropping his third album, *Flight 602*, and material by Death Of The Neighbourhood, Crowhead, Gripper and The Witch And The Robot.

Right now he's working new albums by [his wife] Niko, Q Ball & Curt Cazal, and the next Aim LP.

"I've been working on it for a while now," says Aim. "I'm only just finding time to really get into it, as I've been busy managing the label, but it's going to be my best album by a long way."

Track by track with Aim

Intro

"This was influenced by the West Coast Gangsta Rapper MC Eiht's 1993 track, *Streight Up Menace*. They really don't make 'em like that anymore. It's just a loop and some dialogue. I found the string loop on a crappy library record and the dialogue is from the basketball movie, *Hoop Dreams*."

"I've had intros on all my albums, interestingly enough."

Cold Water Music

"I remember making this like it was yesterday. At the time, I was really into the album *The Speed Of Life* by Xzibit. I think it's hugely under-rated. I loved the tracks *Carry The Weight*, *Paparazzi* – produced by Thayod Ausar – and the Muggs-produced *Foundation*. Like another Muggs track I loved, *John 3:16*, it used long orchestral passages that lasted four, sometimes eight bars, often with relatively simple rim-shot drums. I wanted to make beats like these."

"I found the sample in a charity shop, it had a similar feel to these tracks, and I was buzzing when I found it. I got straight to work. As the song developed it took on more of a Latin breakbeat type feel, but if you listen to the Xzibit tracks track you'll hear the similarities. I often cite Pete Rock and Diamond D as influences, but in terms of my sound, Hip Hop-wise at least, it was these Thayod Ausar and DJ Muggs beats which were closest to what I wanted to make myself."

The Force feat. QNC

"QNC (Q Ball & Curt Cazal) recorded a track with [Grand Central label top dogs] Rae & Christian for their *Northern Sulphuric Soul* LP, and I got to know them while they were in Manchester. I asked them to do some vocals for my album and sent them a beat I thought would be ideal."

"I wasn't there when they recorded it. It turns out they weren't feeling the beat, so they knocked up

LIKE IT? TRY THESE...



Xzibit

At The Speed Of Life

This West Coast car pimper's debut was a feast of orchestral beats and deep lyrics. A huge influence on the Aim sound.

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:
Paparazzi; Carry the Weight



Showbiz and A.G.

Runaway Slave

"I was in awe of their music. It inspired me to the point that it changed my life."

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:
Hold Ya Head; Still Diggin'



The Smiths

The Smiths

'84 debut from these charming Mancs. "My album stood out because I was combining varied influences, like The Smiths, that hadn't been combined before."

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:
This Charming Man; Hand in Glove



Rae & Christian,

Northern Sulphuric Soul

Flagship Grand Central records release, and jewel in the crown of British beat-making.

Hear the QNC and YZ comeback here first.

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:
Now I Lay Me Down; Anything U Want



Various

Fabric 17

A rollocking club mix through Funk, beats and breaks. Forget the MPC, this kid's nice on the 1210s too.

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:
Tom Scott's Never my Love; King Biscuit Time's I Walk the Earth

their own at the same tempo, rapped over that and then stuck the accapella back over my original beat! The vocals were great but they didn't sit right over my beat so I made a new one from scratch and that became *The Force*.

"Later, I worked on the original beat some more and released it as an instrumental called *Underground Crown Holders* on the 2007 *Cold Water Music* album re-issue."

Sail

"I wrote it, but Mark Rae's cousin, Kate Rogers, was visiting and I heard her singing and thought her voice would work on *Sail* so she ended up recording it.

"I like my lyrics in this song, especially the "blood stained the lanes, and I could barely feel the pain..." lines. Walking back from a music festival years ago with an old girlfriend, we had a drunken falling out, I think I lost an E or something and blamed her. She started punching me in the face, which I whole-heartedly encouraged. By the time we'd got back to her parent's house it was all forgotten until they opened the door and saw me with a battered face and a blood soaked t-shirt. Lovely memories."

True To Hip-Hop Ft. A.G

"While most of the tracks on *Cold Water Music* originated at home on

It was written on my Amiga and then re-sampled note-for-note and beat-for-beat in the studio

my Amiga, I started the beat for *True To Hip Hop* in the studio. We were between tracks and I had a root through Mark's records, which he kept in the basement studio for whoever happened to be working down there. I found the bassline, stuck it in the MPC60 and made the beat. I'd just got my own MPC, which I was learning to use, so I took the floppy discs and finished it at home.

"I mentioned to Mark I wanted to get [legendary East Coast Rapper] A.G. on this track and he sorted it. Not long after we went to New York to buy records and Mark called A.G. in the Bronx like, 'we're coming up, meet us at the station.'"

Aim on the MPC60

"I think the only piece of equipment you can 'hear' on the record is an MPC60.

"I'm of the opinion that if you want the sound and feel of an MPC60, you need an MPC60. I think you can get near it programming your drums in Logic or whatever, but it isn't the same.

"I first saw an MPC60 on an MTV spot with De La Soul, I think it was. They were hanging out in a little home studio and I could see it sitting there

and although I'd never seen one before, I knew instinctively that that was what I needed. I ended up getting one imported from America, along with an E-mu SP-1200. I knew how I wanted to work samples and I knew that this machine would let me do it.

"It's that hands-on thing of chopping a beat up and replaying it on the pads with individual drum hits. I'll chop and edit a sample until it loops smoothly. I'll then build it

up with other samples and drums, whatever I can find.

"The MPC only has 20-odd seconds of sampling time so you have to be very selective with what you put in there, a lot of times I'll sample a 33rpm record on 45 and then slow it down in the machine to make the most of the memory. Once the MPC is full I'll start sampling into the computer and have that running the drum machine via MIDI."



Downstate

"This was one of the first tracks, I made for *Cold Water Music*. Like all my earlier tracks it was written entirely on my Amiga and then re-sampled and re-assembled note-for-note and beat-for-beat in the studio. I think this was the only track on *Cold Water Music* that we did all the drum editing in Cubase rather than using the MPC60."

A Tree, a Rock, and a Cloud

"This one is relatively basic, just a nice loop, a fat beat and some tasty female vocal samples. I sampled some horns, but these were re-played

by Jo Ward. There was a track on Nas' *Illmatic* album which I loved called *Memory Lane*. I was into the way the loop had a

vocal 'ooh' sound running through it and always hoped I'd find something similar. This was as near as I got.

"I guess I'm not turned on by it so much now as it's so simple, but a lot of people were feeling this one. I saw a comment on YouTube the other day that called it a 'baby-making jam', I thought that was hilarious. The title, by the way, was lifted from a short story by the American author Carson McCullers."

Journey to the End of the Night

"Another literary steal, I got this title from a book by the French author Celine. As for the track, it started off

with the bowed cello bassline which also determined the tempo. I built the drums from separate hits and started layering samples.

"I wanted a really rich feel so there are lots of long ambient sounds on top of each other. I spent weeks digging for this one, there are a lot of subtle elements in there and the drum programming, especially in the breakdown half-way through, took a lot of work to get it to flow as nice as it does."

Ain't Got Time to Waste feat. YZ

"I loved working with [early-nineties New Jersey rapper] YZ. He was a buzz to be around, funny as fuck but very deep, very politically aware.

"I think it's the only track on the album that was put together in an SP-1200 rather than the MPC60. I wanted the drums really solid, they were almost on a straight Disco beat, pretty simple, just a kick-snare-kick-snare, and the SP was perfect for that. I found a horn sample for the chorus but in the end I got Jo Ward in to replay it.

"I remember the original version of this had YZ acting out different personalities in a queue outside a club which ended up with people getting shot. Mark walked into the studio and he was like 'what the fuck are you doing, you can't use that!' He was right. YZ flipped the lyrics and it became one of the standout tracks."

Demonique

"The dialogue here was lifted from the original Halloween movies. When I was a kid my favourite things in life were music and Horror films. I used to spend all my pocket money on 7" singles and LP's, Fangoria magazines and dodgy VHS copies of uncut 'video nasties' I'd order from dealers in America.

"I was into low budget slasher movies like The Burning and The Prowler and for my 9th or 10th



Aim's Studio Today

"I moved from an Akai MPC60 to a 2000XL a few years ago but I still prefer the sound of the 60. Even though there's only 20 seconds of memory in it, it has a feel I just can't find in the 2000XL.

"I moved from Cubase to Logic which I run from a

MacBook. I thought the plug-ins in Cubase sounded awful so never used them, but where needed, I'll use the Logic plug-ins as they sound clean and do the job. I don't really have any other plug-ins, instead I have lots of outboard to add flavour. I use an API

2500 stereo compressor on the mix buss of all my tracks. I've got a Purple [Action] compressor, which I use mainly for drums and bass, and an Avalon [VT]747 which I'll use to EQ strings and pads.

"Other EQs I have include an Arsenal R-24 by API, a Manley Massive Passive EQ and a Chandler Tone Control. I also use an SPL Vitalizer

which sounds great on synth basslines, TC Electronic M3000 reverb, a Drawmer 1968 compressor, an Apogee Ensemble, an Apogee Big Ben and an Apogee Rosetta converter which I feed the API 2500 into.

"As far as recording goes, I have a load of vintage mics like Sennheiser MD421's and pair of Neumann K84's."

birthday I got Dick Smith's Horror Make-Up kit. Sometimes I get that nostalgic about this kind of stuff it hurts. I try and get some of that feeling into my music though, so a lot of it references my childhood and what I was into or how I remember feeling back then."

From Here to Fame feat. YZ

"This is my favourite track on the album. It's the best beat I ever made

and I love the rhyme YZ put down. He always wrote his lyrics just before recording them, and for this track we had a discussion about where they should go. I really wanted him to get personal on it and by the end of the afternoon he'd written the rhyme.

"I found the main loop for the track on an old Jazz album and chopped it up in the MPC60. I found a couple of other samples for it, and when it came to doing the drums I knew they needed to be simple, no

break-beat or anything complicated, just a big snare, as big as I could get away with. I had snares like the ones in Diamond D's track *I'm Outta Here* and *Ince Again* by A Tribe Called Quest in mind. For me this is the closest I ever got to making a classic Hip Hop track." **FM**

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Check out Aim's MySpace page for upcoming releases from Andy: myspace.com/aimflight602

NEED TO KNOW

Five essential facts about...

Cold Water Music and Aim

1 The track title *From Here to Fame* is from classic graffiti documentary Style Wars. A train passes by with it written on one of the doors.

2 Aim aka Andy Turner was six years old when he began playing drums. As a late teen he picked up the turntables and in '89 opened a wax shack called Speed Limit Records.

3 "The only records recently that make me want to really push it in the studio are *Takk* by Sigur Ros and *Phrases For the Young* by Julian Casablancas."

4 Slasher movie geek Aim also sampled the film *Psycho III* on *Cold Water Music*.

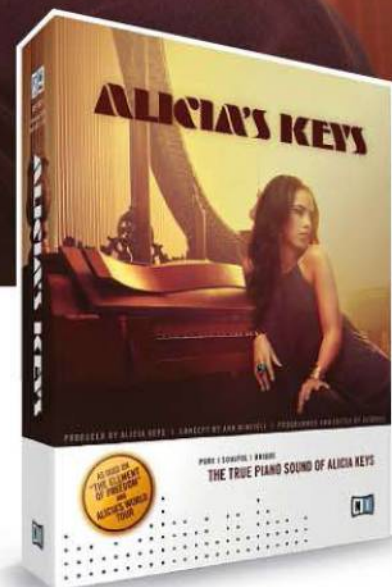
5 Aim re-released *Cold Water Music* in 2007 on his own Atic label with bonus material taken from b-side singles.

THE SOUND OF AN ICON.



ALICIA'S KEYS The sound of a Grammy award winner's very own piano can now be yours. Sampled from her own playing, recorded in her studio with her own engineer and used extensively on her last album, this is the only virtual piano that meets Alicia Keys' professional demands. Designed with incredible attention to detail, it includes even the sound of fingers hitting keys. Embodying the soulful, warm sound that has become a platinum trademark, this instrument is the real deal - just like Miss Keys herself. See and hear Alicia in action with her Keys on The Freedom world tour.

Learn more at www.native-instruments.com/aliciaskeys



NI NATIVE INSTRUMENTS

THE FUTURE OF SOUND

Studiofile

The world's finest recording and production environments

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

A few essential bits of information about...

Blueprint Studios Salford, UK



ADDRESS

Elizabeth House
39 Queen Street
Salford
M3 7DQ

WHO RUNS IT?

Tim Thomas, Ian Stewart, Fred Kindt

WEBSITE

blueprint-studios.com

TELEPHONE:

+44 (0)161 817 2524

Proving that you don't need decades of experience in the music industry to build a top-notch music empire

of your own, Salford's Blueprint Studios was founded by three friends fresh out of college with a desire to create something which would outlast them all. Co-founder Tim Thomas fills us in on the background as we wait for the kettle to boil: "The three of us met on a production course in Manchester. As part of the course we had to write a business plan and while doing the research we realised that there wasn't really a world-class studio in Manchester any more. There were lots of project studios but nothing with really big live spaces and top end gear."

On a mission to rectify the situation, the trio (Thomas, Fred Kindt and Ian Stewart) scoured Manchester's industrial heartlands for a suitable building, hitting the jackpot when they discovered a huge unused building in Salford. They instantly set about getting their hands on it. "The

owner wanted to let the building to us but we really wanted to buy it. We eventually persuaded him to sell it to us and then started gutting it and building five rehearsal rooms in the basement. We built it all ourselves, everything from laying the bricks to the joinery."

The Big Room

While running the rehearsal rooms, the Blueprint team started to plot the next step in their master plan, starting with a simple one-room setup in the studio's huge live room. "In the first year we cobbled together all the recording equipment that we had and put it in the big room on the top floor so we could do demos for bands. Our skill as engineers grew and people started coming back."

This room was soon adopted by Manchester-based Elbow, old school friends of Tim's who were looking for a place to record their fourth album and loved the sound of the huge hall's natural reverb. "While they were recording *Leaders of the Free World*

Genelec 1034s

"We had people in from Genelec to measure the sound of the room and then we added more treatment. The room was built around the speakers really."

Neve VR Console

"I think we've had a lot of business from the Neve because there aren't many in the Manchester."



Yamaha NS-10s

"These actually sound pretty good – it's a bit worrying!"

Adam S3As

"These are the workhorses – everyone really trusts them."

INTRODUCING...



L-R

Tim Thomas

Assistant Engineer

Ian Stewart

Producer

Fred Kindt

Producer

Tube-Tech SMC 2B

"This is best on the mix buss for fairly slow music. We all like it on acoustic tracks and laid-back Jazz stuff. For anything more upbeat we'll go for the Smart C2 or API 2500."



The Big Room

Blueprint's standout feature is undoubtedly the huge live room known simply as The Big Room. Uniquely, for such a large room, the space didn't take much effort to set up for recording. Acoustics expert Fred admits, "The Big Room was a bit of a fluke." The twenty-five metre by fifteen metre room had such an

appealing natural reverberation that it was only necessary to fit movable floor-to-ceiling drapes in order to fine tune the echoes. Other than that, the room was left in its original state, complete with carpeted floor, until a recent renovation. By all accounts, the new hardwood floor has only improved the sound.

So impressed were Manchester-based rockers Elbow with the sound of The Big Room that they adopted it as their home studio in 2005 for the recording of their self-produced fourth album *Leaders of the Free World* (which itself went under the working title *The Big Room*). The band went on to use the

room for the recording of their Mercury Prize-winning fifth album *The Seldom Seen Kid* and are currently locked away again recording the follow-up. Kindt tells us, "They like the sound so much that they recorded an impulse response of the room so they can use it for convolution reverb when they're away."



Empirical Labs Distressor

"The Distressor is the most versatile compressor we have. You can really go to extremes. Tim originally wanted two but at the time we could only afford one. We'll probably end up getting another soon."

**UA 1176LN**

"This gets used the most out of everything in the rack. It's always a safe bet for snare and vocals. Quite a few of us are using it without the compression, just for the circuitry. It's an old trick but it makes a big difference."

we were building the rest of the studio. We had an arrangement where we worked from nine until three and then we'd put our hammers down so they could start recording."

Equipment list

While planning the studio, Belgian tech expert Fred Kindt was put in charge of choosing what gear to buy, and he soon realised that some of the decisions were more difficult than he anticipated: "When we first started thinking about what we wanted it was quite an exciting few months but it was actually quite hard – I had a few sleepless nights. The new Digidesign ICON had just come out and the SSL AWS 900 was just about to come out too so they were both in the picture but we chose the Neve VR Legend and we've been so happy with it. I think we've had a lot of business from

Overall, Tim feels that the balance of equipment works out well: "We wanted to mix analogue and digital to get the best of both worlds. Studio Two is a little bit more digital but we've still got similar analogue outboard and we were really careful about choosing preamps." As far as future upgrades go, plans are under way to add a few more pieces of outboard and a variety of vintage gear. "We'll probably get a two-inch tape machine at some point and some more drum kits, guitar amps and instruments." Fred adds: "I think because we have so much classic gear, what we're going to do next is buy a few things that are a little more out of the ordinary."

Ethos

In the relatively short time since its opening, Blueprint has already built up a great reputation for serving small local bands as well as huge international stars. "One of our first clients was 50 Cent," Tim tells us. "We were here late one night and we got a phone call from a hotel

One of our first clients was 50 Cent, making clean edits of his tracks

it too because there aren't many Neves in the Manchester area. If you just want a controller, we've got a small ICON in Studio Two and we can do a bit more post-production there."

The studio is equipped with monitors to suit every need. "The mains are the Genelec 1034s. Young bands especially like hearing it loud but when we start mixing they don't get used much. We went for the Adam S3As for the midfields and they're the workhorses. Everyone really trusts them. Then, of course we have NS10s and the pair in Studio One actually sound pretty good – it's almost a bit worrying! We have a pair in Studio Two and we've tried them both in the same room, with the same amp and they're really different."

"We track everything with Pro Tools HD3 and 192 converters. We're using a dual core G5 Mac and we're waiting to see what Digidesign come out with next before we upgrade the Mac and Pro Tools rig. For the outboard we went with safe choices. We wanted quite a lot of valve equipment to complement the desk so went for classic gear."

around the corner. The concierge was quite persistent and eventually revealed that it was 50 Cent." Since then we've had Justin Timberlake, Duran Duran, Smokey Robinson and Timbaland and we've had a lot of big Manchester artists like Stephen Fretwell, Badly Drawn Boy and Johnny Marr but they're not really our bread and butter. We knew from the beginning that it was about finding new bands and offering a service that made them want to return."

This attitude is clear from the studio's focus on new bands, and is sure to appeal to anyone considering booking a rehearsal or session: "The whole point is that it's a very sociable place to be. There's a real community here. We've got a small management company and a label. I can't wait for a band to come here for rehearsal, hone their songwriting and end up getting signed to our label. I want this to be here when we're long gone." **FM**

YOUR STUDIO IN HERE?

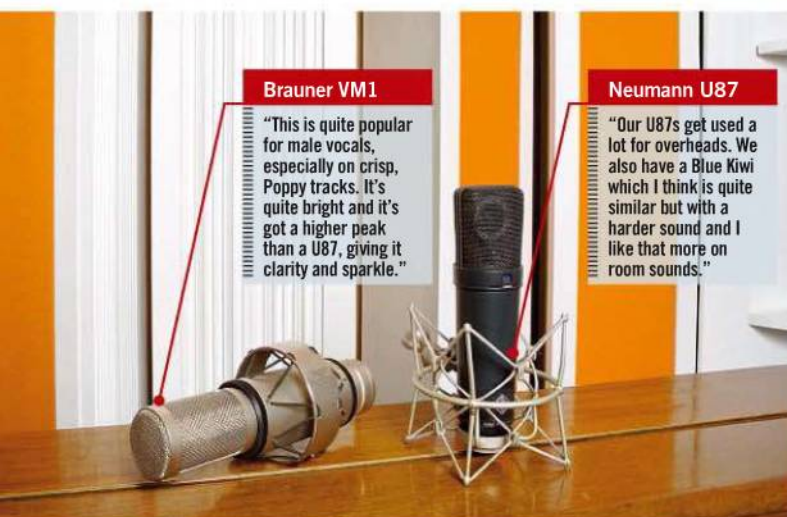
Want to show us around your studio? Drop us a line at futuremusic@futurenet.co.uk, and we'll pop round for an Appletiser.

**Brauner VM1**

"This is quite popular for male vocals, especially on crisp, Poppy tracks. It's quite bright and it's got a higher peak than a U87, giving it clarity and sparkle."

Neumann U87

"Our U87s get used a lot for overheads. We also have a Blue Kiwi which I think is quite similar but with a harder sound and I like that more on room sounds."



ON
THE
RADAR

Depeche Mode

Daniel Griffiths finds out that taking the world's biggest Electronic act out on tour requires state-of-the-art gear and experts at the controls...

On December 16th and 17th 2009, everyone's favourite Electronic Pop pioneers, Depeche Mode, checked into the enormous O2 Arena for the British stint of their massive Tour Of the Universe.

Taken with them were eight mega trucks, packed with gear selectively honed from over 20 years of touring experience and a 20-strong support team that are armed and ready to deal with anything the clash of live tour and hi-tech can inevitably throw up.

Put in charge of the hi-tech team is Paul Eastman, the keyboard technician and programmer for the tour and the man DM trust to make their sound happen on stage.

FM: Things seem to have changed since Depeche Mode were a bunch of Emulators and that famous pair of Revox reel-to-reels running the show.



Paul Eastman: "Ah yes, there used to be two in case one went down. These days we're using the Radar system for the same job and has been for quite a few years too. Mainly because it's so solid. But the chap who used to press play on the tape machines for them back in the '80s JD, is still with them. He was around last night, in fact."

This looks like a monster rig. How long did you spend trying different options, trying to come up with the final set up?

"The original plan for this tour was to take out all Martin [Gore]'s old analogue synth gear. This was because the record [*Sounds Of The Universe*] was all recorded with it. Increasingly over the past few years he's been working on a huge collection. For the new record they took those keyboards into the studio and obviously wanted to recreate those sounds. But obviously there's loads of problems with the gear: oscillators going out of tune, things breaking down and they've been plagued with trouble in the past with technology going down. So they wanted the old sound but – of course – wanted it to be rock-solid..."

"In the past that meant they relied a lot on samplers: Emulators and the old Emax sampler but all the samples were too grainy to use again and needed updating. So Kerry [Hopwood, Live Programmer/Musical Director] went back to the original two-inch tapes again and redid all the samples for this tour. So, we're using those new samples and some plug-ins for our sounds too."



"After we managed to convince the guys not to take all the old keyboards out we spoke to a few people about Muse Receptors and they told us that they were rock solid. So that seemed the best way to go. The last time they toured they were using Logic, and the EXS sampler but they had a few glitches with it. I've used sequencers for playback for Snow Patrol and the Verve – we were using Logic – and they ran fine. But Kerry trusts the Radars. We used Pro Tools for the playback, during rehearsals but just before the tour started we printed the tracks to our pair of machines.

"Sample wise we're using Native Instruments Kontakt, and Massive a lot too. We're also using a lot of G-Media ImpOSCar and Synthogy Ivory for pianos too. There are some sounds you can't get with the synths, so we use the samples for those but there's a lot we can do and we try to use the synths as much as possible. *Stripped* is a good example of that. The big lead sound is Massive and ImpOSCar all layered up to create that main riff sound."

And the plug-ins are all hosted in Muse Receptors?

"Yes, we've got six of them: two per keyboard player. Each pair is a main 'A' and a back up 'B' doing the same thing. Then we've got a custom-built switch box at the side of the stage so we can switch between each keyboard player's Receptor, if something goes wrong."

Is there any live sequencing going on?

"The Receptor stuff is completely separate from the playback side. I'm doing all the program changes on the Receptors here, off stage, but we are using both Ableton Live and Pro Tools alongside the Radars. Each is on a separate MacBook Pro. Ableton Live is being used just for live drum processing while Pro Tools is there for the program changes that are flying about on stage, changing the keyboards and stuff like that.

"It works like this: The Radars are kicking out time-code which is going into Kerry's laptop running Pro Tools. So Pro Tools runs in time with

the Radars. Program changes are fired out of Pro Tools for the guitar rig and the keyboards on stage, and into a bit of software that I wrote that controls Ableton Live in the second computer. You load all your projects into it and when it gets the change it closes songs in Ableton Live and loads the next one up. I used it on Snow Patrol and Verve too, with Logic, but it seems to work with Live too."

Sorry, Pro Tools and Ableton Live? Live is doing live drum processing?

"Yes, it's quite complicated! But Kerry went down to Christian [Eigner, drummer]'s place in Austria and they ummed and ahed about the best way to do it. And this is what they came up with. The band decided they wanted to use live drums, but they wanted them to sound like electronic drums, depending on the song, of course.

"We decided not to use triggers so we're taking the live drum sounds, into Live and processing them live. The drum sounds are going in via a

Keyboards à la Mode

1 Andy Fletcher: Keyboards

"This is Fletcher's rig. He does a lot of the baselines off the Virus Polar here. And then there's two Edirol PCR-800 controllers, each of which triggers one the Receptors. There are two Receptors per player, and each is doing the same thing. They're pretty standard Edirol controllers but they're very good. He generally plays on this one and the other is the back up. If there's

any problems he can just play the other one and the back up Receptor."

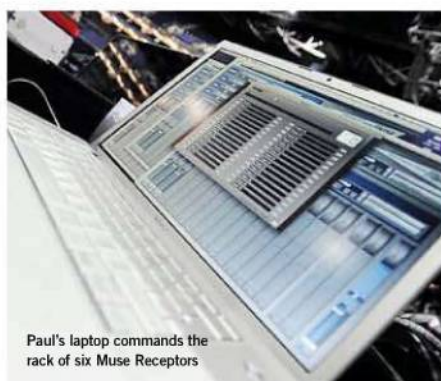
2 Peter Gordino: Keyboards

"This is Pete's rig. He gets the big, weighted piano keyboard, a Roland RD-700. With Pete only one Receptor is live and if that goes down I can switch to his 'B' Receptor. And then he's got another Virus, he does a lot of stuff on that, It's a TI2. Wonderful machines."

3 Martin Gore: Keyboards, Guitars

"This is Martin's rig. He's not actually using this Virus. He's just using it as a controller. It was actually used in one of the songs on this tour, but we dropped that song from the set."

"Again, two keyboards, the Virus TI2 and an Edirol PCR-800 controller. The top one is the main Receptor and the other is a back up Receptor."



Paul's laptop commands the rack of six Muse Receptors

MOTU 828 interface, processed in software then output via another 828. Live is so versatile – they tried it out and they love the sound. No latency, and we can get the electronic sounds we need whenever we need them."

So there's plenty of playing, but how many tracks com off the Radar?

"18. Though it changes from track to track. The band tend to play all the lead sounds. All the big riffs that you'd recognise are all played, mainly using the Receptors. Meanwhile incidental stuff, percussion that Christian doesn't play, some of the strings that Peter [Gordino, additional keyboards] doesn't play come off the Radar."

"They've got three keyboard players so they do play a lot but sometimes it has to go to the Radar."

And are the lighting queues from the Radar?

"No they're from Graham, who's front of house! He's a great lighting director. There are starts for

triggering the video but as far as the performance, the flashes of light, that's all old school. During the gig he's dancing around, really getting into it."

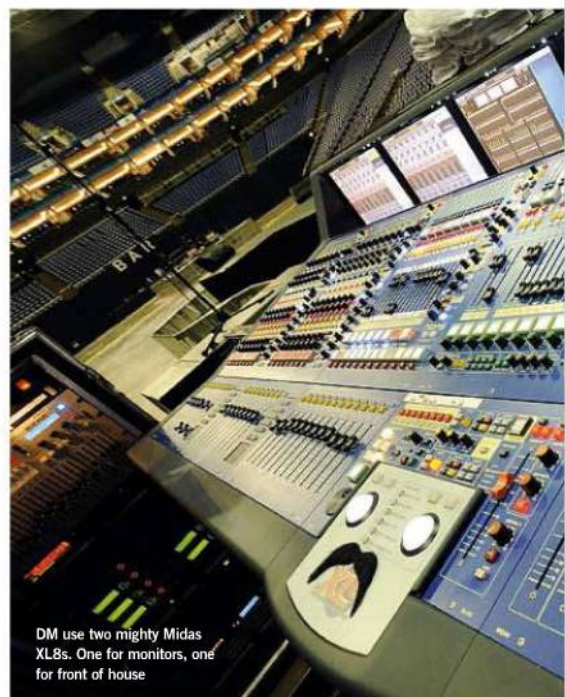
And once again, a back up Radar for your Radar?

"Yes, we have two Radars, an 'A' and a 'B' – one is ran simultaneously for back up, so it's just like the old days. You set one off and the other is set in chase. There's a tone on a spare track on each Radar and they feed into a Radial SW8 switch box."

"If there's a green light there then it can hear the tone. If that stops it immediately switches to the output from the 'B' machine."

How quickly can it make the switch?

"You don't hear it. We've done A to B tests and the band didn't notice it. And it's happened live a few times. The daftest times was when we had these torches mounted here [Paul gestures towards a pair of mini gooseneck light, now safely away] And it got knocked and fell perfectly and hit the stop



DM use two mighty Midas XL8s. One for monitors, one for front of house

button. We looked and went "It's on the 'B' machine! Why's it on the 'B' machine?" And then we realised what had happened."

Can it flip back from 'B' to 'A'?

"Ah, it'd be out of time then. So you're stuck on 'B' until the end of the song. But it's not like we have to make it to the end of the gig on our back up – with everyone staring at it..."

Is all the kit brand new for this tour?

"The Radars were on the last tour but the keyboards are all new. We had Viruses before but we've got the newer ones for this tour. The Receptors are all new too. And this is the first tour we've done with the L-Acoustics K1 rig, only because it's so new."

"This package cost one million Euros and so far there's only ten of these in the world. We're only using the O2's house delay compensations speakers, the rest is all ours and we're very pleased with how



Martin's TC G System stomp boxes in full effect



the K1 sounds. Then there's two new Midas XL8s – one by the stage for monitor mixing and another for front of house. We're the first tour to using two XL8s"

The entire rig seems incredibly well thought-out and compact. Does it pack up pretty small?

"It's incredibly compact. Unbelievable, in fact. U2 were following us around and they had a hundred trucks, but then that was the whole 'claw' set up. We're doing this in eight trucks and we can pack up the backline in half an hour."

What has been the biggest gig of the tour?

"Milan was 73,000. The O2 is 17, 18,000. That's big. But Milan was 73... It was unbelievable." **FM**

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For upcoming tour dates, latest news and for info on any upcoming releases, take a trip to Depeche Mode's official website at: depechemode.com

DM's Guitar Rig

While the obvious star of the show is the hi-tech kit, Martin Gore's burgeoning guitar rig is a whole gig in itself

Wow. There's a lot of guitars here.

Jez Webb: "There's a lot for a synth band. A few more than I was expecting. I should have read the contract a bit closer..."

The keyboard kit, the Radars, everything seems very state of the art over there but here... amps... stomp boxes... it's a bit more Rock 'n' Roll.

"Well everything's off stage. This is the heart of it, the old G System which we used on the last tour as well and as worked well for us. Every song has its own patch, some of them have three sounds in them. It gets a feed from Pro Tools and that switches the patches.

"Before that I had to switch all the sounds, which is a bit of a pain if you're trying to tune the next guitar ready too! The output from the TC Electronic G-System goes into this switchable audio loop which is also switched by Pro Tools. The pedals here are always on, permanently kicking their output into the switcher and their output is switched in and out automatically

when it's needed. The pedals are mainly distortions because the G doesn't do distortion. Then Martin's got a Wah pedal and a fuzz pedal on stage too and that feeds into the loop here too. So hopefully I don't have to touch anything."

Seems that every hi-tech part of the tour is back up crazy, but not over here eh?

"Well I do have a bunch of spare pedals so if one goes wrong. And there's a back up TC Electronic here. And a back up loop system here! But the worst thing that can happen is that one of sounds goes out without the required distortion effect on it until I can swap in another. The wiring at the back of the rack is pretty complicated but Whirlwind made a connector for me. I can leave everything in this rack connected and the output from the entire guitar system comes out on this patchbay here. And I put in a couple of auxiliary channels too and we're using those for the couple of pedals Martin has on stage."

Where does the effected guitar go next?

"I've got a stereo feed coming to two amp heads here, then onto the cabs, which are miked and which are all off stage. When I first started working on the tours – back in '93 for the Faith and Devotion tour – it went straight to the desk.

"There were no amps or anything, as that was the first time Martin had toured with guitars. I think he only played on three songs. But he's certainly come on from then!

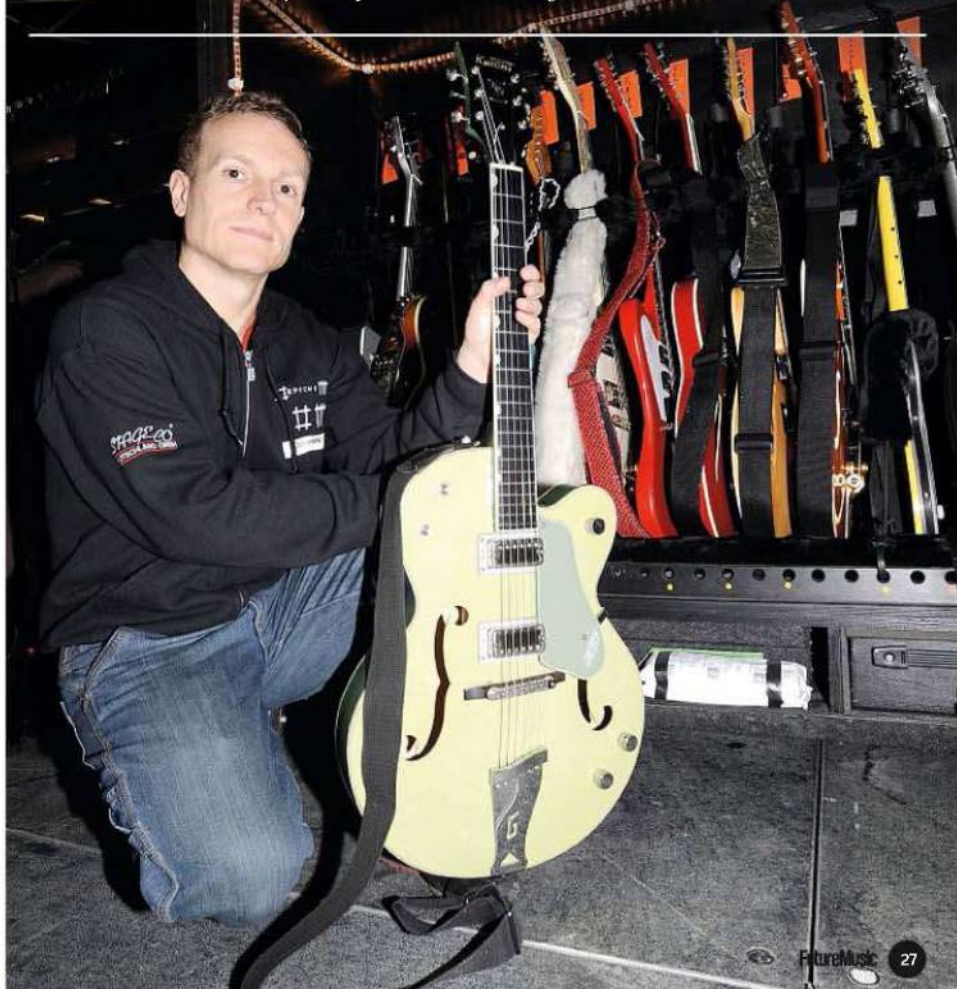
"Now we've got the two amps and two cabs here, covered up and miked with a Shure SM57 and a Shure KSM32.

"He's got two two-by-twelve cabs with one of each mic on each cab. We need that for the sound. It would sound a bit rosey if we just went direct and they're a very Rocky band at the moment."

FM: And this bit doesn't look too hi-tech... [FM gestures towards a large beaten up workbench, complete with tools, vice and soldering iron]

"I've had that 20 years! This is where I'm tuning; if he breaks a string, if something needs fixing. That said very little goes wrong here. I think on this tour he's broken one string, and then he just carried on [laughs].

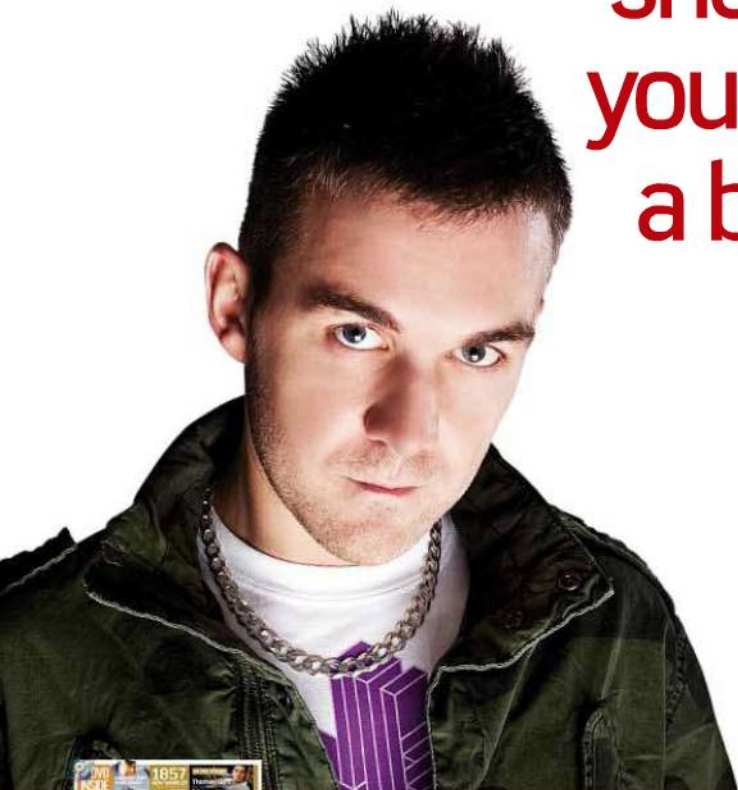
"And touch wood [touches workbench] we've had no disasters. So far!"



If you're serious about music production, *Future Music* should ALWAYS be in your kit list. It was like a bible to me when I was starting out!

Funkagenda

Artist and Producer



WHY WE'RE NO1

Since 1991, *FM* has featured every incredible piece of new gear and been in the studio with every hi-tech recording artist who's setting the pace. Our reputation for behind-the-scenes access and in-depth analysis is second to none. No-one is better primed to help you make great new music now and into the future!

FutureMusic®
Technique and technology for making music

Save 25% on the cover price!

Save over £19 on the cover price with a 13 issue subscription
Subscribe today for **only £14.60** every 3 months by Direct Debit!*

ORDERING YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS EASY



myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/mus/P039

Or call: 0844 848 2852

Lines are open 8.00am-9:30pm weekdays and 8.00am-4pm Saturdays (GMT). **Quote code P039**

Terms and Conditions: *This offer is for new UK subscribers paying by Direct Debit. You will receive 13 issues a year. Minimum subscription term is 12 months. If at any time during the first 60 days you are dissatisfied in any way please notify us in writing and we will refund you for all un-mailed issues. Details of the Direct Debit guarantee are available on request.

Outside the UK?
Flip to **p130** for our special subs offers

nextbeat

the instrument for creative DJs



nextbeat official website
»» www.nextbeat.net



Be Remarkable !



UK Distribution :

Henley Designs Ltd

0123 551 1166



CHEMICAL RECORDS
TOTAL SOUNDS
DJ KIT
DJ EMPIRE
DJ SUPERSTORE
KNIGHT SOUND & LIGHT
WEST END DJ
HARD TO FIND RECORDS
AUDIO VISUAL SYSTEMS

BRISTOL
READING
NEWBURY
CHADWELL HEATH
LEIGH-ON-SEA
LONDON
LONDON
BIRMINGHAM
COLCHESTER

0117 971 4924
0118 951 0050
0845 458 4434
0208 597 0119
0170 252 0020
0208 579 0144
0208 208 6988
0121 687 7773
0120 687 0479

www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

Loopmasters

The Sample Boutique
Royalty-free sounds for producers worldwide

Loopmasters

Flexible sample libraries for producers and musicians who required top quality playing from seasoned professionals to integrate into and inspire their music.

[MORE PRODUCTS AT LOOPMASTERS.COM](http://LOOPMASTERS.COM)



Block Party Essentials



Reel2Reel Reggae



Original Jungle D&B Vol 1



Tech House Producer 2

wave
alchemy

Samples and loops ideal for dance music production, film, TV and broadcasting, multi-media, games developers, DJs...

[MORE PRODUCTS AT LOOPMASTERS.COM](http://LOOPMASTERS.COM)



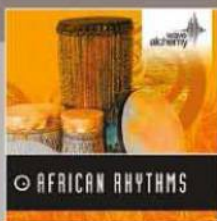
Drum Tools 1



Electro Collection



Drum Machines 01



African Rhythms

MUTEKKI MEDIA
professional audio sample libraries

If it's state-of-the-art Loops, Drums, FX, Bass or Synth Sounds you're looking for, we specialise in offering the sample material you need.

[MORE PRODUCTS AT LOOPMASTERS.COM](http://LOOPMASTERS.COM)



Electro House Vol 1



Audio Boutique 2



Secret House



Ultimate Beats

industrial strength

Brooklyn's ISR bring you new electronic and drum 'n' bass samples from around the world.

[MORE PRODUCTS AT LOOPMASTERS.COM](http://LOOPMASTERS.COM)



Audio Injection



Vintage Breaks Vol 1



BHK Dubstep Vol 3



Drum'n'Bass Vol 3

push button bang

At the cutting edge of electronic music production, bringing loops and sounds that will inspire you.

[MORE PRODUCTS AT LOOPMASTERS.COM](http://LOOPMASTERS.COM)



Tribal Tech



Rise



Dark House



Infinite Element

SPIN
MEDIA

Using General Midi standard allows endless combinations of sounds & patterns with space for experimentation.

LOOPMASTERS.COM



Minimal Tech Vol 1



Classic House Piano

GU
GLOBAL UNDERGROUND

Global Underground encapsulates dance music's international explosion and restless creativity.

LOOPMASTERS.COM



Sultan



Nic Fanciulli

WAV : REX2 : ACID : REASON REFILLS : LIVE PRESETS : APPLE LOOPS : AKAI
MULTITRACKS : HALION : MPC : EMU : EXS : RMX : SFZ : MAC / PC

www.LOOPMASTERS.com

The source for sounds

Call +44 (0) 1273 692 313 or visit the website

Albums



If it's hot, it's here. Welcome to this month's new releases, all lovingly rated by the *FM* review crew

Album Of The Month



Massive Attack Heligoland

Virgin Records



As an Electronic music buff, it might be treacherous to admit that I've never found Massive Attack all that appealing – for me they've never quite fulfilled the hype. The band's most

lauded album, *Mezzanine*, was as proficiently fabricated a record as you're likely to find, blessed with eerie rhythmic textures and abstract electronics, yet one might have been left wondering where the tunes were.

Heligoland doesn't have that drawback – featuring 10 smouldering tracks, it offers the widest scope of styles to be found on any Massive Attack record. From the rolling tumbleweed of the dense opener, *Pray for Rain*, to ex-Tricky associate Martina Topley-Bird's sugary vocal on *Babel*, the trippy badlands of the brilliantly menacing *Girl I Love You*, and Damon Albarn's vocal contribution to the Radiohead-like *Saturday Come Slow*, *Heligoland* delivers on multiple fronts.

Avoiding the temptation to over-produce, the programming is adeptly integrated into conventional guitars, while bass and percussion nestle in seamlessly, always allowing the songwriting to glow. *Heligoland* rarely lowers its standards throughout, utilising every drop of the band's vast experience, which is what really puts it on another ledge.

It's perhaps ironic that *Heligoland* is Massive Attack's least hyped album for a long time, and yet there's a good chance of it being their most accessible record to date. **Danny Turner**

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:

Girl I Love You, Rush Minute, Saturday Come Slow

9/10

Autechre Oversteps

Warp Records



Autechre's tenth album continues a progression of sorts. *Brown & Booth* were labelled as one of the original exponents of IDM (Intelligent Dance Music), combining Post-Rave Electronic Dance music with Techno.

However, in recent years their direction has mutated into something almost indefinable. Beyond simply calling it Electronic music, albums such as *Untilted*, *Quaristice*, and now *Oversteps*, lean strongly towards the avant-garde, toying with micro-tones and textures, shaped by complex

algorithmic patterns. As a fan of Electronic music, taking Autechre at face value is something I've always wrestled with, and *Oversteps* provides few clear answers.

The album is more suited to those who find pleasure in deconstructing music, their tracks are more like puzzles, to be probed and analysed rather than exalted. Personally, I find *Oversteps* is 100% calculated and technique-based and therefore leaves me completely cold – hardly anything elicits a emotional response, but I'd still fight for Autechre's right to do things his way. **Danny Turner**

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:
known(1), see on see, Treale

5/10

Tensnake Coma Cat EP

Permanent Vacation



Mr Snake has been churning out left-of-centre club favourites in both remix and artist formats for a few years now, with his huge production, focussing on finger-snapping beats and catchy-as-hell riffs.

Coma Cat falls to the right of 2009, a year where Tensnake's discography gained weight with the release of his sub-shaking, groove-makin' EP *In The End (I Want You To Cry)*. In a way, *Coma Cat EP* follows the same structure. The title track is close to genius, with the lead riff nodding towards

Anthony & The Camp's *What I Like* – DX bells create an arresting riff that gravitates to the dancefloor with vocal snippets providing a third rhythm. Elsewhere, *Need Your Lovin'* nods towards the full-swing '90s House revival with a vocal-led shoulder-shaker boasting a chorus to remember.

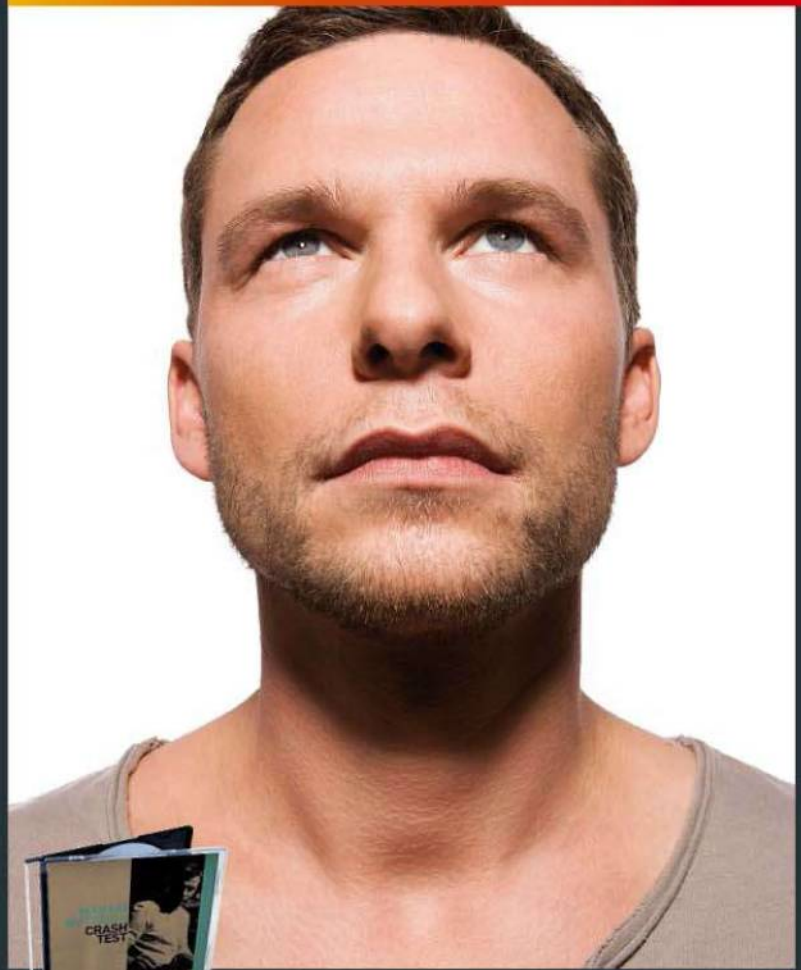
All in all, Tensnake has done what so many artists are aiming to do – respectfully nod towards their charmingly retro influences, while pushing things forward with huge modern production that will send any club system and dancefloor alight.

Declan McGlynn

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:
Coma Cat, Need Your Lovin' (Dub Version)

9/10

It's On Our iPods



Martin Buttrich Crash Test

DESOLAT

Previously, Buttrich has been a silent force co-producing and remixing alongside everyone from Pop acts like the

Sugababes and Madonna to getting in the studio with Timo Maas and Loco Dice. He's been Grammy-nominated and involved in UK Top Ten hits, but now he's surfacing alone with this debut album.

The first thing you notice is just how good the production is here – it's such an educated overall sound with a very detailed quality that learning of Buttrich's previous experiences in both the Pop world and with Electronic music royalty is much less surprising. Overall, it's a relatively deep and sometimes ambient affair, but tracks such as *Back It Up* and *Enough Love To*

Hate, are ready for the dancefloor and there's hidden hooks and vocal snippets buried all over the album so you never feel like your listening to some sort of über-pretentious hypno-Minimal.

The lights-down-low attitude of the sound choices and nuances of dark melody and groove that Buttrich has cleverly built into this album make it a real pleasure from start to finish. *Crash Test* is a veritable master class in slick, balanced, Electronic music production. Don't miss it.

Chris Barker

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:
Everyone Else Is Already Taken, Hoochie Mama, Enough Love To hate

9/10

Josh Wink When A Banana Was Just A Banana Remixed and Peeled

Ovum Recordings



After being approached by a few pals asking to remix their favourite tracks

on the album, it was a no-brainer for Josh to put his whole 2009 album *When A Banana Was Just A Banana* on a remix tip. The album moves from the deep and melodic Jimpster remix of *Jus Right*, to the percussive House skills of Nic Fanciulli's take on Wink's *Hypnoslave* and Radioslave's bouncy floor-filling mix of *Stay Out All Night*.

It's all rooted in a core deep and groovy vibe that keeps it very much a Josh Wink album, but the fairy dust his friends have sprinkled on gives them a new lease of life for 2010. This is a floor-filling, grown-up Electronic music collection that will have you hypnotised with its slick production and subtly melodic nuances. Brilliant. **Chris Barker**

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:

Jus Right (Jimpster Remix), *Hypnoslave* (Nic Fanciulli Remix), *Stay Out All Night* (Radio Slave Remix)

8/10

BT These Hopeful Machines

Black Hole Recordings



Brian Transeau is an ambitious character, once entering the Guinness Book of Records for utilising his 'Stutter-Edit™' technique, having edited a sound fragment using mathematical formulas to create 6,178 edits of a vocal part on his 2003 track, *Somnambulist*. Somewhat out on a ledge, BT's music has varied from Trance to Electronica to Film Score – so elegantly defined on his previous album, *This Binary Universe*.

More impressive perhaps is that you never quite now what you will get with a BT album, as Transeau's restless creativity always demands change. In what might seem a contradiction to that, *These Hopeful Machines* is more of an amalgamation of previous styles – although BT has not released this type of album before. Never one to skimp, *These Hopeful Machines* is a double-CD weighing in at almost two hours length, the songs switching between glitch-based Electronica with heaving Dance beats and Acoustic Rock. As always, Transeau's grip on production is absolutely exemplary and there are some excellent, euphoric Pop/Dance tracks on offer.

Where *These Hopeful Machines* does fall down, however, is on the guitar-based tracks. With the focus

unavoidably placed on songwriting, Transeau often falls short of providing truly memorable riffs and melodies. Despite that drawback, there's still more than enough to enjoy on what is another highly ambitious BT release.

Danny Turner

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:

A Million Stars, *Suddenly, The Emergency*

7/10

Enigma The Platinum Collection

Virgin Records



Enigma founder Michael Cretu released numerous self-penned albums throughout the Seventies, but found himself on the verge of giving up due to lack of ideas. Even he could not imagine that his combination of Ambient and New Age themes would reward him with an astonishing 50 million album sales.

Alongside former wife Sandra Cretu, Enigma's debut album *MCMXC a.D.* was released in 1990 to massive worldwide acclaim. The only downside was the amount of lawsuits Cretu racked up for his juxtaposition of sampled Gregorian chants and Dance beats.

The Platinum Collection is a retrospective release featuring all of Enigma's major hits, remixes, and unreleased *The Lost Ones* – although, in truth, there is little here that has stood the test of time.

Enigma set the template for an entire genre, which peaked, naturally exhausted itself, then died, and although Enigma has tried to adapt,

the techniques used have become very passé and certainly lack originality. The simplicity of Enigma's sound struggles to belie its technical limitations, as the much-used sampled breaks dawdle along in terribly fatigued fashion. Meanwhile, the chants and pipes become profoundly repetitive at times.

Danny Turner

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:

Return To Innocence, *Sadness*, *Seven Lives*

5/10

Nedry Condors

Monotreme Records



Debut album from London three-piece Nedry, with female vocalist Ayu Okakita

the centrepiece. The trio have only been recording for two years, yet have already made waves on the Electronic scene, supporting the likes of Pivot, Daedelus and The Gaslamp Killer. *Condors* may be short and sweet, with eight tracks just about hitting the half-hour mark, but in this case the adage quality over quantity certainly rings true. Nedry create dark, spacious downtempo ambiances, perfect for post-party hangouts or late night insomniacs.

The music is built slowly and carefully, with meticulous attention to detail. Heavily programmed, with the judicious insertion of acoustic or fuzzy guitars, lo-fi beats and dubby bass, Okakita delivers an especially sultry, haunting croon throughout. Only the combative *Scattered* breaks the

tranquility, with its sawing, glistening guitar riffs and stuttering breaks.

In their finer moments, Nedry evoke Bjork/Zero 7, but the occasional Post-Rock angle gives them a wider scope, as does their willingness to experiment with heavy programming. With a tour of Japan lined up for the Autumn, Nedry are definitely worth keeping an eye on. **Danny Turner**

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:

A42, *Scattered*, *Swan Ocean*

7/10

Umek Responding to Dynamic

1605 Music Therapy



Rising faster than the sea level around an iceberg, Umek is set to hit superstar DJ status

in 2010 and listening to this righteous assault of driving Techno and Minimal House, it's easy to see why. The Slovenian DJ and producer has a sound similar to the rolling driving beats of many of the Toolroom artists, with percussive, swung pops and cuts tightly layered over growling, out-of-control basslines.

Although this album is slick, it offers very few new ideas to the hypnotic rolling sounds of much other future Techno out there. This said, it was still a very enjoyable listen and tracks such as *Slap* and *Individual Breath* will be all over the dancefloors for the new few months. **Chris Barker**

ADD THESE TO YOUR PLAYLIST:

Slap, *Individual Brath*, *No One Could Have Suspected*

8/10

Retro Respect



KLF The White Room

KLF Communications

Made with the money Jimmy Cauty and Bill Drummond earned from their novelty hit *Doctrin* 'the Tardis', this is *Acid House* at its most ridiculously commercial. The KLF branded their sound Stadium House, by combining the glittery Pop production and aesthetics with layers of crowd noise. Album highlights include drafting in Tammy Wynette for vocals and shoehorning in pedal steel guitar alongside the 303 at every opportunity. Genius. **Chris Barker**



© Schumacher

Compilations

PICK OF THE MONTH

Toolroom Knights Mixed By Fedde Le Grand

Toolroom Records



Another mainroom banger from the Toolroom camp. This time it's mixed

by the Dutch boy-wonder, Fedde Le Grand, who rolls out the percussive, hypnotic-bounce over two deep and groovy CDs. Great stuff. **Chris Barker**

Exchange Michael Fakesch

Musik Aus Ström



A more forward-thinking take on the cool sound of trashy

Disco of years before. Taking a slightly more experimental slant to the mix, Fakesch delivers interesting groovy chops and a track-listing peppered with the artsy elite of Electronic music.

Chris Barker

CR2 Live & Direct Miami 2010-02-16

Cr2 Records



Taking on a whopping triple-CD mix, CR2 serve up Day, Night and

Classic mixes for this year's WMC in Miami. It's all nicely commercial and digestible, but unfortunately suffers from moments where the track selection feels a bit stale.

Chris Barker

Balance 016 Agoria

Balance



This triple-CD mix delivers a mind-blowing selection of tracks

and will open your ears to genre's and styles you barely knew existed. Agoria glues it all together cleverly, giving all three of the mixes a very 'balanced' feel. **Chris Barker**

Hench Mixed by Jakes

Mixtape Vol 1



The first in a mix series from top-line Drum 'n' Bass MC turned Dubstep

producer showcases the full power of his new label. This compilation is not for the faint hearted – it's basically heavyweight Dubstep.

Will Seelig

Fix Your Acoustics

THE STUDIO AFTER

The finished studio. Looking and sounding a whole lot better.



Got mix problems? Your control room could be the culprit. We fix a studio and dish out the tips that could make all the difference to your sound

When we got the call from your local studio, saying that they had major mix problems we were quickly on the spot to help out. The Percy Street Studio is a charitable venture at the Percy Street Community Centre in Bath, run by Adam Pitt. "We had the space in the basement of the building, but

turning it into a studio proved to be a bit of a challenge," he explains. "The biggest immediate problem was the sound proofing. The original construction of the main building made sound transfer through the ceiling, floor and walls a real issue. We had lagged the rooms heavily, but the finished rooms needed proper treatment. The studio's acoustics are

playing havoc with the student's efforts to make tracks."

Percy problems

The control room at the Percy Street Studio is a large 4m by 6m space with the desk and monitors on one of the narrower walls. The low ceiling and concrete construction causes real problems with a ringing top end

and heavy bass enhancement, making it practically impossible to mix at the correct sound levels.

With an ever-increasing amount of mix-ready work by students requiring completion, the guys drafted in the experts at Universal Acoustics to come and solve the problem.

What at first seemed like the impossible was just a few hours work and the cost well within the studio's modest (read tiny) budget.

So what do Universal Acoustics do? "Universal Acoustics are a UK company who design and manufacture a high quality acoustics materials for the professional and home recording markets," explained Paul Eastwood of UA. "We offer a wide range of room treatment kits so

© Gavin Roberts

THE STUDIO BEFORE

The Percy Street studio in construction. What started out as a rubbish-filled basement would soon be a fully featured recording studio



sorting out a room of this type and shape will be a breeze."

Modern room treatment kits, of the type that UA offer, are a quick and easy fix to most studio problems, consisting of wall or ceiling tiles and triangular corner tiles that act as bass traps. "Our kits vary in cost according to the room size and budget, although the kits can be enhanced at any time by simply ordering extra tiles," says Paul.

"The Solar system room kits we offer start from just £150."

Acoustic solutions

So what did Paul reckon to the Percy Studio set up? "The two most common problems we encounter are rooms with bare untreated walls. That's a big no-no right there. And when combined with a ceiling that suffers from reverberation, you'll get low frequency build up, especially in corners. Without treatment, you just can't trust your bass," he says.

"The Percy Centre was typical of an untreated room that had good potential. All it needed was the exposed hard surfaces to be taken care of. Tiles can take care of the reflection issues within the room and fortunately the interior structure of walls had been correctly lined with a dense mineral fibre material before the plasterboard outer skin had been applied. By doing this, they'd sorted any serious sound leakage issues before we were called in."

"It's important that people realise the difference between sound proofing and sound treatment. Just sticking a few acoustic tiles on the wall will not address serious noise transmission between adjacent walls, ceilings and spaces.

"The degree of improvement is subject to the percentage of coverage applied. In most cases, we recommend that a room has 25% minimum coverage but this can vary subject to the overall character of sound the customer requires," says Paul.

Tile away

Having seen both rooms with a pair of tiles haphazardly placed left and right of the desk and room lined from floor to ceiling with acoustic panels that suck out all the life from the room, we can testify that both extremes are equally problematic. Mix in either scenario and you're making a mix that going to sound

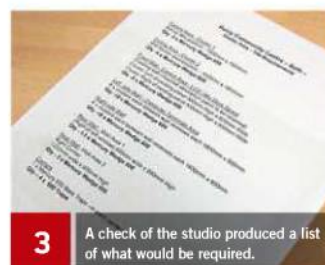
Step By Step... How to fit acoustic panels



1 The original studio: Looks a bit like a garage. And sounds a lot like one too.



2 The tiles arrive. A pile of packages this size was enough for the job.



3 A check of the studio produced a list of what would be required.



4 The tiles themselves slot together for ease of transport then pop apart.



5 Before he got started, Paul of Universal Acoustics (left) carefully measured out the room to find the centre of the listening position. This would inform the placement of all the other tiles.



6 Paul, Dan (centre) and Paul 2 (right) try the tiles for size and position.



7 UA's own 'Space Mist' adhesive proved ideal to mount their tiles.



8 The wide nozzle means tiles get the correct amount with a few sweeps.



9 A spirit level proved an ideal way to press the tiles into place.



10 Once your first tile is in place, its neighbours' position looks after itself.



11 Obstructions can be avoided by cutting tiles with a bread knife.



12 Likewise the panels can be quickly trimmed with a Stanley knife.



13 Two bass trap corner pieces settled in position.



14 Paul gets creative, opting for a diamond pattern on the sidewalls.



15 The room nears completion with ceiling, corners and front tiles ready.



16 The finished product! Now, anyone need any tiling doing?



SONTRONICS
BRITISH DESIGN • WORLD CLASS

Introducing...



All our mics are covered by our
SONTRONICS LIFETIME WARRANTY

SATURN

Multi-pattern condenser mic

5 polar patterns: omni, sub-cardioid, cardioid, hypercardioid & figure-of-eight
Two-stage filter (75/125Hz) and two-stage pad (-10/-20dB)
Comes with unique shockmount in aluminium flightcase

Also NEW for 2010...



STC-2X
Omni & cardioid
condenser mic



STC-20
Large-diaphragm
condenser mic



STC-10
Cardioid instrument
condenser mic



Distributors for UK & Eire
tel: 01837 55200

www.timespace.com/Sontronics

dramatically different when you play it anywhere else. Remember that you want to deaden, excessive, ringing higher frequencies not eliminate them all together.

Likewise you want real, natural sounding bass that's neither cut nor boosted by the room itself.

The architect

So what materials did Paul go for for the Percy problem? "When it comes to commercial buildings or public spaces such as the Percy Centre, we go for our Architectural range which is cut from a material known as Basotect, a lightweight but extremely effective melamine-based acoustic material. It meets the highest fire ratings currently available and is officially recognised and approved for use in a public spaces."

So, where's the best place to put them? "We were potentially restricted by the computer workstations to the left and right of the studio, luckily these were at a height where the tiles could be fitted above them, in diamond-shaped clusters along each resulting in the correct amount of wall coverage," explains Paul. "We also placed twin bass traps in each corner as we noticed a pronounced build in the corners during our pre-install visit. We installed some tile clusters on the front wall in front of the engineers mixing position to take care of the reflections from the studio monitors. Plus we fit some tile clusters to the front and rear ceiling areas to further smooth out the room, which takes the harshness away."

Et voila!

And after a few hours of measuring and sticking we're pleased to say the treatment worked like a charm. Tests the following day by Producer/Engineer Jason Spencer proved that the new room sounded clean, sweet and consistent wherever the listener is positioned. "In a word: better," says Jason. Mission accomplished.

So what should our readers do if they wanted to give their home studio 'the full treatment'? "We're happy to provide an verbal or online consultation completely free of charge," says Paul. Check out their range at universal-acoustics.com **FM**

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Give UA a ring at +44 (0)845 555 1123 or head to universal-acoustics.com and UK distributor scvlondon.co.uk for more

You Know You've Got Problems When:

The clap test

You clap your hands and there's an unpleasant high frequency 'ringing' to the sound. This is a dense wave of fast reflections that'll make mixing your top end practically impossible. Can't get your hats and hits sounding crisp? This could be why.

The chair test

Sit in your usual listening position and tweak your bass until it's just how you want it. Now move backwards away from your speakers. Does the bass

change? Does your track get warmer and deeper? If so then you're witnessing the curious effect of reflected lower frequencies gathering in corners and back of your room. If your mixes are lacking in bass when played elsewhere then you're mixing in an artificially bass-boosted bubble – unbeknown to you you're cutting lower frequencies to counter the problems caused by your room. Likewise if your mixes sound too bass heavy when played on

other systems then your listening position isn't accurately relaying the amount of bass in your tracks. The result is that you're pushing the low end too far in order to return the bass your room is sucking out.

The solution?

Cut high frequency reflections and stop bass build up with some acoustic treatment! Go for a pro solution or check out our simple quick and easy fixes elsewhere in this feature.



Alternatively... Quick and Easy Acoustic Fixes

Vocal solutions

If your only 'live' instrument is your vocal then a simple fix is a reflection filter, of the type made famous by sE microphones. Their sE Reflexion Pro is a curved shield that fits around your mic. Place it on a stand, put a tile (or



curtain, or something soft) behind you and sing as normal. The Reflexion prevents the sound of your room hitting the mic and the result is a pro, 'vocal booth' sound.

And if you're in need of a mic too then their recent X1 bundle will give you their new X1 vocal mic and a Project Studio Reflexion panel for just £199. seelectronics.com

Get soft

Studio tiles look great, can be fully fire retardant (such as the

ones used at the Percy Centre) and cost less than you think, but if you're really on a budget you can fix your problems for free. Hanging generous, billowing curtains across your flat surfaces will help stop reflections in their tracks.

Similarly, a trio of mattresses lashed together for an impromptu vocal booth, or bass traps. And the time-honoured method of placing a sofa against your back wall is ideal to stop bass coming back to haunt you.



SE USERS
INCLUDE;

GIL NORTON

FOO FIGHTERS, PIXIES, GOMEZ

TONY PLATT

BOB MARLEY, AC/DC, THIN LIZZY

STEVIE WONDER

SVEN LENS

SNOOP DOG, WILLIE NELSON

TROY VAN LEEUWEN

GOT9, A PERFECT CIRCLE, SWEETHEAD

ADRIAN BUSHBY

U2, FOO FIGHTERS, NEW ORDER

JACKNIFE LEE

REM, SNOW PATROL, GREEN DAY

DOM MORLEY

AMY WINEHOUSE, MARK RONSON

ENDA WALSH

U2, SHANE MACGOWAN, CORRS

DON WAS

BOB DYLAN, THE ROLLING STONES

JOHN MERCHANT

BEE GEES, BARBRA STREISAND

CHRIS PORTER

PET SHOP BOYS, TINA TURNER

BT - BRIAN TRANSEAU

BT, DAVID BOWIE, TORI AMOS

BRENDAN BENSON

RACONTEURS, BRENDAN BENSON

PAUL BARRETT

QUINCY JONES, U2, FRANK SINATRA

GUY CHAMBERS

ROBBIE WILLIAMS, JAMES BLUNT

GEOFF DUGMORE

JEFF BECK, JAMES BLUNT

ROGER LYONS

NEW ORDER, BEE GEES, OLIVE

STEVE LEVINE

THE BEACH BOYS, THE CREATURES

PAUL HERMAN

FAITHLESS, NATASHA BEECHFIELD

ALAN BRANCH

BLUR, PRIMAL SCREAM, U2

STUART CRICHTON

PET SHOP BOYS, SONO, KYLIE MINOGUE

PAUL MERTENS

BEACH BOYS, PET SOUNDS, STEREO LAB

NICK FRANGLIN

LEMONJELLY, PRIMAL SCREAM, JOHN CALE

ROB HARRIS

JAMIROQUAI, KYLIE MINOGUE

JAMES MURPHY

LCD SOUND SYSTEM

ALAIN JOHANNES

ELEVEN, GOT9, SPINNERETTE

ERIC VALENTINE

ALL AMERICAN REJECTS, GOT9

JAMIE CULLUM

GRAHAM PATTISON

SPIRITUALIZED, KULA SHAKER, GOMEZ

COURTNEY PINE

THERE ARE NO
COINCIDENCES

Black Magic

NOT JUST A KILLER VOCAL MIC



'The sE4400a is a beautiful microphone. I've tried it on nearly everything I can with stunning results. It will be a classic and will be used by me for a long time to come.'

JACKNIFE LEE

REM, U2, Green Day,
Snow Patrol, Bloc Party,
The Hives, The Editors

'I have used the sE4400a on acoustic guitar, electric guitar, bass, percussion. It is a true all-rounder. I can see the sE4400a becoming a requirement for all good mic cupboards.'

TONY PLATT

Bob Marley, Thin Lizzy,
AC/DC, The Stranglers,
Motorhead, Buddy Guy

sE4400a - Actual Size

- 4 Polar Patterns - Cardioid, Figure 8, Hypercardioid, Omni
- 4 Pads and Cuts - Pads: -10db, -20db, - Cuts: 60Hz, 120Hz
- Matched Stereo Pair - Available as a Factory Matched Stereo Pair



Patent Pending

THE Reflexion Filter

The sE Reflexion Filter is the only one used by professionals including Gil Norton, Dom Morley, Don Was, Chris Porter and Tony Platt ...
FIND OUT WHY

'T' is for 'TUBE'

Introducing the **sE2200T**
The multi-award winning sE2200a is now available with a Tube.



FIND OUT MORE

0845.500.2.500
www.sonic-distribution.com

SONIC



Sound Engineering
www.seelectronics.com





Armed with a healthy obsession for analogue synths and Depeche Mode, Jake Williams created Rex The Dog. With a handful of acclaimed remixes and originals at his tail **Chris Barker** steps into the animated world of one illusive man and his dog...

The early career of Jake Williams aka Rex The Dog, features him thrust into the glare as JX, a Pop-House-Rave crossover act which produced the 90s hits, *Son Of A Gun*, *You Belong To Me* and the huge-selling *There's Nothing I Won't Do*.

But while one successful career is enough for most, this was Jake's apprenticeship in music.

After JX ran its course, Williams fell back in love with Depeche Mode's debut and early analogue sound. It was the playtime sessions with

a new synth that spawned what was to become the first ever Rex The Dog track, *Prototype*. Soon enough, this track was signed to the ultra-cool Cologne-based label Kompakt and quickly became one of their most successful records. Lightning strikes twice.

We first featured the elusive Rex The Dog back in 2006 and – since Williams doesn't do photos or press – have been trying to find a way of getting into his studio ever since. Fortunately Williams is a fan of *FM* and brilliantly agreed to show us the synths behind his sound and his home studio in his famous self-portrait Rex guise.

FM: How did JX come about considering your love for Synth Pop? Were you into the more Ravey Dance stuff too?

Jake Williams: "I was very, very young when I was doing JX. I mean, initially I was into the Vince Clark Depeche Mode stuff musically, but I also got really into Adamski and eventually went to see Adamski play in Brighton. I was probably a bit young and too much of a mommy's boy to be going to actual raves and I thought that Techno and Dance music were a bit boring really.

"But, at the Adamski gig there was a DJ playing and it was the first time I heard Dance music on a big system. Hearing the amplified sound of electronics was really powerful. I still get that same buzz from hearing a sequencer line and a driving kick drum amplified over a big system. I was writing songs back then using a Roland W30 and working with a friend who was a singer, but after hearing the club music I think I probably started trying to make things a bit more Techno and a bit less song-orientated.

"At first, I suppose my heart wasn't really into the music because it didn't have any melodies or hooks. Then I heard Glam's *Hell's Party* [later used by the Urban Cookie Collective for *The Key The Secret*] and it was the first time I started to hear Dance music that I really liked. So I started beginning to make tracks that eventually became JX and I made *Son Of A Gun*, sent some tapes off before getting signed up to Hooj Choons."

What was that like? Did you have plans or ambitions to become a producer or musician?

"No I was at art school and funnily enough I sold many more records when I was at art school than I ever did as a full time, professional producer!"

"But I guess you don't really sell records anymore anyway..."

And then JX came to an end...

"Yeah, the hits dried up. [laughs]"

So when you created Rex, it must have felt really refreshing to make music in a new style rather than the expected JX sound...

"Well JX was me sort of stumbling into the sunshine and finding this genre of Pop Dance that

I could really get into. But, Rex definitely feels much more comfortable and versatile than JX."

Is that because, with JX, you felt like you had to make a hit?

"Yeah, totally. My initial goal with JX was just to get it on vinyl or get it played in a club. So it was really strange, because my whole context changed after making this record in a really relaxed spirit, to being expected to deliver more hits."

"It wasn't so much the label pressure though, it was just me. I really wanted to deliver another success, but it's really difficult to do that over and over again."

Do you still get royalty cheques from JX?

"Yeah, it's funny because it still exists and gets played here and there. I'll get texts from my mates telling me that a radio station or DJ is playing my record and then I find out it's JX and not Rex The Dog [laughs]."

How did you start with Rex?

"Rex was sort of born completely overnight as a concept. I mean, I've always been drawing and, as you know, Rex is a real dog, but it began with me becoming obsessed with Depeche Mode's *Speak & Spell* again and reading that Daniel Miller had bought a miniKorg 700s as his first synth."

"So I convinced myself that if I could find this synth then I'd be able to sound like early Depeche Mode. As it turns out, they didn't really use that synth much on that album, and it sat in my studio for a few months neglected."

"Then I started fiddling with it one day and found the repeat button and just thought it was brilliant. The tempo was dictated by the repeat rate at 117BPM or something and then I just put a kick and a snare underneath it and I thought it sounded pretty cool. After that, I recorded the lead line over the top also using the 700s. It all came together in an evening and I thought that I just needed to put the finishing touches on in the morning."

"It was funny because the guy I shared the studio with heard it and said, 'What's that in aid of then?' which I still tease him about!"

But it was one of the first tracks you'd made that wasn't in aid of anything...

"Yeah, I thought I'd made a slightly retro curiosity and the purpose of the track was just me falling in love the miniKorg 700s as it just gave me these amazing sounds."

And this was the track that eventually became your debut *Prototype*?

"Yeah, and I sent a CD with it on to Kompakt, because I'd been buying a lot of records from that label. I'd been going to Nag Nag Nag in London a lot and really enjoying the stuff that JoJo de Freq was playing. So I'd go in to record shops and ask them to show me the stuff that is like what JoJo de Freq plays and lots of it seemed to be on Kompakt who seemed to have a really good, don't-give-a-fuck attitude that I liked."

"I didn't think I'd hear from them and then about two months later they said they were really into the track and I needed to create a b-side for the release. So I made *We Live In Daddy's Car* also just using the Korg 700s which was, again, a really nice discipline, sticking to one synth to do a track. Kompakt told me that when they heard the track they couldn't really agree with themselves for liking it and my track just sat on this pile because maybe they felt a bit guilty about the track."

"In the end though, it sold really well for them

I convinced myself that if I bought this synth, I'd be able to sound like the early Depeche Mode record I had become obsessed with



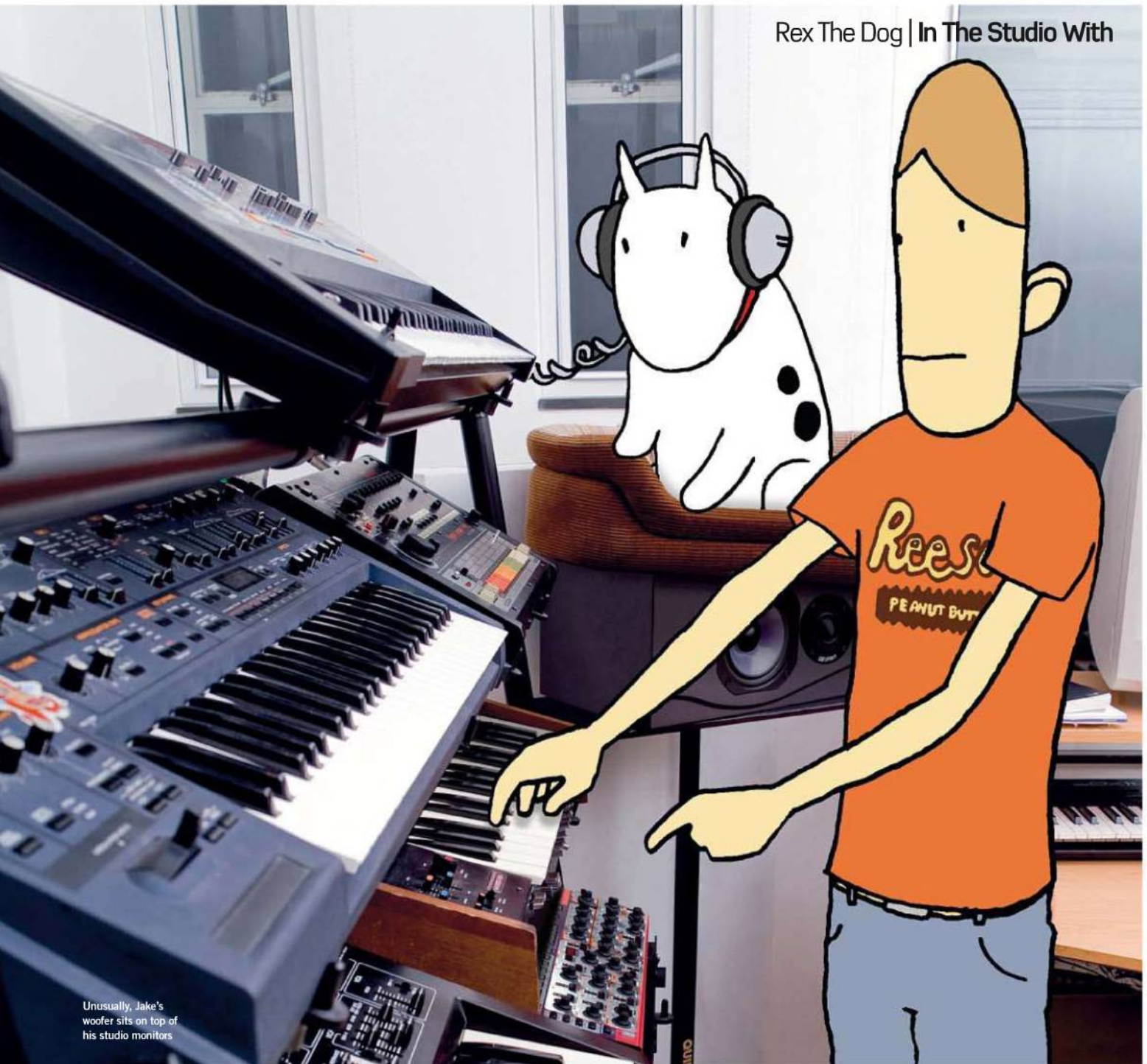
Rex Club

"When I DJ I'll play a mixture of my own tracks and tracks I like depending on the gig and the people there. I use the older Evolution UC-33 which I have set up to control Ableton Live after initially using the other Evolution X-Session as a strict DJ controller only using two channels in Ableton. I replaced it with the

UC-33e because I wanted to have more flexibility and more channels and was getting frustrated with not being able to add extra clips. I've just replaced it with a new one, and it still works fine for everything I need it for. I have it set up so that rotating some of the top rotaries launches clips that have drum fills

and cuts, then there's effects and filters and phasers. I still use the mouse to launch clips because I have so many clips loaded into Live but it works fine. I have no desire to start clips by pushing glowing buttons! It doesn't really make sense for the way I work and I see the UC-33e as a tool and nothing more."





Unusually, Jake's
woofer sits on top of
his studio monitors

Rex The Dog's Guide to: Recalling Your Analogue Presets

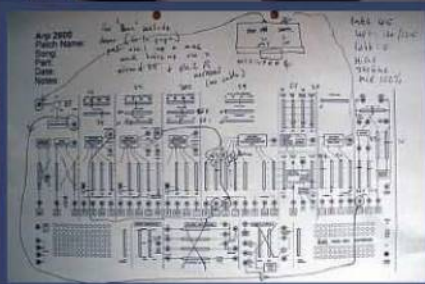
1



Analogue Anomalies

"It's notoriously difficult to create the same sound twice on old synths like the ARP2600. Even the slightest variation can mean the sound is nothing like the one you had before. That creates problems if you're going to do lots of tweaks because once you've recorded just one take into audio, you've lost the original sound!"

2



Printed Presets

"The best way to 'save' a sound is to print up some patch sheets of the front panel and mark your settings on it, but the ARP makes this very hard to do, because it only shows really vague increments. Even a careful pencil mark on the sheet of where a slider is doesn't record things precisely enough and the sound is never the same."

3



Synth Stickers

"I got round this by being kind of OCD and printing up super-precise labels and sticking them under each slider, so now I can write down each setting exactly and recall it really precisely. When my old studio partner saw me sticking all these tiny labels on, I think he thought that I'd finally gone mental!"

and was one of their biggest selling tracks at the time I think, but it probably isn't anymore."

So you're suddenly back in the thick of the music business again...

"Yeah, but it was in a different way. There was again the personal pressure of delivering more tracks that would be as good as *Prototype*. I guess that's partly why the album wasn't finished for another four years. I did a lot of remixes though, for the Prodigy and some other really cool acts."

On one hand you're a gear freak and always really keen to find out about new kit but you're working in quite a retro fashion.

"Yeah, but I don't trust OS X yet with MIDI timing and most people who I've spoken to have had nightmares with it. I'm a believer in imposing certain limits because I already feel like I have too many options in the studio. With synths, I try to operate a strict one-in, one-out policy, if I can."

So what's the next synth out?

"Well, maybe the Sequential Circuits Pro One. It's an amazing synth but I just think that mine is a bit broken or something. It's so unstable and hard to get a sound twice on it. It's been repaired a few times but it's still not right."

"I've been looking at the newer Dave Smith Prophet '08 but I haven't had chance to actually try one, because there aren't that many music shops anymore to go in and play things."

Are you into the more boutique-style analogue synths then?

"Yeah, well I mean I bought the MFB Synth II and it sort of put me off because it's so soulless. I keep seeing it and thinking I should try it again, but I've never got anything with personality out of it."

Are you sampling much?

"It's a mixture really, because I'll occasionally sample drum hits and bits, but I'll get very dogma about things and decide to only use the 909."

"I do sample from records: kicks, hits, claps and that kind of thing. I'll take every tiny hit and build it up in the EXS in Logic."

You must have some massive sample libraries for your EXS.

"Well, 'libraries' probably makes it sound more organised than it actually is [laughs]."

What are your remix methods?

"Everything gets put into the computer as soon as possible. I try not to keep stuff in MIDI for too long. Generally, I'll import all the remix parts that I've been sent and try and line them up so I can see how the original track works."

"And it helps that 95% of the time I'm doing remixes of tracks I really love."

"I think my skill set means that I much prefer working with a song and give it a completely new scaffold. I find it a really interesting and really rewarding to work with a song you like in this way."



Roland JP-8000

"Eek! I haven't used this on any Rex music at all. It's quite a Trancey machine so it's slowly heading towards eBay I think."

Roland SH-1

"This played the bassline on our *The Knife Heartbeats* remix – if you tweak the envelope while it's controlling the PWM, it sounds super twitchy."

SCI Pro One

"A great synth, but not very well built, and there's something wrong with this one – it spends more time in repair than in use."

Roland TB-303

"Had this since early JX, so it's on *You Belong To Me*, but also on *Frequency*. I love it, who doesn't?"

Moog Prodigy

"This makes the best 'sync'd' oscillator sound. It plays the melodies on *Italian Blond*, and also the screeching bass on our *Fever Ray* remix."

Roland Juno-106

"[laughs] This still has the riff sound from *JX Son Of A Gun* in it. Patch A88. It's a pretty versatile synth this, but the chorus circuit is so noisy it's almost funny."

Roland TR-808

"I only got this quite recently. It's beautiful, and booms like a bastard. My lame speakers can't really handle all the bass."

Roland TR-909

"I have had this for ages too, it was dead cheap, surprisingly. It sounds so clean and pure, I love it. *Italian Blond* is 100% TR-909."



ON THE DVD: Production Insight

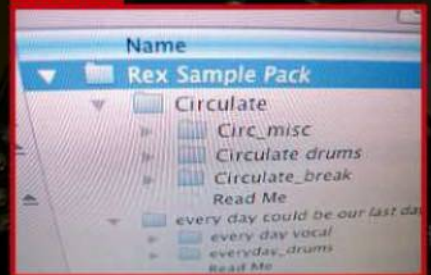
VIDEO



Building A Track

FM had the opportunity to be a fly on the wall this month, for this unusual studio visit. Rex and Jake show you how they build a track from scratch, starting with synth drums, layering basslines and utilising audio edits to create the classic Rex sound.

SAMPLES



Rex Files

This month, *FM* provide you with exclusive sample content with stems and hits taken directly from Rex's album *The Rex The Dog Show*, including *Circulate*, *Everyday Could Be Our Last Day*, *Frequency*, *Homing Pigeon*, *Prototype* and *Sequencer*. Rexcellent!

What are your personal favourite remixes you've done so far?

"I'm quite superstitious about blowing my own trumpet but I think I've done quite a few good ones. The remix of *Heartbeats* for The Knife was a really unself-conscious remix, where I was just concerned with it getting accepted. Other remixes such as The Sounds *Tony The Beat* I asked them if I could remix it because it was such a great track.

"I almost had to ask their permission and make sure they knew that I was just going to give them their original track back with synths instead of guitars. I just finished a remix for a Swedish band called Sound of Arrows that I think is sounding really good too."

Where do you see Rex going next? Is it hard to now go back and create music in the same free way you did when you started Rex?

"The idea that it's hard to just play around once people start liking your music is definitely a personal thing and I'm sure that it doesn't come to into mind for other producers.

"For me when somebody likes a record I've made, I just can't get it out of my head. That means that when I'm making the next one I'm thinking about someone liking the last one... And that can be a problem. You just have to wrangle with yourself and get a grip I guess, but it definitely makes me a much slower producer when it comes to actually finishing tracks.

"The sound of Rex changed a lot from *Prototype* to when the album was complete. I think the more personal you get with the music, the easier it becomes to experiment and get away from the pressures of making songs."

It must be a benefit to be financially sorted too, because although success brings the pressure to succeed again, it can bring a financial freedom...

"Well, there isn't any money in making records anymore really..."



The Keys That Please... miniKorg 700s

Released in 1974 this dual oscillator version of the miniKorg 700 is a bizarrely designed beast with much of its quirkily-named controls (traveller, expand and bender) placed beneath the keyboard. The traveller control is important for the Rex The Dog sound – a combination of high-pass and low-pass filter – you can hear it working hard on

Rex's debut *Prototype*. "I've always been obsessed with the Depeche Mode album *Speak & Spell*", explains Williams, which was co-produced by Daniel Miller. "I've since chatted to Daniel about it, and he told me it wasn't really used on that album! But he did make *Warm Leatherette* by The Normal just using the Korg. You can tell as soon

as you hear it, it has that distinctive 'waaaaarp' sound that I kind of ripped off on *Prototype*. *Prototype* was sort of a dogma exercise in that it only used sounds from the Korg without any MIDI. The dogma purism is a bit let down on *Prototype* by the fact that the kick drum and clap are samples. Not every synth can make a good kick drum!"

If you had a camera on the wall and a team of analysts watching me they'd be asking each other 'What the fuck is he doing?'

No, but what I mean is that your success with JX and Rex has meant that you can literally afford to be a slow producer.

"Yeah, that's a very astute observation. The point is that wanting to make another hit isn't the mindset that is productive for me and wanting to have a successful record for me isn't about making money. Even with JX it wasn't.

"I just wanted to recreate the success, keep something going and to not seem to have failed."

Is that mentality still important with Rex?

"It's much less important now with Rex because it's not the same level as JX and I'm much more free

now to do what I want. It's nice not to be near the charts and have any sort of label pressures because the stakes aren't as high."

So, you don't want any chart success with Rex?

"I'm not concerned about it, but if it happens, it happens. There was the possibility that *Bubblicious* might have got some Radio 1 play. But it was never a big deal for me and I never really thought about it.

"Daytime Radio 1 airplay is something I haven't been involved with for years and it's extremely nice not to worry about whether Radio 1 put you on the A, B or C playlists."

That's a comfortable place to be. But where do you go from that point?

"I want to make a whole load of new types of music and explore other scenes and things. I think the way forward is to keep looking for new

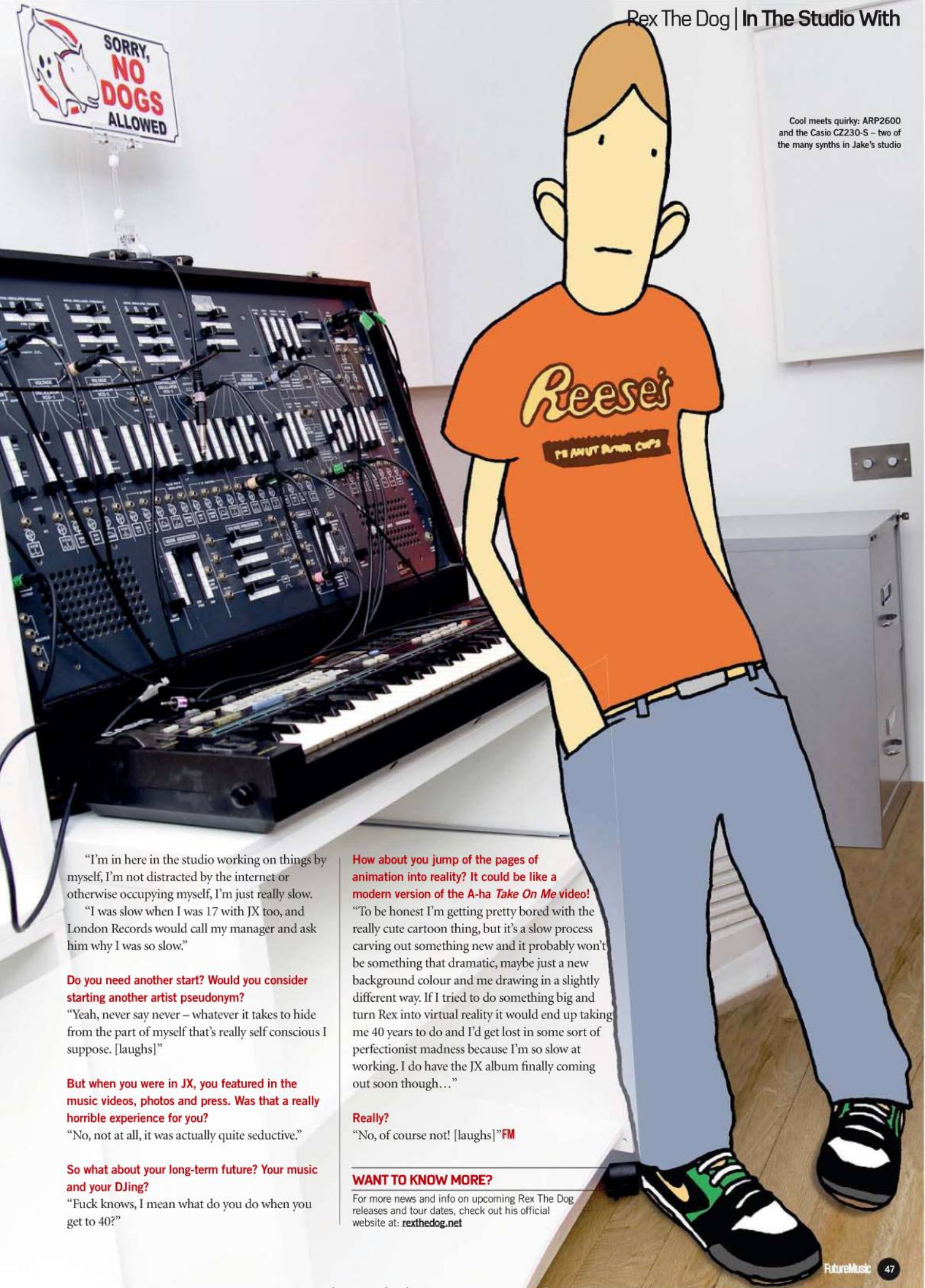
surprises and try new techniques to make music without thinking about it too much.

"The whole idea of 'being successful' is so counter productive, what's the point? To stay in that zone where music is the goal and success itself is never a specific goal is...er, a good goal!"

So this is why you're so content now?

"Not at all! I wouldn't say that I'm content in the slightest! I'm actually really frustrated in how slow I am at doing things in the studio. If you had a camera on the wall, and a team of analysts watching me, they'd be asking each other, 'What the fuck is he doing?'"

Cool meets quirky: ARP2600 and the Casio CZ230-S – two of the many synths in Jake's studio



"I'm in here in the studio working on things by myself, I'm not distracted by the internet or otherwise occupying myself, I'm just really slow."

"I was slow when I was 17 with JX too, and London Records would call my manager and ask him why I was so slow."

Do you need another start? Would you consider starting another artist pseudonym?

"Yeah, never say never – whatever it takes to hide from the part of myself that's really self conscious I suppose. [laughs]"

But when you were in JX, you featured in the music videos, photos and press. Was that a really horrible experience for you?

"No, not at all, it was actually quite seductive."

So what about your long-term future? Your music and your DJing?

"Fuck knows, I mean what do you do when you get to 40?"

How about you jump of the pages of animation into reality? It could be like a modern version of the A-ha *Take On Me* video!

"To be honest I'm getting pretty bored with the really cute cartoon thing, but it's a slow process carving out something new and it probably won't be something that dramatic, maybe just a new background colour and me drawing in a slightly different way. If I tried to do something big and turn Rex into virtual reality it would end up taking me 40 years to do and I'd get lost in some sort of perfectionist madness because I'm so slow at working. I do have the JX album finally coming out soon though..."

Really?

"No, of course not! [laughs]" **FM**

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more news and info on upcoming Rex The Dog releases and tour dates, check out his official website at: rexthedog.net

LOGIC ESSENTIALS



Learning MainStage 2 in Logic Studio

So, you're a Logic user who thinks MainStage has nothing to offer, huh? Well, you're missing out. As a generator of sounds, a place to bounce ideas around and as a performance tool, MainStage has got it nailed. **Jono Buchanan** introduces you...

MainStage has attracted a devoted following among live-based Logic users who, before its release, had to content themselves with setting up sounds on successive Logic channels and

awkwardly prodding 'up and down' from one to the next.

I regularly come across Logic users who've barely explored MainStage but as it's a program which offers substantially more than just the ability to play Logic's library of

sounds, I thought it high time I encouraged more of you to check it out.

THE EXPERT

Jono Buchanan
composer,
producer



Jono Buchanan spends far too much of his life fiddling with technology to get it to do cool stuff for his writing and production work. Logic Studio is his faithful toolkit.

In the main

Firstly, let's talk structure. A 'performance' in MainStage is called a Concert, which contains a series of patches organised ready for live performance. Each patch consists of either a software instrument channel or an audio one, meaning that any of Logic's synths and instrument plug-ins, or your AU ones, can be used as live instruments, as well as audio inputs from microphones, guitars or hardware synths.

Each of these patches is organised into a Logic-style channel strip, so it can pass through any combination of insert effects you like (again, third-party plug-ins included) and auxiliary busses can be used too, to add 'global' effects such as a reverb and delay, as well as MainStage dedicated effects like LoopBack, of which more shortly. When you first open MainStage, you'll be encouraged to open a Concert in a category appropriate to your needs, so there



Create your own signal chain in MainStage with a friendly GUI

Layouts

In the top left-hand corner of MainStage, you'll find four tabs entitled Layout, Edit, Perform and Full Screen. Layout Mode is the one you'll need to build a patch set up from scratch but before trying this, it's worth loading an existing patch and looking at how the Layout page works. The moment you click the Layout button, the specific tags assigned to the faders, dials and buttons within your patch disappear to show you the 'skins' of what these controls are, with the Screen Controls Palette open at the bottom, beneath the main GUI.

From this palette you can drag and drop the control icons you want into the main area and as soon as you have and you click on one, the left-hand side of MainStage becomes a Screen Controls Inspector, where routings can be assigned. Click on any knob or dial and you'll see which input device is controlling it (useful if you have more than one), which channel is controlling it, which fader number it is and so on.

You can also choose its colour or change the type of controller it is, as well as apply text so that when you snap back into Edit mode, the values you've selected are labeled. Don't be put off by the fact that the Patch List in the main area is labeled with seemingly endless 'Patch Name's – remember, this is just

the Layout page to show you where and how each area of the screen will be labeled once you get back to playing. So, once you've had a look at a regular patch to learn a few assignments, close the Concert and load the Drum Kit with pad triggers template.

In the main area, you'll now be faced with a 4x4 block of drum pads with a neat

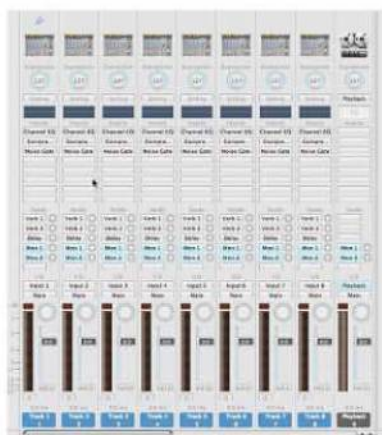
background square around them, with a separate panel on the left with dials and switches for Ultrabeat and some effects controls. Again, click on the Layout button and click one of the pads. You'll see the channel and note assignment on the left, so you now know how to set each pad to the key of your choice. Now click on the background around the pads.

Here, you can see that the panelled background is available via one of the options in the Screen Controls Palette below but, of course, it doesn't need routing information as it's not going to play a 'musical' role.

By clicking this, you have the option to leave this panel blank or to load any image as a background. By now, hopefully you're becoming familiar with

the structure for assigning dials and switches. In Layout mode, grab the items you need as controllers and assign specific parameters such as MIDI channels and note numbers.

In Edit mode you can assign more global parameters to controllers, simply by clicking the relevant controller and then choosing a named parameter below the main screen.



MainStage features its own set of channel strips

are templates for keyboard players, guitarists and so on. Click one and a Concert of some complexity will open as a template. You'll find it says 'Untitled Concert' in the top left-hand corner and below that, a series of patches will be on

offer which match the 'vibe' of that Concert. The central area of the screen is dominated by the workspace, which will either feature a keyboard and accompanying set of controls, drum pads or perhaps a series of guitar stomp-boxes from PedalBoard,

'listening' without needing to be armed. With that in mind, many of the Concerts with audio inputs require you to adjust the master output before they'll work – a neat muting trick to avoid feedback.

MainStage can easily assign controllers to the parameters of your choice

depending on which Concert type you've chosen. The channel strips for the Concert appear on the right and you'll notice for audio channels that Logic's 'R' record enable light is absent – these inputs are

Destination assignment

What MainStage does particularly well is let you easily assign controllers to the parameters of your choice, so that these can be changed or tweaked, per patch, as you play. To do this, you'll need to 'look behind' one of the existing patches to see

how it's configured, which in turn means enabling the Patch Inspector.

This should be open by default and appears in the area underneath the main workspace but if it's off, either click on

Jamie Lidell is a master of the live loop, building whole tracks around his jams



Loop the Loop

MainStage's Loopback gets to work

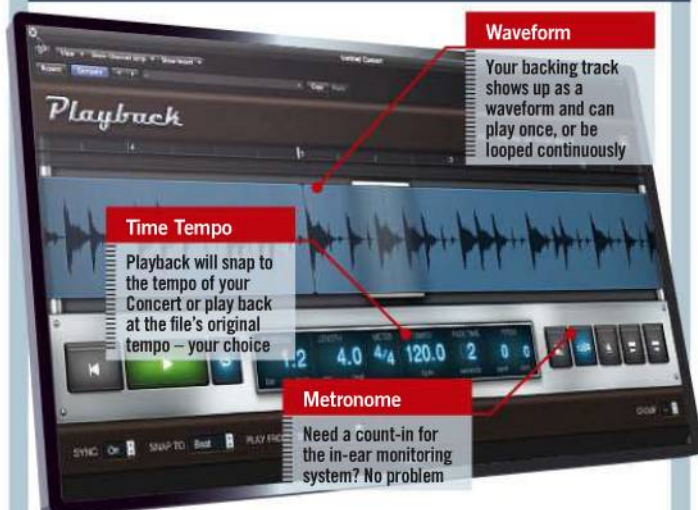
As performance tools go, MainStage's Loopback could be 'the one' you've been looking for. This acts in the same manner as the Lexicon JamMan, in that you can record a passage of audio and then instantly hear that recording back as a loop before adding additional layers on top. In this way you can easily create multi-layered, looped performances on the fly – great as an ideas tool in the studio but even more impressive onstage. If you're unfamiliar with his work, check out Jamie Lidell, who uses

lots of techniques like this in his recorded and live work, or listen to the multi-layered vocal performances on Imogen Heap's most recent album – techniques like this can be perfected in Loopback very easily.

Again, operation is easy as pie, as there's a 'Single Amp and Looper' preset in the 'Guitar Rig' templates. Fire this up and Loopback's on bus 1 – double click it, hit record and sing or play your first pass, then keep stacking up your performances as the loop comes round.



Playback



One of MainStage's dedicated modules is Playback, which can be assigned to a new Software Instrument channel strip and whose job it is to provide playback of an audio file, such as a backing track. Once set up, you can load any audio file, which shows up as a waveform. Playback has some great tricks up its sleeve, such as its ability to playback either 'normally' or at the tempo of your Concert, meaning that you could even use it to mix in a track while DJing.

Otherwise, it can also play once or loop, fade out over a duration of your choosing, or only start after a bar's count-in, which is useful if you're using it alongside a live vocal performance which starts 'at the top' of the track. If this is what you need, you can easily set up a live audio track with your channel strip of choice including EQ to suit the venue, compression and effects. The fade option is flexible, in that you can either pre-select a fade for the end of

playback, or punch the 'fade out' button at any stage to trigger the fade out early, if necessary.

You can also set the start time to either play at the top each time, or from a specific position, so if you've set up a 'medley' backing track, for instance, and want to reprise your set with just a specific section of that backing, you can jump to it and play from there.

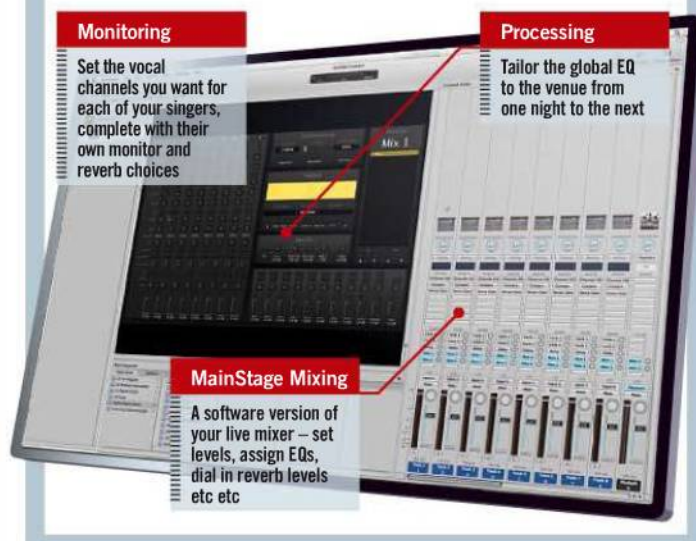
There's something here for everyone from DJs to karaoke organisers, so Playback is well worth a few minutes of exploration.

Build What You Like

The biggest preconception about MainStage is that it's just a way to play back Logic's instruments onstage, but as I hope this introduction has shown, it's capacity to do that is the tip of the iceberg. The key to MainStage's success is that it's a kind of modular system – so long as you know how to build the controllers you want, this program can do lots of things. For instance, you'll find a template which is a virtual mixer, complete with eight channels of

audio input, so if you're a sound engineer doing sound for a group of vocalists, you could plug each microphone into your audio interface and let MainStage do the rest – tailor EQ and compression for each of your singers, set both PA and monitor reverbs and even run Playback with the backing tracks for the gig. You needn't stop there either – if the singing group is accompanied by a keyboard player, you can feed her the sounds she needs from one track to the next by having a

group of patches ready for each song. As the controls you need can be easily assigned to dials and faders, you don't even need to have your mouse at the ready to tweak plug-ins – just assign your hardware controller and run the whole show from that. So, here's a performance and control instrument ready to turn your studio productions into live masterpieces and as the music industry becomes increasingly live-centric, you might find this program packs a more than useful feature set.



Monitoring

Set the vocal channels you want for each of your singers, complete with their own monitor and reverb choices

Processing

Tailor the global EQ to the venue from one night to the next

MainStage Mixing

A software version of your live mixer – set levels, assign EQs, dial in reverb levels etc etc

'View – Inspectors', or type Apple-5, its shortcut. Once this is open, click on one of the dials assigned to any parameter within the workspace, so that it highlights. You'll find three tabs for editing – Attributes, which includes the name and colour of the dial – Mappings, which shows the path between the dial and the parameter it controls and finally, the name of the parameter itself. Click this final tab and you can browse through a list of alternatives, as you can select any alternative parameter within whichever plug-in you're playing, as well as global settings such as volume, pan



MainStage's customisable GUI makes it a very attractive alternative to Ableton Live



ON THE DVD

Explore the MainStage Concerts talked about in this tutorial on the DVD.

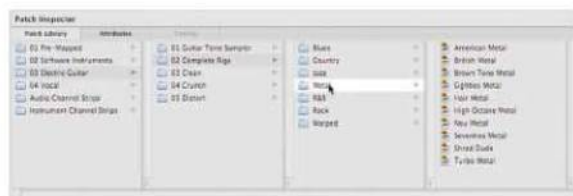
or buss send levels. Selecting an alternative will change the routing but won't change the slider or dial's 'name', though you can fix this in the Attributes tab.

Multiple patches

If you're preparing a Concert for live use, I find the easiest way to create a series of the patches I want is to copy the currently selected patch (Edit-Copy) and then paste it. This second patch will start life as being identical to the first one but it's a simple job to select a different preset or to create a new sound for the copy, make new channel strip settings and these settings are, of course, retained as you flick back to the first patch. So, if you're playing keys or guitar throughout a gig and want a selection of

presets customised to your role within any song, you can easily do this and double-clicking the name of any patch lets you rename it, so it's easily recalled from one track to the next. Layering sounds is easy too, as MainStage only accesses one set of MIDI notes per patch. In other words, if you set up a second channel strip and assign the instrument of your choice to it, both your original sound and this new one will play as soon as you input some notes.

This should give you an overview of what's possible with MainStage but read the boxouts too, to give you some further examples of what this program can do and check back next month, when I'll be talking you through MainStage in video form. **FM**



MainStage comes with plenty of effects presets to get you started

LOGIC TIPS NEXT ISSUE

MainStage is far too big and feature-packed to describe with text and grabs, so I'll be looking deeper at it in video-form next month. **FM226 on sale 20th April**

A History of Sampling: Part One

From tape loops to software, sampled sounds are a huge part of Electronic music. **Greg Scarth** gives us a lesson in the history of sampling

This month in *Knowledge Base*, we're taking a closer look at the history of sampling, a subject close to all our hearts and rather taken for granted in the modern studio.

With the ability to manipulate sound in hundreds of different ways, it's important not to forget the basics and have a grounding in what's going on, in order to produce the best results. This month we look at the history of sampling technology, examining the development of the equipment itself, explaining the theory behind it before finally checking out your options for sampling in the 21st century.

The analogue era

In a musical sense, the process of sampling – that is, recording a snippet of sound and then triggering them to be played back at

will – appears relatively simple, but there's a lot more to sampling than you might realise. We'll start our lesson in the analogue era, which might seem a bit counter intuitive – after all, sampling is, by definition, based on digital technology but there was still a demand for similar instruments before the advent of digital recording. The solution was the tape-replay keyboard, whose keys triggered the playback of strips of tape, creating sounds, which were otherwise impossible to replicate.

The most famous and widely used tape replay keyboards were the American Chamberlin models and British Mellotrons, both of which produced unique sounds, but could hardly be seen as a versatile sampling instrument given that they relied on pre-recorded tapes to produce notes. Another common use for samplers also has a

E-mu's SP-1200 offered 12-bit sampling, with a gritiness adored by Hip Hop producers

clear parallel in the analogue era. Looping a whole sample or a fragment of a sound to give the impression of infinite sustain is such a common process with just about any modern sampler that you've probably never given it too much thought, but in the pre-digital era it was an altogether more time-consuming prospect, involving creating physical loops from tape and running them round and round in a tape machine to repeat the recorded section. Clearly sampling-style tasks were not easily carried out in the pre-digital era, meaning that early digital samplers instantly introduced a whole world of new possibilities.

Early mass-market sampling

The first generation of digital samplers were huge systems built around early personal computers and, although they were massively important in the development of mass market sampling technology, these exotic models have largely been consigned to the dustbin of history. Only a handful of electronic musicians today would recognise, for example, the Computer Music Melodian or EMS MUSYS, let alone consider using one to make music. However, thanks to the pioneering work of their developers, these machines formed the framework for what we now consider to be the basis of sampling: digitally recording a sound and triggering it at will, manipulating its speed and pitch.

The second wave of sampler came in the form of commercially available machines such as New England Digital's Synclavier (1975) and Synclavier II (1980) and Fairlight's legendary CMI (1979).

Although these models brought sampling to a wider audience in theory, their prohibitively expensive retail prices meant that sales were limited to the wealthy and as a result it was mainly established artists such as Peter Dinklage, Frank Zappa and Hall and Oates who adopted the Synclavier and Fairlight, creating some of the earliest sample-based music.

Sampling technology really got into its stride with the arrival of less expensive mass-market machines, which offered powerful sampling ability in a smaller, more convenient format. Samplers including the keyboard-based Ensoniq Mirage (1984) and Sequential Prophet 2000 (1985), the rackmount Akai S612 (1985) and the drum machine-style E-mu SP-1200 (1987) were the first big hits as sampling captured the imaginations of producers and musicians from every genre. The SP-1200 in particular became the default choice of Hip Hop producers, whose manipulation of Funk and Soul breakbeats not only broke musical ground, but also led to a number of court cases as sampled artists and record labels sought legal ramifications for this new



appropriation of their recordings (see the *Sampling and the Law* box for more on the legal implications of sampling). At the time, the small memory capacity and inaccurate sound of low-resolution samplers was widely considered undesirable.

Although their simplicity and dirty sound would ultimately be seen as part of their enduring appeal, there was significant demand for companies to develop more accurate, cleaner-sounding samplers with bigger memories, more features and more powerful processing options.

Into the '90s

In the late '80s and early '90s, compact rack-based samplers from Akai, E-mu and Roland began to dominate the market. Compared to the earlier models, these samplers offered larger sample memory, easier workflow for editing sounds and setting up patches and often included filters or effects to allow sounds to be manipulated even further. Akai's development of time-stretching algorithms meant that samples could be sped up and slowed down without affecting their pitch, an effect that opened up all kinds of possibilities for loop-based electronic Dance music. By this

Sampling and the Law

Since the first samples appeared on records, legal issues have surrounded the use of sampled loops and hits. Due to the fact that early Hip Hop producers were so quick to incorporate samples of old Funk loops, vocals and drum sounds, the genre effectively acted as a test case for sampling law. For an example, of the amount of sampling which was going on in those lawless days, check out the Beastie Boys' 1989 album *Paul's Boutique*, one of the masterpieces of early sample-based music which features over 100 samples of everything from the Jackson 5 to Alice Cooper. The



Rapper Biz Markie was the subject of an infamous sampling lawsuit

lawyers soon began circling, and artists from 2 Live Crew to Vanilla Ice became embroiled in lengthy legal disputes concerning their appropriation of existing recordings. The situation reached a climax in the

early 1990s, when rapper Biz Markie was taken to court by frizzy-haired Irish crooner Gilbert O'Sullivan was over an uncleared sample of *Alone Again (Naturally)* which featured on the Biz's 1991 album *I Need A Haircut*. The judge's ruling not only ensured that the album was withdrawn from sale, but meant a precedent was set whereby all samples had to be cleared before a record could be released.

This ruling effectively still applies, and more recent cases have shown that even the tiniest fragment of sampled sound can land an artist in serious hot water.

© Gettyimages

popularity with the arrival of cheap and powerful computer-based setups and the DAW revolution of the 1990s and although a handful of models are still manufactured by the likes of Korg, Roland, Yamaha and Alesis, the workstation no longer enjoys the market it did 15 years ago. The main exception to this trend is Akai's MPC range, which remains phenomenally popular with Hip Hop producers in particular.

As we mentioned in last month's *Knowledge Base* on drum machines, the original MPC60, released in 1988, was developed by electronic music legend Roger Linn, creator of the Linndrum, and the product line has been upgraded on a regular basis since the late '80s. The MPC's simple workflow, distinctive sound and rock-solid MIDI timing ensure that it remains a favourite two decades after its introduction.

Sampling in the 21st century

For most producers, the default choice of sampler in 2010 will be a software plug-in running in conjunction with a DAW and the main reason for this dramatic shift away from hardware is simple: software samplers offer a convenience which very few hardware models can rival. The workflow of most software samplers leaves hardware for dead, allowing the user to drag and drop files to set up patches, edit waveforms in a non-destructive fashion and run multiple instances of the same plug-in for ultimate control. Compared to the hassle of working through hardware samplers' layers of menus, usually on a tiny LCD screen, this alone is enough to persuade most users to ditch the hardware. Given that software samplers are



To demonstrate the way in which a clean sample can be processed to give it a gritty sound similar to a classic hardware sampler, check out our audio demos.

sampling 01.aif
the clean, unprocessed drum pattern

sampling 02.aif
a bitcrusher plug-in is applied and set to 10-bit resolution and 2x downsampling

sampling 03.aif
the bitcrusher is adjusted to 8-bit resolution and 3x downsampling. A low-pass filter is added to attenuate the high frequencies

sampling 04.aif
an aggressive FET-style compressor is added

sampling 5.aif
an overdrive plug-in and a dark plate reverb are added for a more retro sound

also capable of operating at 24-bit resolution and higher sample rates than their hardware equivalents, the advantages are clear.

However, despite the many benefits of software sampling, the legendary sounds of older models mean that many hardware samplers retain a loyal fan base in spite of the fact that they may be much less convenient to use and technically inferior in many ways. Vintage hardware samplers can be viewed as another tool to add tone to your production, taking advantage of the dirt and grit, which vintage AD and DA conversion add to samples. As such, the classic 8-bit, 12-bit and 16-bit models such as those produced by E-mu, Ensoniq and Akai in the 1980s and early 1990s still attract good prices on the second-hand market.

Less popular models by companies such as Yamaha (check out their super-budget SK range) and Casio offer a cheaper entry point to vintage sampling but you may find that software, repair parts and information are less easily available than with the more popular models. The sound of classic samplers can be emulated to some extent using a combination of resampling, bitcrushing, filters and mild overdrive to mimic the grit and inaccuracy of older machines. Check out our audio demos for examples of loops manipulated in this way.

Whichever approach you take, the possibilities with sampling technology are huge, and can play a crucial role in your productions. In next month's *Knowledge Base* we'll roll up our sleeves and look at the practical applications of sampling, showing you how you can get the most out of what the technology has to offer. **FM**

KNOWLEDGE BASE NEXT ISSUE

Stay tuned to Knowledge Base as next month, we'll be looking at the practical applications of sampling. **FM226 on sale 20th April**

The MPC's workflow and distinctive sound ensure that it remains a favourite

stage, manufacturers had adopted technology from each other and reached similar conclusions on the basic features that we've come to expect from samplers.

Since the 1990s, most samplers are capable of holding a large number of samples in memory and assigning each one to a range of MIDI notes and velocity values in order to create complex patches.

Features such as multiple outputs, effects processing, high levels of polyphony and support for more complex patches spread over a number of MIDI channels became increasingly common. Waveform editing via on-board screens and external monitors made recording and manipulating samples much easier, as did software-based editors which allowed computerised control of key functions. During the early 1990s, sampling workstations also enjoyed a brief period of popularity, offering sequencing capabilities, sampling and synthesis in conjunction with a keyboard – or pad-based interface. The workstation declined in

Gui Boratto

Brazil's greatest gift to the club scene and white-hot remixer Gui Boratto talks *Hamish Mackintosh* through his hardware, software and synthesizer preferences...



Gui Boratto's new *Renaissance – Mix Collection* is a spell-binding Minimal Techno trip of the highest calibre. Further evidence of the man's wicked way with Dance music can also be found on last year's *Take My Breath Away*

album, which illustrates Boratto's mastery of his machinery and whose myriad delights serve to explain just why he has quickly risen to become the man to turn to in remix circles, deconstructing and re-assembling tracks for Massive Attack, Bomb the Bass, Simian Mobile Disco and a veritable flood of other cool artists.

From an early career working as an architect, Boratto transferred his design skills from the drawing board to the computer screen (via the seminal Roland MC-500) to forge a unique sonic vision that combines the best of all worlds.

We couldn't wait to catch up with Boratto to uncover some of his studio secrets as well as getting a handle on what technology Gui arms himself with for his incendiary live shows and DJ sets.

As with the pervading ethos of Minimal Techno itself, it seems that, gear-wise, less is very often more. *FM* investigates...

FM: Can you take us on a whistle-stop tour around the most used gear in your current studio rig?

Gui Boratto: "I use Pro Tools but I mainly work with Logic along with two Apogee interfaces – the AD-16X and the DA-16X. I've probably got around 20 hardware synthesizers but now my wife is getting a little mad as my studio is effectively in my living room [laughs], so she won't allow me to use them all at the same time!

"Basically I tend to use my Nord Lead 2, my three [Roland] MKS racks, the 50, 60 and MKS80. Other racks I use are my Oberheim Matrix 6R and a

couple of other bits and pieces. I change around things like the Roland SH-09. I have two SH-101s and two Juno-106s as well as an old TR-808 and some other drum machines including an old Roland R8 module. I also have a lot of software synths like Native Instruments and others.

"To be honest I use maybe half and half software and hardware – I'm not a purist in that I love my synthesizers but I also love the soft synths."

What about monitors – it's gotta be an important choice for you.

"I have Genelec 1031s but I always end up using a very cheap pair of Event monitors for mixing on. Nobody believes that I can use them but I've been mixing on them for years now and I know how they sound really well.

"When I was working on the Genelecs they're so bright with an amazing bottom-end that I used to end up actually making more mistakes! Normally,



when you mix then take a track to the clubs you'll find that there's not enough bass or maybe that the high frequencies are a little bit too harsh, but I bought the Events when I was living in San Francisco in 2001 and I've used them since then."

Are you using a console or do you mix in the box?

"Always within Logic. I have a small mixer but what I normally do, because I have 32 inputs with the

FM understands that you're partial to using a JazzMutant Lemur live?

"I programmed my own screens for my Lemur... my favourite is the step sequencer, which I use live. It's like having 16 spaces to fill in or take things away using Max/MSP. I'd say that around 80% of my drums come from Max too, which I then add some extra details to. Everything is routed into ReWire within Ableton so my bigger files, like long basslines

plug-ins within Live as I like to stick to Ableton's native ones for EQ, delay and reverb so as to keep it super-stable. I have about 50 screens of Max running – you don't have to look at Max really, as it just has to be open behind everything else. All the work is already done so I run the Lemur with endless faders, which gives me the freedom to screw with the LFO or some other parameter.

"I was also using a Monome a lot recently too. I

bought one when they came out three years ago and I used it non-stop for two years. I was using it for a sort of ReCycle so I could basically put a loop up on it then recycle a little piece of it on the fly. You don't even need to use a mouse for that.

"People like Daedalus are

using the Monomes in a really radical way to get some great results. Now I'm just using the Lemur, an Akai APC40 and an RME interface, which I really love the sound of. It's a very simple setup but I can really improvise and have fun with it. It's also light enough to carry on the plane with me."

Is that ability to improvise what keeps it interesting for you on a tour?

"For sure – otherwise it would be the same thing every single night and I would get sick of that. I really like the conversation you can have with the crowd when you have the ability to make breaks

Apogee interfaces, is to put all my synthesizers through them. So, when I'm programming, when I start to produce, because Pro Tools has absolutely zero latency, I can put a big compressor, reverb, delay on things. I have a really nice Tube Tech compressor, which I sometimes use as an insert and also an Ensoniq DP/4 reverb that I route through Logic."

Was Logic always your DAW of choice?

"I've been using Logic since v2 – before that, my first sequencer was a Roland MC-500 which I got in 1988. It was a MkII MC-500, which had two outs instead of just one. I was programming on that for so long it delayed me getting into the computer as a programming tool.

"I tried [Twelve Tone Systems] Cakewalk and some others. I used Cakewalk for four years before moving onto Logic. I was so used to programming on the MC-500 that I had a big problem with the timing of computers. Logic still isn't quite as precise as using the MC-500 but it felt like the best of the software sequencers.

"The timing issue still annoys me so much that I turn everything I program into audio, which allows me to really lock down the timing of things. It's just one of those idiosyncrasies that everyone has about how they work."

Would you say that starting out on the MC-500 gave you a love of detailed programming then?

"Things have changed a lot, of course, and now you can really see the music. Back in the day, the programming was much more mathematic and you weren't able to see a cursor, bars, the regions or follow the timeline of the track.

"Now you can have everything in different colours, countless pages and you work on the programming and mixing at the same time. Twenty years ago, I would program the whole track then put everything on a mixing desk and mix it all in an old-fashioned way. Now, everything kind of comes together in one process.

"There's no set production, mixing or even mastering really, as I do all three processes on-the-fly, at the same time and that's what I'm used to. It would be really hard to go back and just use the MC-500 now!"

or harmonic lines, all come from Ableton. Most of my tracks have a fairly Pop structure so, for me, it's hard to get loops and improvise with them.

"Most of my tracks are instrumentals but you can still clearly hear a verse, a chorus and a bridge, which is why I often need very large files and I find Ableton is very safe for dealing with them."

As trite as it's becoming to suggest it, Ableton has certainly raised the bar for what computer musicians can do in the live arena, hasn't it?

"It's very safe, very reliable – it doesn't crash. One thing I do stick to is not using any third-party

Gui's live show comprises of Max/MSP, Lemur, APC40 and Ableton Live

The Gui The Secret

Despite having an envy-inducing collection of hardware synths, Gui Boratto also has a place in his heart for a new breed of soft synths

"I have a lot of soft synths and I do really like the Native Instruments collection in general. I love Kontakt...it's my favourite sampler. Sometimes I use Battery but Kontakt is still the number one for me. The Arturia

Minimoog sounds incredible – almost like the real thing. I think the only soft synth that does actually sound better than the synthesizer it's modelled on is the PolySix in

Korg's Legacy collection. I had a real PolySix and it's a great synth but the software version is just cleaner and has more bottom to it. I've just got Native Instrument's

Maschine and I really like it. Sometimes I take the Maschine and program on it as you think differently with different things and it's perfect for programming in Step Mode.

"For controlling everything I have one of the Korg microKONTROLS. I used to use the Novation Supernova II keyboard as my controller but the Korg is great as it has all the knobs and faders on it. The keys aren't quite full-size, but that's cool as it does the job really well."

THE LITTLE VILLAIN GROWS UP

"THE ADDED SAMPLE MEMORY AND KEYBOARD REALLY PLACE THIS WITH THE BIG BOYS." - FUTURE MUSIC 211



NEW RRP
£599
LIMITED TIME OFFER

NEW WALDORF LARGO SYNTHESIZER FREE 30 DAY TRIAL AT HANDINHAND.UK.NET

Many producers and synthesizer enthusiasts asked for a full-blown Waldorf Synthesizer for their virtual rack. Waldorf listened, and now they proudly present Largo. Largo is the first pure software synthesizer used in Blofeld and Q hardware synthesizers. As for every Waldorf instrument, ergonomics are a core feature on screen as well. Your eyes will be pleased with a clearly structured, graphical user interface.



WALDORF BLOFELD KEYBOARD INCLUDING FREE WALDORF EDITION INTEGRATED KEYBOARD AND 60 MB SAMPLE MEMORY

Not only on the outside did he gain weight, also his inner qualities have seen a remarkable step-up: besides the virtual-analog synthesis and the classic wavetables it now sports a whopping 60 megabytes of sample memory. Just imagine to add a vocal-like noise spectrum to a typical Wavetable pad, spice-up a virtual-analog solo sound with a strong attack sample or just process any other sample with the countless oscillator and filter modulations.



BLOFELD MODULE INCLUDING LICENSE SL SAMPLE UPGRADE NOW £395 INC VAT

The Waldorf Blofeld synthesizer module combines incredible-sounding analog-modeled circuitry with the power, convenience, and accessibility of modern digital features.

"LARGO IS PROBABLY THE EASIEST TO USE, BEST-SOUNDING AND MOST VERSATILE SOFT SYNTH I'VE USED TO DATE" - FUTURE MUSIC 217

NEW AUDIOFIRE PRE8 NOW SHIPPING

16 IN 16 OUT FIREWIRE AUDIO RECORDING WITH 8 BRILLIANT™ MIC PREAMPS



The AudioFire Pre8 offers the same high quality hardware and console software as the original AudioFire 8 and AudioFire 12, but with 8 auto-sensing universal inputs featuring Echo's Brilliant™ preamp technology. In addition, the AudioFire Pre8 features 8 balanced 1/4 inch analog outputs, 2 channel inserts, phantom power, 2 stereo headphone outputs with volume knob, main output volume knob, ADAT (with S/MUX for 96 kHz support), S/PDIF and MIDI I/O. Inputs 1 and 2 feature premium preamps with options for phase reversal, low impedance, direct input, 80 Hz rolloff and pad.

NEW ENHANCED AUDIOFIRE 8 ADAT

16 IN 16 OUT FIREWIRE AUDIO RECORDING WITH PREAMPS



AudioFire8 offers the same high quality hardware and software found in our popular Layla3G product, but with the addition of a FireWire interface. With the AudioFire8 you can record 24 bit 96kHz audio with low latency monitoring.

ECHO

WHEN YOU NEED TO GET THE JOB DONE



AUDIOFIRE 4: offers a compact audio interface with all the connections you need for your studio. With the flexibility of FireWire and bus power, you can also take the AudioFire4 on the road. The AudioFire4 can record 24 bit 96kHz audio with low latency monitoring.

INDIGO DJX: Finally an ExpressCard solution for the digital DJ. Indigo DJX offers two independent stereo 1/8 inch analog outputs; one for setting up your cue mix on a pair of headphones, and the other for the house mix. Each output features 24-bit/96kHz converters for the quality you deserve.



MIA MIDI: offers a pair of balanced 1/4 inch analog inputs and outputs and operates at the +4dBu levels used by pro-audio gear. It combines this with 24-bit/96kHz converters and 106 dB of dynamic range for the quality your recordings deserve. Also included is an S/PDIF digital audio interface.

GINA 3G: Gina3G is the third generation of our budget priced, professional quality digital audio recorder. The original Gina premiered seven years ago to critical acclaim and since then we've been perfecting the art of making high quality recording products at affordable prices.



ADVANCE YOUR CRAFT, STAY CONNECTED NEW CATALOG AT HANDINHAND.UK.NET

During 25+ years in operation, Hosa Technology has kept pace with the latest technological advancements. Professionals and enthusiasts alike look to Hosa for products that enable them to advance their craft. With thousands of items ranging from stage snakes, patch bays, video distribution amplifiers, and fiber optic cables to headphones, power supplies, and maintenance accessories, Hosa is committed to providing today's musicians and audio/video professionals with the right tools for the job.



HAND IN HAND
TECHNOLOGY

For more information regarding any of the featured products, please contact us on the details below:
WWW.HANDINHAND.UK.NET - EMAIL: INFO@HANDINHAND.UK.NET - TELEPHONE: 01752 696633

www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net



Keith Emerson's synth collection contains some of the rarest in the world

Synths, Samples and Tokyo

Does Gui have any plans to utilise those lovely synths of his to create a sample library at any point for computer musicians to plunder?

"I would actually love to do it. A couple of years back someone from Native Instruments asked me to create a library with my

specific sounds but I was in the middle of a tour and they had a deadline so I wasn't able to do it at that time. It's a great idea though as I can still remember being blown away a few years ago when I first heard Vince Clarke's *Lucky Bastard* sample collection. It's crazy – he had probably the biggest synthesiser collection

around at that time and the sounds he made are amazing!

"Keith Emerson was another guy with an amazing collection of synths – he has old Moog synths that not even the Moog company have any more. There's a store in Tokyo called FiveG, and it's the only one in the world I believe, that has a

huge collection of all the old analogue gear. There's a whole wall of Roland 909s, 808s and Prophet synths, everything you could ever want. I was with Oliver from Hardfloor, who has a lot of machines himself, but even he couldn't stop himself buying more [laughs]. It's like a disease really – you have to keep buying more of them even though you'll maybe only use it once!"

longer or change the structure of song or even just muting parts. All my tracks have the drums completely separate and the rest I have a channel for bass, a channel for harmonies and pads and things so you can have fun improvising with all that.

"People know when I'm entertaining myself and when I'm doing that then I'm able to entertain other people. Ableton's made that possible in a very easy and reliable way."

things when I played at the Mutek Festival in Montreal a couple of years back.

"I used the DS to trigger some percussion from my computer and people couldn't quite see exactly what I was using – so everyone kept asking after the gig what remote controller I was using.

"Actually, during the same US tour, I played in Denver and the guy who played before me was using a Nintendo Wii Wiimote controller to play invisible

The whole melody of *Take My Breath Away* is a 202 with and overdrive pedal in between the synth and the interface to warm it up

Are there any functions you think Ableton should have that aren't within it already?

"I don't really use Ableton in the studio, just for playing live. Maybe the zoom function could be a little better and the grid and timeline too. I have a lot of friends using Ableton to in studios who do get a little crazy about the timeline but, in general, Ableton is an incredible bit of software."

Sounds like you'd be into new apps that turn games consoles or iPhones into music controllers?

"Yes that's definitely interesting to me – I still have a Nintendo DS, which I used via Wi-Fi to control

drums [laughs] – it was a lot of fun and it sounded really nice."

Does your former career as an architect affect the way you approach your music?

"I think there are similarities in the two worlds as they are just different forms of art and expression. You treat space as being either empty or full – when you're composing music I think you actually see that. Putting a track together is like decorating a room with windows, or pieces of furniture here and there and it's about all the connections and relationships within that space."

When people approach you to do a remix, how do you approach where you're going to take the track?

"First of all, I really like to preserve the best of the original. Sometimes the harmony is incredible or the vocal is amazing and I can use that, but create a different mood. When the requests come, I don't say yes to everything, particularly as I don't have time and I also have to be into the original track, otherwise I can't do it.

"With my own music, I'll normally start with just a metronomic drum pattern then the bass and some chords. The melody-riff is really important and the whole relationship between the harmony and the melody is the whole story really. The textures and all the other bleeps and clicks are the icing on the cake after the rhythm and melody have been sorted."

Have there been any constants in your setup over the years?

"Of course our tastes change day-by-day. The Nord Lead 2 was my favourite for several years but now I would say that my Roland SH-09 is doing it for me. I have a couple of Roland SH-101s, which I really love too, although the SH-09 is simpler and sounds so different to other things. I've been doing a lot of things lately with my old Roland MC-202 micro-composer, which is basically very similar to the sound of the SH-101.

"The whole melody of *Take My Breath Away* is a 202 with and overdrive pedal in between the synth and the interface to warm it up. I love the result of that as the sound becomes really organic and almost screams like a guitar."

Who would you most like to be asked to remix?

"I was always crazy about Depeche Mode and never had a chance to remix any of their tracks but, at the same time, I think it would be very hard to remix them because it would be a real challenge because I loved the originals so much.

"I was really happy to remix the Pet Shop Boys when they asked as I'd been listening to them for years since I started programming."

Other than the new *Mix Collection*, are there any new Gui Boratto projects in the pipeline?

"Well the album I've done with Bomb the Bass – *Back to Light*

– which has just come out. Tim stayed in my house for two weeks last year and he wants to come back to Brazil and collaborate some more. I never really stop composing new tracks so, maybe by the end of this year I'll be already doing my own next album – in between lots of remixes, some singles and plenty other stuff. There's never too much of a pre-defined plan, so we'll just see." **FM**

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Gui Boratto's *Renaissance – The Mix Collection* is out now. More on Gui's gigs and goings-on can be found at guiboratto.com.br



The MC-202 was used for the main melody in the title track *Take My Breath Away*



Gui's Apogee converters, Novation BassStation Rack and Oberheim Matrix 6R



Gui's Roland SH-09 is his current workhorse in the studio





HARD TO FIND

www.HTFR.com



0121-687 7777



sales@htfr.com

Vinyl House, 10 Upper Gough Street, Birmingham City Centre, B1 1JG



The Largest DJ Store In The UK - Centrally Based In The Midlands - Friendly Advice - Latest Products - 2 Minutes From New Street Train Station



HTFR

- USB AUDIO INTERFACE + GAIN CONTROL**
- USB Audio Interface, 16-bit / 44.1kHz
 - 2 x RCA Inputs (1 x Stereo) Phono Or Line Level
 - 2 x RCA Outputs (1 x Stereo) Line Level
 - Includes Recording Software

MR222580 **£29.95**



ARTcleanbox

ART CLEANBOX II - HUM ELIMINATOR

- Hum Eliminator & Ground Loop Removal Tool
- 2 x 6.3mm (1/4") Jack Inputs & Outputs
- Removes Noise From Laptops Or Computers
- Passive Operation - Requires No Power Plug
- Connects To Any Audio Set-up

MR298952 **£39.95**



Focusrite

FOCUSRITE SAFFIRE 6 USB

- USB Audio Interface, 24-bit / 96kHz
- 2 X XLR / Jack Combi-inputs With 48v Phantom Power, 2 x RCA & Jack Outputs
- Award-winning Focusrite Pre-amps
- Ableton Live Lite 7, FX Suite & 'Xcite' Pack

MR326826 **£139.00**



lexicon

LEXICON I ONIX U42S

- USB Audio Interface, 24-bit / 96kHz
- 4 X XLR / Jack Inputs & 2 X Jack Instrument Inputs
- 6 Channel Recording Studio Quality DBX Mic Pre-amps
- Includes Pantheon Reverb Plug-in, Cubase LE4 & EZ Drummer Lite

MR292062 **£219.00**



Focusrite

FOCUSRITE SAFFIRE PRO 24 DSP

- Firewire Audio & MIDI Interface, 24-bit / 96kHz
- 2 X XLR / Jack Combi Inputs With 48v Phantom Power
- 8 X RCA & Jack Outputs, 2 X Headphone Outputs
- VRM (Virtual Reference Monitoring) System Emulates 10 Leading Studio Monitor Models

MR317227 **£299.00**



ableton

ABLETON LIVE INTRO

- Auto Sync, Loop, Record, Mix & Edit
- Mix 64 Audio Tracks & Unlimited MIDI
- 500 Instruments & 300 Effects
- Includes 7GB Of Professional Samples

MR329381 **£89.00**



ableton

ABLETON LIVE 8

- 32-bit / 192kHz Non-destructive Editing & Mixing
- Real-time Tempo Adjusting & Seamless Mixing
- New Groove Engine, Warper & Loop On Loop Functions
- Amazing Recording, Live Performance & DJ Capabilities

MR301044 **£299.00**



novation

NOVATION LAUNCHPAD

- Pre-mapped USB Ableton Live Controller
- 8 X 8 Touch-sensitive Fully Assignable Pads
- Backlit For Visual Feedback Of Settings
- 8 X Dedicated Multi-colour Function Buttons
- Includes Ableton Live Lite 8

MR326110 **£149.00**



steinberg

STEINBERG CUBASE 5

- Multi-track Audio & MIDI Production Suite
- Includes Halion Sampler With 135 Instruments
- New 'Audiowarp' Real-time Time Stretching & Pitch Shifting
- Includes VST Audio & MIDI Effect Plug-ins
- Industry Standard Package

MR291547 **£479.00**



novation

NOVATION ZERO SL MK II

- USB Control Surface
- 8 Faders, 8 Pads, 6 Knobs, 32 Buttons
- DJ-style Assignable Crossfader
- Backlit Display, Rotary Surrounds & Buttons
- Autotap - Direct Compatibility With Ableton, Reason, Cubase Etc

MR301736 **£199.00**



KORG

KORG NANOKEY

- USB MIDI Controller Keyboard
- 25 Note Velocity-sensitive Keys
- Octave Up/Down & Pitch Bend & Modulation Keys
- Plug 'N' Play Operation - No Drivers Required!
- PC & Mac Compatible

MR291939 **£39.95**



novation

NOVATION NOCTURN 49

- 49 Key USB / MIDI Controller Keyboard
- 8 Touch-sensitive Knobs & LED Surrounds
- 8 Buttons, 8 Trigger Pads, 6 Transport Buttons
- Autotap For No Installation With Leading Software
- Including Cubase, Reason, Ableton Live & Logic Etc.

MR326872 **£219.00**



novation

NOVATION REMOTE 25 SL MK II

- 25 Key USB / MIDI Controller Keyboard
- 8 X 8 Touch-sensitive Fully Assignable Pads
- 32 Buttons, Transport Controls & X / Y Touchpad
- Autotap For No Installation With Leading Software
- Including Cubase, Reason, Ableton Live & Logic Etc.

MR301744 **£249.00**



AKG

AKG D 44S

- Dynamic, Cardioid Pick-up Pattern
- 50 - 18,000Hz Frequency Response
- Purpose Designed For Vocal Applications
- Includes Hard Carry Case
- Amazing Mic From Industry Standard Manufacturer

MR222409 **£24.95**



Wharfedale

WHARFEDEALE DM 4.0 - MICROPHONE

- Dynamic Microphone
- Super-cardioid Pick-up Pattern
- 45-18,000Hz Frequency Response
- Perfect For Vocals, Instruments, Recording & Performance
- Metal Body, On / Off Switch
- Includes Case, Clip & Detachable Cable
- Rated As 5 Star Mic By HTFR!

MR325074 **£34.95**



KORG

KORG MICROKORG XL

- Synthesizer & Vocoder, Velocity Sensitive Keys
- MMT Multi-Modelling Technology Taken From Radios, 8 Voice Polyphony, 2 x Oscillators
- Mains Or Battery Powered Operation
- 6 Arpeggiator Types, 16 Band Vocoder With Built-in Microphone

MR291947 **£339.00**



ROLAND

ROLAND SH 201

- Analogue Modelling Synth
- 49 Velocity-sensitive Keys
- Built-in Reverb & Modulation FX
- USB Input For Manipulation Of External Audio (CDs, MP3s Etc)
- VSTi Software - Edit & Store Sounds In VSTi-compatible Software

MR193486 **£449.00**



nord

NORD WAVE

- Analogue Synth & Digital Sample Player
- 49 Velocity-sensitive Keys With Aftertouch
- 18 Stereo Voices
- 189Mb Flash Memory (180Mb For User Samples)
- 3 Morph Sources (Modulation Wheel / Control Pedal, Note Number, Note Velocity)

MR279297 **£1675.00**



KORG

KORG M 3 61

- Synthesizer & Work Station
- 61 Keys Semi-weighted Synth Action
- MMT Multi Modelling Technology
- 5.7 Inch Colour TouchView User Interface
- 1344 Preloaded Programs, 32 Preloaded Drum Kits

MR335733 **£1699.00**



ROLAND

ROLAND FANTOM G6

- Synthesizer & Work Station
- 61 Keys With velocity & Aftertouch
- 8.5" Colour TFT Widescreen Display, 16 Pads
- Legendary Fantom Sound Engine
- 1920 Preloaded Programs, 73 Preloaded Rhythm Sets

MR335719 **£1949.00**



CME

MIDI TO USB INTERFACE

- 1-In / 1-Out MIDI To USB Interface
- 16 MIDI Input, 16 Output Channels
- Built-in USB and MIDI In & Out Cables
- PC & Mac Plug 'N' Play, No Drivers Required
- USB Bus-powered - Requires No External Power Supply

MR277919 **£19.95**



AKG

AKG K518 LIMITED EDITION DJ HEADPHONES

- Closed Back, 16-24,000Hz Freq Response
- 32 Ohms Impedance, 50mm Drivers

ALL COLOURS AVAILABLE **£39.95**



AKG

AKG K 271 MK2

- Closed Back Studio Headphones
- 15-28kHz Frequency Response
- Patented Variomotion Drivers
- Maximum Isolation For Studio & Stage
- Includes 2 x Detachable Cables

MR320207 **£119.00**



beyerdynamic

BEYERDYNAMIC DT 770 PRO

- Closed Back Studio Headphones
- 5-30,000Hz Frequency Response
- Swivel Adjustable Circum-aural Cups
- Innovative Bass Reflex System
- Award Winning Producer's Favourite

MR320550 **£129.00**





STUDIO SPEAKER STANDS (1M)

- Professional-grade Isolated Monitor Stands
- 1000mm(H), Tri-pole Design For Increased Stability
- 178mm x 178mm Solid Metal Mounting Plate
- Includes Foot Spikes & Neoprene Pads For Extended Isolation

MR314673 £119.00



KRK 10S LE (WHITE)

- 160 Watts RMS Subwoofer
- Variable Crossover (36-130Hz)
- XLR, Jack Inputs & Phono Inputs
- HTFR Exclusive White Finish
- 10" High-excursion Glass Aramid Composite Woofer

MR318237 £319.00



KRK RP 5 G2 LE (WHITE)

- 45 Watts RMS Per Speaker
- 5" Glass Aramid Woofer, 1" Neodymium Soft Dome Tweeter
- Self-powered, Bi-amplified
- HTFR Exclusive White Finish

MR326934 £249.00



KRK VXT 4 (WHITE)

- 45 Watts RMS Per Speaker
- 4" Kevlar Woofers
- 1" True Silk Dome HF Driver
- Self-powered, Bi-amplified
- HTFR Exclusive White Finish

MR266604 £469.00

FREE Catalogue



Call 0121-687 7777, eMail: catalogue@htfr.com
For A FREE Copy Of Our Full Colour Catalogue



AURALEX MOPADS

- Speaker Isolation Plinths
- Rests On Any Flat Surface, For Any Size Speaker
- Decouples Speaker From Resting Surface
- Prevents Resonance, Sound Conduction & Vibrations

MR263586 £33.95



DENON DNHC 1000S

- Dedicated USB Controller For DVS Systems
- Direct Control For Track & Selection
- Instant Loops, Samplers & Hot-cues Triggers Etc.
- Serato Approved - Compatible With Any MIDI Software

MR321793 £165.00



INTIMIDATION TOUCH V 2 BLUE

- DVS Software With USB Audio Interface
- Includes 2 x Time-coded Vinyls & 2 x CDs
- New Beat Sync & BPM Counter
- HTFR Exclusive Limited Edition

MR335095 £199.00



EKS OTUS

- USB Turntable Controller & Audio Interface
- 2 x Stereo Outputs, Independent Headphone Out
- Includes Traktor DJ Software Only @ HTFR
- 2 Virtual Deck Layers, 7.5" Jog Wheel, 23 Buttons, 10 Knobs

MR248596 £499.00



STANTON UBERSTAND

- Foldable Laptop DJ Stand
- Aircraft Grade Light-weight Aluminium
- 2 Equipment Shelves
- 2 Minutes Assembly / Disassembly Time
- Suitable For Mobile Or Fixed Purpose

MR222850 £69.00



KORG ZERO 4

- 4-Channel Audio & MIDI Mixing Console
- 24-bit / 192 kHz FireWire Interface
- Full MIDI Control / Assign Functions
- Mix Analogue, Digital & MIDI 'At Once'
- 8 Insert Effects, 11 Master FX & Sampler

MR223442 £699.00



KORG ZERO 8

- 8-Channel Audio & MIDI Mixing Console
- 24-bit / 192 kHz FireWire Interface
- Full MIDI Control / Assign Functions
- Mix Analogue, Digital & MIDI 'At Once'
- Touch Sensitive Effects Control

MR223443 £899.00



PIONEER CDJ 900

- Plays Music From CD or USB & SD Device
- Controls Software Via MIDI / USB
- Vinyl Emulation Touch-sensitive Jog Wheel
- LCD Panel & Graphic User Interface
- Auto Beat-loop Function With Beat Divide
- 'Slip' Loop Function
- Includes Software: Prepare Music Pre-gig

MR324742 £975.00



VESTAX VCI 300

- 2-Channel USB / MIDI DJ Controller
- 3 Band Channel EQ, Built-in Audio Interface
- Dedicated Headphone & Master Outputs
- Includes Serato Itch DJ Software

MR266242 £589.00



KAM STUDIO DESK

- Self-assembly Studio Workstation
- Holds Mixing Desk, MIDI Keyboard, Samplers Etc
- Computer Monitor & Separate Speaker Mounts
- Easy Assembly
- Amazing Value Professional Studio Furniture

MR248335 £159.00



DENON DNX 1700

- 14 Inputs (Including 2 Mic & 4 Digital)
- Built-in USB 2.0 Audio Interface
- 2 Independent FX Sections (13 FX Per Section)
- 3.5" TFT Colour Display With Customisable Settings
- Mix CD or Vinyl & Control Software Simultaneously

MR319123 £1499.00



PIONEER DJM 400 / CDJ 400 (BLUE)

- Limited Edition Pioneer Package
- 2 x CDJ 400 MP3 CD Decks
- DJM 400 Mixer + Effects & Sampler
- New Cool Blue LEDs
- Matching Blue Pioneer Flightcase Included!

MR329925 £1699.00



PIONEER CDJ 2000

- Plays Music From CDs Or USB & SD Device
- Controls Software Via MIDI / USB
- Vinyl Emulation Jog-wheel, 3 Hot-cue Points & Loop Function
- Includes Software: Prepare Music Pre-gig!

MR322763 £1489.00



DENON DNS 3700

- Plays Music From CD Or USB Devices
- Controls Software Via MIDI Or USB
- Vinyl Emulation Jog Wheel, 3 Hot-cue Points & Loop Function
- 3 Platter Effects & 4 DSP Effects (Flanger, Filter, Echo & Loop)
- Auto-beat Looping With Trim & Edit
- Crossfade Between 2 Tracks On One CD!
- Includes Denon DJ Music Manager Application
- Visible Waveforms

MR290879 £769.00

hard to find
music technology



SERIOUS ABOUT MAKING MUSIC?
VISIT OUR NEW MUSIC TECHNOLOGY SHOWROOM

- NEW DEDICATED MUSIC TECHNOLOGY & HI-TECH SHOWROOM
- SYNTH'S, WORKSTATIONS, SOFTWARE & CONTROLLERS ALL ON DEMO
- DEDICATED SPEAKER DEMO ROOM FOR STUDIO MONITORS
- ALL THE LEADING BRANDS & LATEST MODELS AT THE LOWEST PRICES
- LOW APR FINANCE AVAILABLE AND FREE ON-SITE CUSTOMER PARKING!



NEW REVAMPED LAYOUT FOR 2010

OPENING HOURS:
MONDAY - FRIDAY
10am - 6pm
SATURDAY 10am - 5pm

DIRECTIONS:
www.HTFR.com/map
NEW LOOK STORE:
www.HTFR.com/htfr-store

Website Also Accepts
PayPal

WE ARE THE MOST COMPETITIVE PRO AUDIO STORE IN THE UK!

HTFR PRICE PROMISE

AND THAT'S A PROMISE!
www.htfr.com/price-promise

All Orders Despatched Within 24 Hours
24hr

CUBASE ESSENTIALS



Using the Cubase 5 Delay Plug-ins

This month, **Bruce Aisher** pays a visit to the often unsung world of Cubase delay plug-ins to talk about the spacial tricks that will give your mix depth, width and even a secondary rhythm, without clouding your mix...

Reverb hold effects

1 Having played with Time Freezer – the rather superb, but as yet little known plug-in from Physical Music – I pondered the ways in which reverb might be used to achieve something similar. Time Freezer does what its name suggests, and takes an audio file (or audio stream, if used as an effect), and freezes it in time, producing a constant drone-like output from a single 'slice of audio'.

In Cubase, REVerence or RoomWorks can be used with very long reverb decay settings to arrive at a wash-like tail. In the absence of the 'Freeze' function available on some reverb and delay units, to achieve

a constant drone you will need to export the result and import it to an audio track. Once you've done this you can experiment with copying and pasting the newly generated reverb tail to create a constant backdrop – crossfades can help with this.

Try reversing alternately copied sections to avoid repeats, and don't forget that you can re-process this track using Pitch Shift and Time Stretch processing to manipulate the effect. Envelope-based pitch shifting works particularly well for weird and wonderful sonic backdrops.



> Creating reverb 'hold effects'.



Cubase's RoomWorks has a Freeze function, perfect for long holding reverbs

THE EXPERT

Bruce Aisher,
producer,
engineer



Bruce has been using Cubase since its arrival on the Atari ST in 1989. He's grown up alongside his favourite piece of software, sharing the ups (and downs) of the professional music world. The two are now inseparable.



Mono delay is unglamorous, but can add a metallic flam

Mono delay tricks

2 Poor old 'Mono Delay'. It's not a glamorous plug-in and doesn't have many controls so what is it good for? In this world of 'super-modulator-vintage-filter-convolo-EQ' processing it is easy to forget that sometime a simple uncluttered delay can still be responsible for some interesting effects. The other day when I was listening to a Glam-Rock track, I noticed that the snare had a great 'flamming' quality that clearly wasn't played that way. In actual fact, the snare was running through a very short delay to give a very quick repeat.

To make this effect work well it is worth adjusting the Lo and Hi filter controls so that repeat is more 'lo-fi' than original dry

version. Oddly, on the same album there was a very metallic sounding snare, and once again a short delay was responsible – this was in the days before sampling or digital editing. This time though the delay feedback loop was used.

Pushing this up when short delays are used can create some interesting buzzing effects that work well with drums – especially synthetic percussion.



> Simple mono delay effects on percussion.

Stereo delay

3 While mono delay certainly has its place – remember that most early digital and nearly all tape delay units were monophonic – stereo delay is a great way of adding space to a mix and sometimes is more useful creator of ambience than reverb. In the case of pads, medium to long delays with some subtle feedback can work wonders, and don't tend to cloud a mix in the way that a Hall reverb setting might. Although it is tempting to use Cubase's delay Sync feature by default, for subtler elements I prefer to leave this off and set the delay times manually (and differently for the left and right channels).

What's described above is a fairly common use of a stereo delay, they are also a great way of creating space with short and more rhythmic varied elements. Having recently got my hands on the new UA emulation of the weird and wonderful Cooper Time Cube (two 'hose-based' delay lines!) it got me thinking about this month's tips. Once again, a great replacement for reverb on guitars or synth parts is a stereo delay configured as a send effect with two short but different delay times for the left and right channels.



> A tour of the Cubase Stereo Delay.

Using delay times to make things wider

4 One of the uses of reverb in a track is to build space, adding a sense of depth, but there are times when some subtle spacial emphasis is required without the roominess of reverb – and that is where our short and varied delays in different channels come in.

Consider this real-world scenario. You are in the middle of a room, and directly facing a sound source. In this case the sound level is the same in both ears. If the sound source moves to the left, it will get slightly louder in the left ear – but not by much. Of course, we are accustomed to positioning elements of a mix in the stereo field by using a panning control – but all



ModMachine Madness Pt1

5 It's all very well getting back to basics, and using delay effects that are simple at heart – and this is why they are sometimes overlooked – but obviously the more complicated ones still get most of the attention.

The danger here though is that some users find that they stick to presets (or small random variations on them), and don't really ever understand what is going on

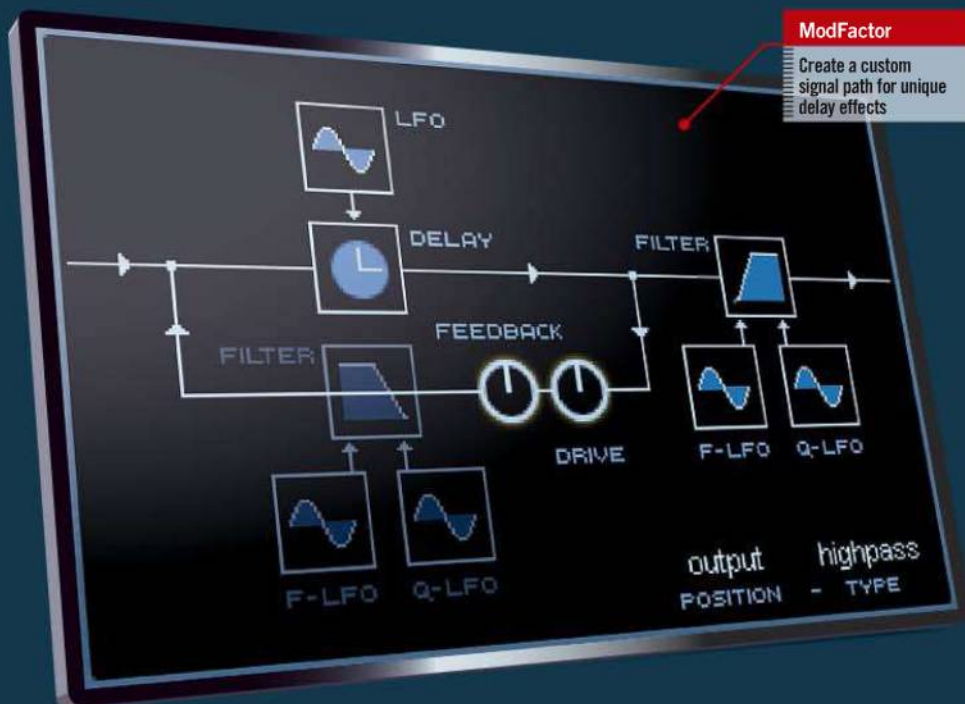
underneath, which can be very useful to know. Most delay-based effects (besides a delay time parameter) will have one or more of the following elements – feedback, filtering or EQ, modulation via an LFO of the other parameters (most commonly delay and filter cutoff frequency). Cubase offers its own variation on this in the form of the ModMachine plug-in. It is an interesting effect, despite the fact that I wish it had independent left and right delay paths – but that's a

particular hang-up of mine. So why would you want to modulate delay time? Well, obviously it makes the delays less predictable, which might be useful in certain circumstances, but something interesting happens as you speed-up the modulation – the pitch starts to wobble.

This is one of my favourite effects, and can add a lushness and warmth to any sound.



> ModMachine basics.



PingPongDelay

7 Ping-pong delay – one of the better-named studio effects (after Flanger, of course) – has the left and right channel delay synchronised such that one is always double that of the other, causing the sound to bounce from one side to the other. Cubase's PingPong delay is generally used to best effect when you also synchronise it to the Project tempo by engaging the Tempo sync button. The Spatial control determines the overall width of the bounce – sometimes narrowing it slightly can be less distracting.

A good use of the ping-pong delay (which incidentally you can create with most stereo delay plug-ins) is when you wish to add to some excitement to simple synth bass lines. In fact, Giorgio Moroder's pulsing Electro-Disco classic *I Feel Love* combines a simple sequenced bassline with delay to great effect. It is also something that you should consider using when writing, especially if you are lost for ideas, as it can force you to simplify and 'groove' against the delay. Remember that, as well as using straight 1/16th and 1/8th notes (for example), you can also experiment with dotted and/or triplet variants.



> Ping-pong delay on basslines.

ModMachine Madness Pt2

6 Let's take a more detailed look at ModMachine. What you get is a delay line (that can be synced to the project in note-based increments or in millisecond values) that can also be modulated by a sinewave-generating LFO, the amount of which is applied by varying the Width control. The speed of this LFO is determined by the Rate

knob, which once again can be synchronised to the current tempo should you wish.

Next we have a Feedback control that determines how much of the delayed signal is routed back to the input. This section also has a Distortion processor that adds grunge to the delay repeats.

Finally, in the top part of the plug-in window we have the Mix control and the interesting Nudge button. This intends to simulate the

effect of pushing a tape reel, giving the sound a momentary pitch wobble – great for adding some inaccurate humanity back to the proceedings.

The middle of the window has a graphic showing the signal path, which can also be clicked on to facilitate routing re-configuration of the filter section.



> ModMachine feedback fun.

these do is change the relative level sent to the left or right channel.

In reality, we derive most of our positional information from the fact that a source to the left of us will arrive at our left ear before the right – a slight delay – and we can recreate this when mixing. If the delay difference between channels is less than about 30ms then the delay itself will not be apparent, just the change in perceive

location. Of course if you mix the direct signal in as well, then the effect is blurred and more subtle – sometimes a good thing, but be careful to check your mixes in mono, as comb filtering effects can raise their ugly head.



> Spatial enhancement with delay in Cubase.



ModMachine Madness – Part 3

8 The crucial thing with feedback loop processing is that each time the audio passes through the loop it will be processed again... and again...and again. This has been used to good effect over the years, especially with filter processing. Luckily, Mod Machine has some interesting options here.

There is a filter section that can be configured as a low-, band- or high-pass type with variable Q (or resonance). The filter could be inserted into the feedback loop to give a nice degrading delay repeat effect, but there is more up its sleeve. Both the cutoff frequency and Q can be modulated by their own LFO. The Lo and Hi range controls determine the maximum extension of the modulated values. Each section also has Spatial control which adds an offset between the left and right

Real and Fake Reverse Reverb

9 On the subject of reverb – one trick that, while perhaps clichéd when overused, remains a firm favourite with me is that of reverse reverb.

For a quick and easy take on this, it is possible to use the Reverse button in REVerence to reverse the

Impulse Response. What this means in practice is that rather than a decay with an ever quieter tail extending from any audio that is passed to the plug-in, you hear a reverb swell rising from nothing.

Of course this can be interesting in itself for more creative effects, but doesn't have the classic sound of a reverse reverb rising out of nothing

before the main body of direct unaffected sound, as you would get with the all-tape effect of old.

So what's the key to creating a true reverse reverb effect? First take your chosen source material, and if it isn't already one audio event, bounce or export it – ideally to a new track.

Now reverse it, apply a reverb plug-in and ensure that it is set to

100% signal. Export the output of the track to another track, reverse the resulting audio and voila.

You will need to mute or delete the intermediate track and line-up the reversed reverb track for best effect.



ON THE DVD

> Using REVerence to conjure-up some interesting reverse effects.



channels to add a sense of stereo perspective to the proceedings.

For slightly more predictable madness you might choose to place the filter section in the main output path.



ON THE DVD

> ModMachine extreme processing.

Last word on delay

10 Cubase has some useful delay tools, but I still feel that Steinberg could go further on this front. My

wish list for a 'ModMachine 2' would include – independent delay paths for each channel with separately adjustable delay times. How about a 'groove' slider for each as well that allows you to push or pull the timing? Next I'd like sidechain modulation access to feedback, filter cutoff, LFO modulation depth and delay time.

And while we're at it, how about a compressor in the feedback path, independent low- and high-pass filtering, a 'wow and flutter' modulation section and the addition of a noise generator. None of these would be difficult to achieve, and

would make this 'fantasy' plug-in a perfect replacement for many of my other third-party plug-ins.

One last thing – how about a delay plug-in that can host its own plug-ins. Please Steinberg?



ON THE DVD

> Combining delay plug-ins for special treatments.

NEXT ISSUE

Make sure you pick up FM next month for more Cubase tips. FM226 on sale 20th April

The Science of Mastering: Part Two

In the second part of our *Knowledge Base* double feature on mastering, **Greg Scarth** shows how you can get started mastering at home...

Having talked in last month's *Knowledge Base* about how professional mastering engineers take your tracks and apply the

finishing touches, this month we're going to look at the DIY approach. We'll guide you in the right direction so that you can have a go at mastering tracks yourself rather than sending them off to the pros. Mastering is a notoriously difficult skill to learn, but it's possible to achieve good results at home if you put a bit of time into training your ears and learning the tools of the trade.

We'll focus mainly on software since it makes sense that most beginners to DIY mastering will choose the cheaper software-based approach. Armed with the tips on offer here you should soon be able to get started with mastering your own tracks.

Equipment

As we discussed last month, the quality of mastering relies heavily on the quality of your monitoring environment and equipment. In order to understand their importance, you should probably consider the consequences of getting it wrong. Poor quality monitors are likely to suffer from an uneven frequency response and if your room is badly treated (or worse, untreated) then this problem could be exacerbated to the

point where there are significant peaks and troughs in the frequency response of your monitoring setup. Attempting to master under these conditions, you're likely to compensate for the problems as you go, leaving you with a mastered track riddled with problems.

Now, let's be pragmatic here: it's understandable that if you're having a go at DIY mastering you either don't want to use a professional service or, more likely, can't afford one. If that's the case then it's unfair to expect you to go out and buy new monitors and top-end room treatment just for the sake of it. However, as we discussed last month the importance of the monitoring environment is even more important when mastering than it is when mixing.

Mastering is your final opportunity to spot problems with your tracks, so it makes sense to give yourself a fair chance. At a very minimum, refer to the *FM Knowledge Base* on acoustic treatment, borrow a measurement microphone, measure the response of your room and consider building some cheap DIY bass traps, diffusers or absorbers to get your mastering space up to scratch. As with mixing and producing, there's also no harm in having a second set of monitors, a hi-fi or some multimedia speakers on hand for cross-referencing.

Smartelectronix's s(M)exoscope waveform visualisation plug-in is a great and free option for analysing your mastered tracks

In fact, it's a wise idea to double-check that your mastered tracks translate well to different systems just as you'd check that a mix translates. In the long run you'll probably train your ear to the point where this stops being necessary, but it's a good training tool as you learn the art of the mastering engineer.

In terms of processing, there are a number of options these days when it comes to software mastering packages. iZotope Ozone, IK Multimedia T-RackS, TC Electronic MD3, the various WAVES packages and the Brainworx bx_bundle are the main commercial options, but a number of freeware and shareware packages are also available. In addition to this, you'll probably find a reasonable set of mastering plug-ins bundled in with your DAW. Logic 9, for example, offers handy mastering tools in the form of plug-ins such as the Multipressor, Adaptive Limiter, Linear Phase EQ and MultiMeter. The last decision to make is whether you want to use a mastering plug-in in your DAW or master in a dedicated wave editor such as Steinberg WaveLab, Sony Sound Forge or the excellent free Audacity.

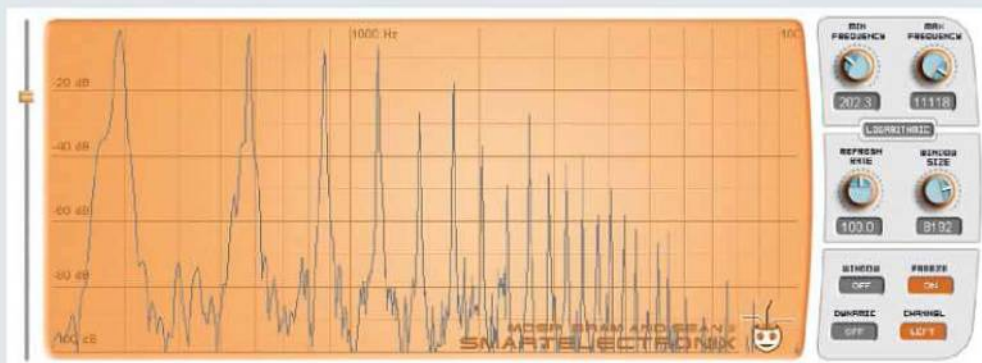
There are a number of advantages to working in a wave editor, but some may feel that the familiar DAW environment aids workflow. Once all the tools are in place, you're ready to start.

The track

The final piece of the mastering jigsaw puzzle is the track itself, and at this stage let's think again about the aim of the mastering process: adding the finishing touches to a good mix. Your aim when mixing is still to make the track sound as good as you possibly can, and as such it's a good idea to separate the mixing process from the mastering process.

Needless to say, trying to mix and master all at the same time or carrying out a half-hearted mixdown with the intention of fixing it at the mastering stage are best avoided. If you find it hard to avoid the temptation to start tweaking your mix during mastering, practise with a bounced stereo version rather than simply loading the project up in your DAW. Taking a break between mixdown and mastering is also a good way of creating a psychological distinction between the two processes.

On a related subject, I would strongly suggest that you avoid adding any kind of mastering effects to your track until you're sure that your mix is as good as you can possibly get it. An EQ or a compressor on the mix buss is not a problem as long as it suits your overall sound, but mixing or even writing tracks with a stack of multi-band compressors, limiters and exciters on your stereo output is a very bad habit to get into.



Dither and SRC

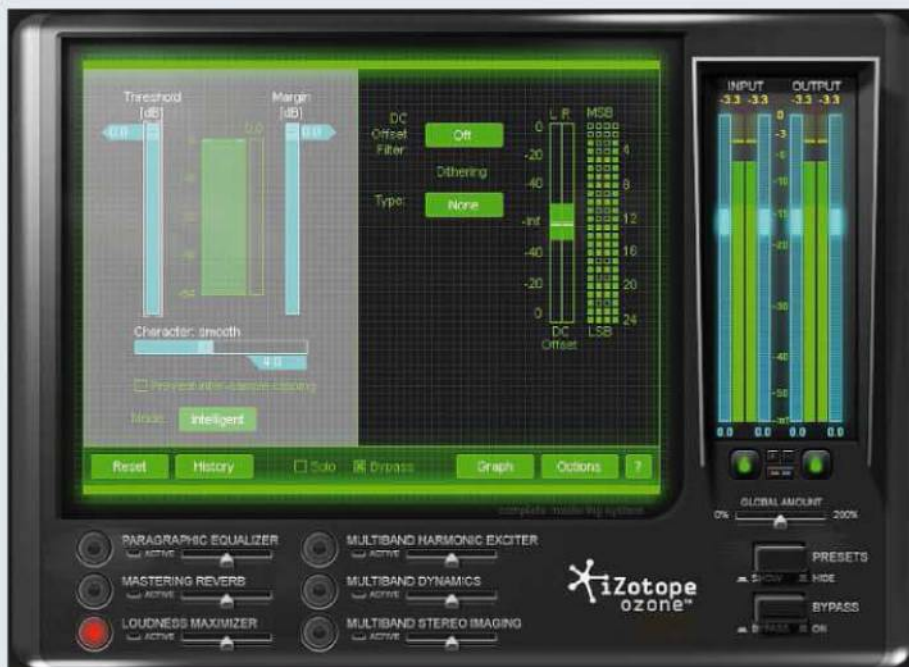
When reducing the bit-depth (word length) of a digital audio file, quantisation error will introduce distortion to the signal. It may seem crazy, but this problem can be avoided by adding noise to the signal before reducing the word length.

Luckily you don't need to understand the science of dither to apply it when you master tracks, but beware that not all dither algorithms

are created equally. It's possible to add different types of noise in order to achieve the same effect, and a certain noise algorithm may work better than others on your track.

Sample rate conversion may also be necessary, and this is best done as a separate stage to the bit-depth change. Say you'd been working at 48kHz, 24-bit and wanted to distribute your song on an audio CD

(44.1kHz, 16-bit), the best approach would be to convert the sample rate using your best sample rate converter, then apply the best-sounding dither algorithm in order to reduce the word length. Given that many producers these days are working in 24-bit at high bitrates then distributing their music in 16-bit audio CD or MP3 format, dither and SRC are crucial elements of the mastering process.



Dithering counteracts quantisation error when reducing sample rates

resulting in a more dramatic compression of the entire drum channel. As such, the EQ can drastically alter the way the compressor works, almost as much as adjusting a setting on the compressor itself.

The same process occurs when running a full track through mastering effects, although the fact that the waveforms are more complex and contain sounds from across the entire frequency range means that mastering effects interact with each other to an even greater extent. Sticking to established processing chains and keeping an ear on the bigger picture when making adjustments should help you to avoid unexpected results.

As you work, think about how each change might affect other settings in your mastering chain. For example, if you've boosted the highs to add clarity maybe you now need to adjust your multi-band compressor to take the change into account? As we so often say in *Knowledge Base*, good quality mastering is largely based on trusting your ears. If you're really struggling, visual aids may help, so try running a commercial track through a spectrum analyser or looking at its waveform to get an idea of its frequency balance or overall level.

Eventually you should soon train yourself to hear subtle differences and adjust accordingly without looking at the meters.

Bin the presets

We mentioned last month that presets are best avoided for mastering purposes. The idea that you can load a generic 'Dance Mastering Preset' in your mastering package and hope to get something appropriate for the particular track you're working on is nonsensical. A Dance preset EQ might boost the low frequencies to try and emphasise the kick drum and bass notes, but its suitability will depend entirely on the level of bass already in your track. If you've made a bass heavy mix, picking a mastering preset that boosts the bass again will have an entirely detrimental effect. If you want to learn about mastering and get the best results, avoid presets at all costs.

FM book club

If what we've covered in *Knowledge Base* over the last two issues has left you hungry for more, we recommend the outstanding *Mastering Audio: the Art and the Science* by Bob Katz. It's rare that any subject in music production is summed up so well, so if you want to take your mastering knowledge to the next level you can't go wrong **FM**

Processing

Regardless of what software you have, it's wise to consider the importance of effect order. A typical basic mastering chain would consist of an EQ followed by a compressor or multi-band compressor, then a limiter. The

the output level, frequency balance and even waveform shape (looking at the waveform can give you a good warning when clipping will occur or dynamic range is being harmed).

Most DAWs have built-in tools for this task and we'd also highly recommend Bram's

free s(M)exoscope plug-in (bram.smartelectronix.com). The next thing to consider is how the separate stages of your mastering effects chain interact with each other as you make changes. This phenomenon occurs just about any time you chain effects together.

To simplify matters a bit, let's think for a

moment about effects in a production context rather than mastering. Consider a situation where a sound source (say, a drum machine) is being run through an EQ and then a compressor. If we boost the bass on the EQ, the drum machine will hit the compressor harder each time the kick is triggered,

A mastering preset that boosts the bass again will have a detrimental effect

majority of extra effects such as exciters or stereo widening tools would typically slot in after the compressor and before the limiter. It's also usually a good idea to put some kind of metering tool such as a spectrum analyser, scope or level meter at the end of your chain in order to see how your changes are affecting

KNOWLEDGE BASE NEXT ISSUE

Make sure you pick up *FM* next month for more industry insight and studio knowledge.
FM226 on sale 20th April

PRODUCTION ESSENTIALS

Band Splitting Mixing and Processing

Splitting your frequency bands for individual processing and monitoring can help create depth and clarity at both the vital mixing and mastering stages. **Jono Buchanan** digs deep into the mix, carves a notch and gets creative

Ultimately, after all of the track building and mixing techniques which go into turning a project from a good idea into a series of multi-tracked performances which capture the spirit of that idea as well as possible, the ultimate 'rendering' of a musical work tends to be as a stereo file. Bouncing down a

stereo master is usually considered 'the end' of any mix process but equally it marks the start of the post-production or mastering stage of any track. As more of us are carrying out our own mastering ourselves these days, this tutorial is aimed at the specific consideration of band splitting and mid/side (M/S) mastering – in other words, how to

THE EXPERT

Jono Buchanan
composer,
producer



In between lecturing in music technology, Jono spends his days mixing and producing to the wee small hours – and he's happy to share his vast knowledge with you each month in FM.



The mid/side recording signal decoding theories can be applied to in-the-box elements

make the most of your master file as possible, to enhance it further than you could at the mix stage.

Band splitting means breaking your stereo file down into a few different frequency groups, so that individual processing can be applied to the highest frequencies, without affecting lower ones, for instance. M/S mastering takes the theories behind the popular mid/side recording technique and applies them to a master stereo file which allows for a huge degree of control, particularly when making decisions about 'how stereo' a mix should be. Even more importantly, allowing you to separate frequency bands from more central, mono content to those from wider stereo signals for individual processing.

A range of tools for carrying out such practices are becoming increasingly popular and with Brainworx's bx plug-in scoring so highly in our *Gear Of The Decade* feature a couple of month's ago, it's clear that the opportunities offered by such plug-ins are proving increasingly popular in studios around the world.



M/S processing can EQ sibilant mono vocals without affecting stereo frequencies

Mid/Side Mastering

How mid/side encoding can truly deconstruct stereo masters

Bearing in mind that M/S recording, as explained so far, is all about microphone technique and capturing a deliberately 'false' sense of stereo from two mono microphones, what use could it possibly be on final stereo mix files?

Furthermore, why has it become such a popular technique at the post-production mastering stage, even for musical forms, which contain no mic-recorded signals at all, such as instrumental Dance music?

The answer lies in our understanding of mono and stereo and striking the best sounding balance between the mono-compatible and stereo elements, which make up our

mixes. Here are two examples. You might, at the mix stage, discover that the vocal part in your mix is too sibilant and that a touch of de-essing or careful EQ

is required to make sure this doesn't translate to the release you're planning for the song. However, an EQ tweak or even de-essing process on the entire

mix is going to have implications for other mix elements occupying similar frequency bands, such as hi-hats and pad sounds, which may well either contain 'stereo' information, or be panned away from centre. Equally, at the other end of the frequency spectrum, just how 'mono compatible' is your bass sound?

Lots of synths and plug-ins which feature stereo outputs actually construct their 'whole' sound from a couple of layers or separate oscillators and, to help these sound more impressive, these layers are frequently panned to widen their emphasis and give them more 'presence'.

Not so great when you're listening back to your mix in a

club and any stereo intricacies that became a delicate balance in the overall mix are mono-summed away, or worse – phased away.

Again, though, how do you 'narrow' the stereo image of a bass sound to ensure it's sitting right in the middle of your track at the mastering stage, while leaving high frequencies alone?

The answer to that is also M/S related – if you can treat the middle of your mix with one set of processes and the sides with a different set, there's no reason why you can't de-ess a centrally panned vocal, without affecting the same frequency areas in the stereo content on either side and adjust bass accordingly too.

Stereo Presets

Is your bass made from more than one layer or sound source? Watch out that it isn't 'too stereo'



To the mid, to the side

Before we can understand why M/S mastering can be so effective, it's worth understanding the concept of M/S recording first, which is a well-established and popular microphone technique which lets you record in stereo but with huge flexibility over 'how stereo' the resulting recordings will prove.

In M/S recordings, you need two mono microphones. The first, using a cardioid pattern, points straight at the source you're recording and captures the 'mid' signal.

position of the 'mid'. Then, either at the recording stage if you're recording through a desk or later, using a decoding algorithm, this 'side' signal is split into two mono channels, with the left of these playing back the recorded 'side' signal as captured and the right channel playing back the same recording but with its phase inverted.

This effectively means that the 'positive' movement of the diaphragm when recording is translated to both the left- and right-hand sides of what has become a 'stereo' source

but with the huge benefit of true mono compatibility.

You can decide how 'wide' to pan the side source, once split into two channels and also decide how to balance volumes of the mid and side signals with many of the pitfalls of 'true' stereo recording, such as phase

alignment, completely removed.

Flexible friends

In post-production and mastering, flexibility is key. It's not uncommon that mastering engineers will be asked to make a number of 'versions' of a track so that there's an appropriate mix for a variety of playback



For well-balanced mixes heading for CD and download release, a stereo mastering treatment like this can work a treat

formats. For instance, until so many of us chose to plug our TVs and DVD players into our front-room speakers, it was common that 'TV masters' would be put down to ensure that the richness of most Pop music used on TV didn't overload often inferior television speakers. Mono mixes were frequently requested too, often for broadcast purposes.

Obviously, widening or decreasing the stereo image, as well as adjusting relative frequency balances of a mix has wide-ranging implications for the overall result, so making sure you have the right tools to get the maximum quality from any mix setting is crucial. By this point, you could justifiably be wondering how a mid/side approach to mixing and mastering differs from conventional stereo treatments. Simply put, most conventional mastering processes treat

You can decide how 'wide' to pan the side source, once split into two channels

Nothing too new there. The 'Side' signal is really where the clever stuff happens.

This second microphone, whose diaphragm should be placed as close to that of the 'mid' mic as possible, should be switched to a figure-of-8 pattern and angled at 90 degrees to the mid microphone, so it's effectively pointing 'directly left' from the

Multiband Compression

Splitting your master files into separate frequency bands at the mastering stage can add serious punch and clarity

Perhaps the most well-known 'band splitting' plug-in is the multiband compressor, which divides a stereo mix into different frequency bands so that each can

be individually compressed as part of the mastering process.

Regular compressors limit the dynamic range of a signal but applying a stereo compressor to a

whole mix often yields EQ issues, as the relative levels of bass, treble and intervening bands appears to change as the compressor responds to louder,

usually low frequency signals. Multiband compression gets around this issue by applying an individual compressor to bass, treble and at least one 'middle'

band, meaning that you can toughen up bass or add sparkle or crunch to a mix without adversely affecting or compressing other bands.



1 I've built a basic House track which is designed to contain individual elements in each frequency band. At the bottom end, I've got a dominant bass part and kick drum, in the mid range, a nice full snare sound and, at the top, percussive elements such as shakers and cowbells. There's also a nice drifty vocal, a vocal effect and a squelchy mid-range pad sound, so it would be nice to get some extra definition into each frequency band to make sure the track's all it can be. You can hear it on the DVD, firstly, with no multiband compression.



2 Using Logic's Multipressor, the mix is split into four frequency bands – low, low mid, high mid and treble. Focusing on the bottom end first, I want to get some extra tightness into the elements here and see if I can glue the bass and kick together a little more. This means using both of the lower bands as the kick features predominantly in the lower one, while the low-mid nature of the bass means much of its signal is here. I'm only using ratios of around 2:1, but with some compression and gain change, the bass end comes to life. Hear it on the disc.



3 The third band is where almost all of the vocal lies but it's sitting fairly nicely already so there's no need to reinvent the wheel here. An even lower threshold of 1.88:1 is used just to tidy up frequencies in this area and I'm adding a tiny bit of gain too, just to keep a balance with the lower frequency content. The final band of treble frequencies is a little harsh, so I'm working these a touch harder with a ratio of 2.5:1 and subtly dropping the volume. This places greater emphasis on the vocal and keeps the overall mix in check. Hear the result on DVD.

Advanced Sound Design

Get extreme with your stereo treatments to create space in the centre of the stereo space – perfect for vocals and spoken word

A more radical mid/side mixing approach comes to the fore if you work as a sound designer or are in the business of mixing music to picture. Again, there's a clear

differentiation between the content, its volume in the centre of the mix and the detail in the sides. In stereo mixing, it's usually the case that the dialogue

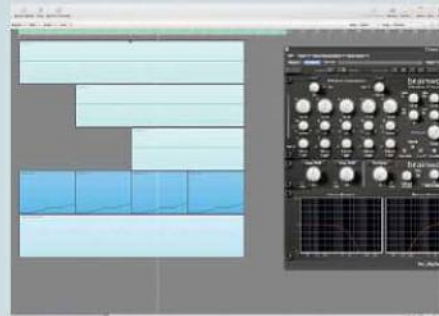
channel is mixed centrally, as a lead vocal is in commercial music contexts, so it's hugely important that the music and sound effects you add leave

adequate space for the spoken word. Equally, there's scope to spread content out to the sides and to make the most of the space in the mix field. I'll be

showing you a more textural piece and mixing it in these contexts. There's nothing to stop you applying similar settings to more obviously 'musical' pieces.



1 Here's the basic track we'll be using. It's made up of three 'texture' parts, two of which are from NI's Absynth 5 and one of which comes from the FM8 synth. There's then a strange electronic loop from Stylus RMX, which is feeding into a randomising delay patch from Logic's Delay Designer and an extra 'percussion' part of weird and wonderful thin noises from Battery 3, which features their own stereo delay. All of these sounds feature important central frequencies but also have a lot of detail spread to the sides. Hear the file unprocessed on the DVD.



2 The first step is to 'reduce' the mid signal so that I can make more of the stereo elements. This reduction is achieved by using the low-pass filter first of all, to roll off frequencies above 1.5kHz. As I want this filter to work even harder, I'm giving it a helping hand by also reducing frequencies above 4.5kHz by 2.6dB, which initially produces this much duller result. Hear it on the disc. It's possible to audition just the mono section by pressing the 'Solo M' button, which lets you hear exactly what you're doing.



3 Now it's time to maximise the stereo section. I'm adding lots of extra sparkle here by adding 2.6dB of gain above 8kHz and 1.7dB at 4.11kHz. I've rolled out bass frequencies below 577Hz altogether, meaning that the bass content is only coming from the centre. Additionally, I've dialled in some stereo width – up to 220%, so that the stereo content is spread wider than normal. The result is thinner but more atmospheric and crucially, there's now room for a dialogue vocal in the middle. Have a listen on the DVD.

Frequency Splitting at the Mastering Stage

Just because a mix is rendered doesn't mean that frequency-sensitive effects can't be added...

We've all been in the situation where we've listened back to a 'final' mix the day after, or taken our stereo bounce to audition it on an alternative pair of speakers

and noticed that the top end lacks reverb, there isn't enough delay on the lead vocal or enough 'pump' on the bottom end and usually, it's no problem to fire the

mix back up and fix those problems. But if you're mastering someone else's work, you have no access to the source files so it's tempting to think that there's no

way to add such treatments. This isn't necessarily true – so long as you have access to some powerful filters, you have the capacity to split a mix into separate

frequency bands that can then be treated independently. Whether you want to add extra effects or tighten a particularly frequency group, it can be done.



1 Here's the basic track we're going to be working on, consisting of a vocal, bass, low drums and stereo hats. The mix has been bounced down to a stereo file, so in order to process it and split it into discrete bands, I've placed it on a stereo audio track and have switched off its output routing to the stereo buss. Then, I've set up three auxiliary busses and have turned the gain to -3dB on each. This means the whole mix is being sent to three separate channels. On the DVD, you can hear the source file.



2 The next step is to split these tracks into separate frequency bands. I'm going to need some pretty powerful filters but many EQ plug-ins provide these. Using the Channel EQ plug-in, I've turned the first auxiliary buss into one for bass only, by using a low-pass filter to only let through frequencies below 255Hz. I've used an extreme 48dB per octave filter. The second buss uses both high- and low-pass filters to let through frequencies between 255Hz and 3.5kHz and buss three uses a high-pass filter on all frequencies above 3.5kHz.



3 Now that the frequencies are split, I can send each separate part to its own treatment. I've started by compressing the bass a little harder, then added some delay to the mid-range by sending this buss to an extra auxiliary with frequency-capped delays (again, 250Hz to 3.5kHz). Lastly, I want a little sheen on the hats, so I'm sending the high frequencies to a final auxiliary send where I'm adding a little reverb. This produces nice 'tight' results, with each band benefiting from its own unique treatment. Hear the result on the DVD.

all content within the stereo field equally. Strap an EQ across the stereo mix and make some adjustments and the left and right signals will be enhanced or reduced in equal measure. This applies to compression too – slap a compressor or volume maximising plug-in over your track and, of course, both sides are treated as one.

While this works perfectly well and for well-balanced material is still a preferred method, there are times when only mid/side post-production will really cut it and this is not necessarily due to a 'poor job' having been done at the mix stage.

As you might expect, mid/side tools are an essential requirement for mastering houses

Feel the width

Let's go back to the example regarding stereo bass synthesizers. If you're cutting your music to CD or MP3, while a wide stereo bass won't provide a fully 'rooted' feel, it's not necessarily disastrous to have a

bass constructed from separate sources and to have these panned left and right of centre. However, if you're intending to cut your track to vinyl, it might be. The grooves

on a record, as it's cut, reflect the frequency content which is then 'decoded' by the stylus and any material which has too wide a stereo bass will cut an appropriately wide groove on the vinyl. This can become a serious problem if the groove is so wide that it touches

the one next to it, as the result will cause the record to skip on playback. As you might expect then, mid/side tools are an essential requirement for any mastering house, as it's a simple job to align bass content to the middle and save some red faces.

Brainworx's free bx_solo plug-in is perfect for soloing mid and side information



Tool time

So, where to find tools which allow you to specialise in the manipulation of stereo imagery in this way? Many DAWs now feature native stereo enhancers, which let you decide how to spread frequency content across the stereo field. While this might address some issues, it's not quite the same as having separate mid and side options.

Brainworx are currently leading the charge in this approach and their freeware plug-in 'bx-solo' provides a great place to start, in terms of soloing mid and side content and adjusting the stereo width. Read through the boxes in this feature to see why you too should strongly consider this mixing and mastering approach. **FM**

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Make sure you pick up *Future Music* next month for more production insight and technique. **FM226** on sale 20th April

Frequency Specific Mono Making

Using bandsplitting to add mono weight to your bottom end while maintaining the stereo sparkle and mono compatibility

Stereo's great isn't it? Being able to prioritise central sounds while sending other elements of your mix to the side will give you almost endless mixing options.

All of this is true and yet often, simplifying sounds and mixes to make them more mono actually creates a good deal more space, tightness and presence in a mix.

If you're working with only electronic sources, you need to be careful as many a synth plug-in manufacturers or drum library creator, eager for its

presets to capture your imagination will throw multi-layered stereo sounds complete with effects together to produce ear-catching results. In

other words, those 'mono' instruments you want in the middle might actually be stereo sources, which can create all sorts of problems down the line.



1 I've written an Electronica track, which I want to ensure is as mono-compatible as possible. There are plenty of stereo sources in the track, including the bassline and while some high frequency content, such as the panned hats, need to stay stereo, I want to be absolutely sure that the most solid elements of the track aren't being separated too much. To start with, I'm experimenting with Logic's own 'Direction Mixer'. A setting of 1.0 represents stereo, so this setting of 0.5 halves the width of the stereo image. Listen on the DVD.



2 The Direction Mixer doesn't really cut it in this context, as it overloads the middle of the mix and the bass really suffers. So, I'm scrapping Direction Mixer in favour of Brainworx's bx plug-in and I'm going to see what its MonoMaker function can do. To start with, I want to see how the mix sounds 'completely in mono'. So, I'm dialling the MonoMaker dial hard round to the right, so that all frequencies up to 22kHz are mono-fied. You can hear the result on the DVD – listen particularly for the results on the originally stereo elements such as the hats.



3 In a way, this shows just how much we take stereo for granted – the mix is a pale imitation of itself without those stereo synths gently undulating from left to right. Clearly, unless I want a mono mix, this is a step too far, yet the bass and kick are benefiting from this super-tight mono treatment. So, a compromise can be reached. As the stereo content is mostly high frequency, I'm going to drop the MonoMaker frequency dial down to 330Hz. This means frequencies below this value will be 'made mono' while those above can remain stereo. The DVD reveals all.

Sound Investment Opportunities from KMR



Peluso 2247

Authentic U47 re-creation. Stunning value and quality.

"It has become, without a doubt, the favorite mic in my own collection." - Henry Robinett,
"Emulating one of the best-loved microphones in recording history is no mean feat, but Peluso has done it!" - Huw Price

£999.00



Toft ATB

8 buss, Trident heritage console, from designer Malcolm Toft.

"The ATB will provide consistent results and a vintage vibe that would be hard to come by elsewhere at this price point"

- Bobby Frasier

Prices from **£4400.00**



TOWERSONIC

Truly professional, British, hand-made speaker stands. Comprehensive range consisting of height adjustable stands, fixed height stands, and the new remote-controllable adjustable stands.

Prices from **£250.00**



DAV BG7

Decca Studios heritage, hand made mic-pre/compressor. A hybrid of the revered BG1 mic-pre and the BG6 compressor/limiter. *"I was seriously impressed with the DAV, and at this price it is impossible to level any credible criticism at all"* - Hugh Robjohns

£599.00



Crane Song HEDD

2 Channel AD/DA convertor. Audiophile grade signal path. Clean or sound changing - the sound is yours. *"Manufactures such as Crane Song have stepped up to the plate to develop processors that never existed before, all because of this brave new world we call digital. As I said before to hear is to believe!"* - Larry DeVivo

£2702.50



TL Audio A4

A 16:2 Discrete Class summing mixer housed in a 2U unit and features 16 balanced inputs on TRS and D-Sub with individual pan controls. *"[With the A4] you get a wholesome feeling, hearing impeccably designed Class A circuitry handling the summing, the Ebony A4 is exceptionally well featured."* - George Shilling

£799.00



FMR RNLA

The Really Nice Levelling Amplifier (RNLA) is a compressor, of sorts, with a character that works well with vocals, bass guitar, acoustic guitars and two-mix sources. Some very well-outfitted RNLA users report that even with a full complement of expensive, vintage levelling amps/compressors, the RNLA still fills a niche that the others do not.

£209.00



JDK R22

The R22 dual channel compressor features two channels of API's award winning compressor circuit. Each channel includes the patented 'THRUST' switch to protect the sensitive high frequency content of the audio signal even under the most vigorous of compression ratios. Incredible value for such a well featured, world-class sounding compressor.

£899.00



Neve 4081

Four independent & genuine 1081 Mic/Pre or Line input channels. Unit can be controlled from front panel or all functions controlled remotely by Mac or PC computers (Mac only initially), using a USB connection and the dedicated Neve Remote Control software or remote control via midi from ProTools.

£2291.25

We offer our full consultancy service in-store, by phone or email, and our website has over 2000 products which can be purchased online. Our legendary after sales service comes with it just the same. Make use of our dedicated Listening Room to try anything out before you buy. To hear the gear in your own studio - call or email for details. For the largest collection of professional recording products anywhere in Europe, call, email, or drop by.

ALL PRICES ARE INCLUSIVE OF VAT

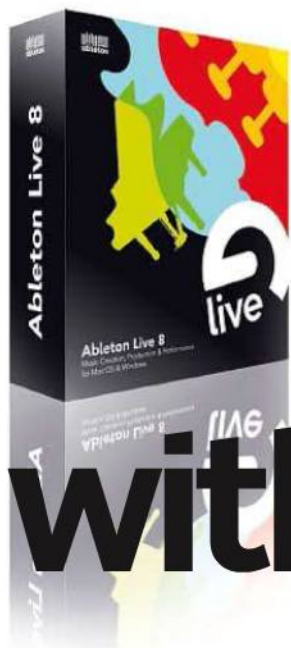


1375 High Road, Whetstone, London, N20 9LN
Telephone: + 44 (0) 20 8445 2446 Email: sales@kmraudio.com

www.kmraudio.com



ABLETON LIVE ESSENTIALS



How to ReWire Live 8 with Reason

Last month, we talked about how to ReWire Ableton Live with Apple's music-making applications, but now it's the turn of the ReWire favourite, Reason. **Martin Delaney** prepares to get the best of both worlds

For Mac users, I'd have to say the Logic/Live partnership is ultimately more powerful and flexible, but there are a lot of Reason users out there (and a lot of Windows users), and Reason is the best alternative to using Logic with Live. Reason and Live make a good

combination – Reason's biggest problem is that it can't record audio – Propellerhead have tried to deal with this with Record, a more DAW-like application which integrates very well with Reason, but the Live combination gives you more options, and a better interface – there's nothing like Live's

THE EXPERT

Martin Delaney
performer,
educator,
producer



Martin, aka mindlobster, has produced Live training material for MacProVideo and PC Publishing, and has personally taught Live to musicians, DJs, kids, and prisoners. He also designed the Kenton Killamix Mini MIDI controller and is one of the UK's first certified Ableton Live trainers.

ease of use, and audio bashing features. But Live isn't perfect either, which is why Live users can benefit from working with Reason. Even if you buy the Live Suite, which contains all of the available add-on Live instruments, you'll still be left wanting more, and that's where Reason delivers.

Not only does it come with an extensive library, there's heaps of content online, some created and shared by users, some available commercially. Propellerhead sell their own Reason ReFills like Soul School, Electric Bass and Abbey Road Keyboards, and you could also look at loopmasters.com, powerfx.com, and reasonrefills.com – and there are plenty others out there.

Audio Reason

The External Instrument Device I talk about in the main walkthrough is great if you want a tidy, one-track way of going to/from a ReWired application like Reason. The only problem with it is that you can't record the audio input back into the same track – that's asking a bit too much! You can create a neighbouring audio track and use the In/Out



'What's in it for me?' Part 1: Live has the audio recording and manipulation features that Reason is still missing



'What's in it for me?' Part 2: Reason has workable instruments, with a legacy of user-created content available online.

View to route the audio into that one – you could maybe use a bit of track grouping to keep things visually tidy, too. If you want to use Start Record on Scene Launch to capture incoming audio from Reason into several Session View clip slots at the same time, then you'll have to make sure record arm is 'off' for the MIDI tracks in your Live set, otherwise you'll be recording new, empty, MIDI clips.

MIDI Reason

You can also send MIDI CCs from Live's clip envelopes to control Reason instruments. Create a MIDI clip (it doesn't have to contain notes if you just want to send the CCs), and route the track to a specific Reason instrument. In Envelopes Box, make sure MIDI Ctrl is selected in the top chooser, then choose a MIDI CC from the pop-up below.

This is another example of how well Reason and Live play together – you don't have to figure out which MIDI CCs you need for the Reason device controls, because Live picks them up automatically – so now you can send notes and automation to Reason, and record the audio back in.

For the record

When it comes to rendering, it's not quite the same as with Logic and Live, where Logic doesn't even need audio tracks dedicated to Live. You'll need to create an audio track in Live, then arm it to receive the Reason input. Obviously, you can record the Reason output directly into Live, but you can also click and drag to highlight an area in the Arrangement View, then open the Export Audio/Video window and render to disk as usual, and the Reason output will be included in the mix (if you're working in Session View, you can open the Export Audio/Video window, and type in a number of bars instead). **FM**

LIVE ESSENTIALS NEXT ISSUE

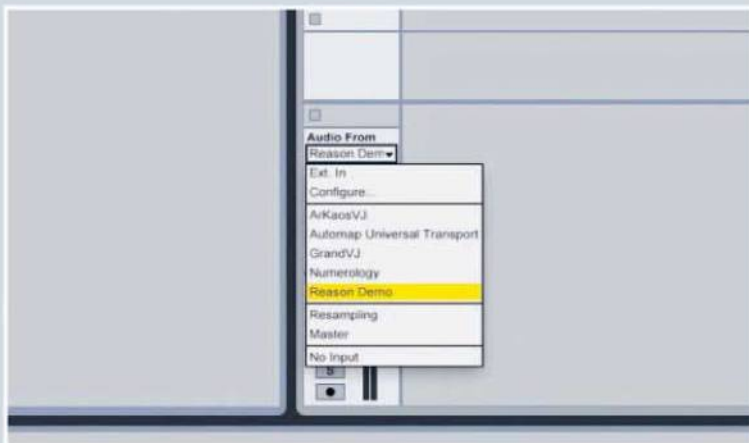
Make sure you pick up *Future Music* next month for more on Live 8-based wisdom. **FM226** on sale 20th April

ReWire with Live and Reason

It doesn't take long to get these two talking – and when you do, they're the best of friends...



1 The usual ReWire start-up rules – launch Live first so it can be the master, then launch Reason – which is now the slave – use one of the Reason demo songs if you don't have your own. Hit the spacebar immediately, and both apps will start running.



2 Reason's mixer will show audio levels, but you won't hear anything until you set up Live. Open Live's In/Out View, and create a new audio track if you don't have one available already. From the In/Out View, choose Audio From/Reason.



3 Arm the audio track for recording, or – if you just want to listen – set it to Monitor/In instead. You'll see a level immediately, as long as your Reason file has some programmed parts! Now you're free to resample/process the Reason parts as necessary.

MIDI Parts from Live to Reason

Using Reason's instruments as a sound source for Live's MIDI parts



1 Let's say you've got your ReWire setup already in place, like in our other three-step walkthrough. Create an empty Reason rack, and load an instrument, like SubTractor. Create a new MIDI track in Live, and drag in the External Instrument Device from the Browser.



2 In the new Device, choose MIDI To/Reason, then below that choose SubTractor 1 (if you've renamed it, the name will show here instead). Then choose Audio From 1/2 Mix L, Mix R. Set the Live MIDI track to either record or monitor.



3 As soon as you play in some notes from a MIDI keyboard, or Live's pseudo-MIDI keyboard, or you create a MIDI clip and draw in some notes, SubTractor's audio will come in the Live track, for sampling, processing or whatever. Nice and tidy!



ON THE DVD

A QuickTime movie showing the ReWire procedure in action – Ableton Live ReWiring to Reason, using MIDI and audio. If you don't have Live 8, download the demo from ableton.com – it'll run fine alongside your current version of Live. Then you can download the Reason demo too (if necessary), from propellerheads.se

Greed is Good

Before I start – sorry, this is a Mac-only thing. It is supported on PC but not natively – check out IPMIDI as a third-party solution (nerds.de).

I know this is a popular topic with Live users – you might be wondering if you can manage your resources by ReWiring two applications on two different computers, that are networked either via cable or wireless network.

The short answer is...no!

ReWire only works between applications on the same computer. But don't freak just yet – there are other ways of doing it. Anybody with a Mac running OS X 10.4 or above has it pretty easy, especially if you want to do it wirelessly, funnily enough.

Wireless sync

First, make sure both of your Macs are connected to the same WiFi network. Then, go to the toolbar in the Finder and choose Go/Utilities – when the Utilities folder opens, double-click on Audio MIDI Setup. This is the heart of all audio and MIDI routings that are possible with the Mac operating system so it's a place you should know well, if you don't already. Open the MIDI Window, and double-click on the Network icon.

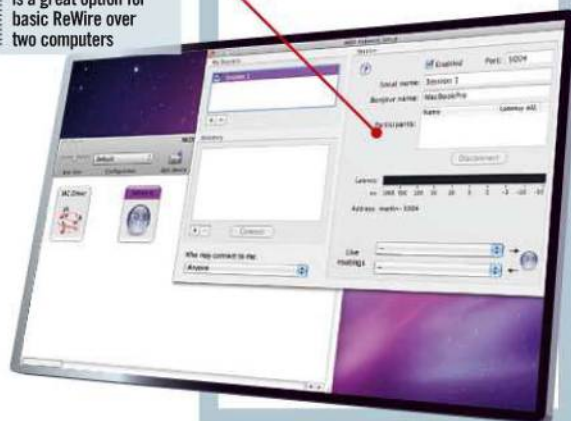
At the top left of the MIDI Network Setup box, which appears next, click the '+' to add a Session. Make sure the small box next to it is checked (you can also rename the session if you want to). The boxes on the right give you more information about your session. The 'enabled' box should be checked too.

Now open Audio MIDI Setup on your other Mac, and the session you just made should be visible there in the Directory box – choose it. Open Live on one Mac, and Reason on the other, and setup their MIDI Preferences so Live is sending MIDI sync to Reason (you can also do this with Live on both Macs, or any other music apps, basically).

That's the very short version, because there are issues you can run into with latency and time drifting...but that'll get you started, anyway!

WiFi MIDI

Networked MIDI sync is a great option for basic ReWire over two computers



Going Further with ReWire

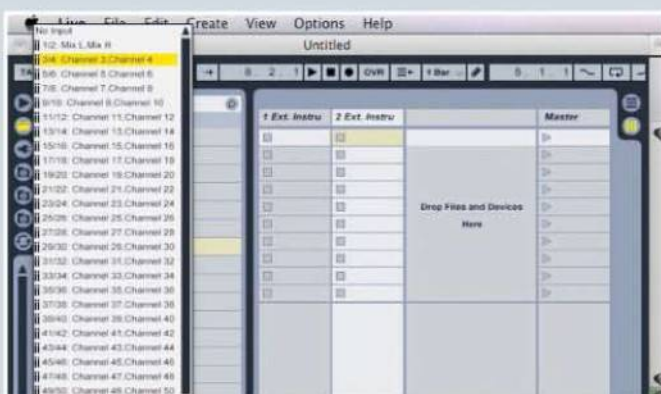
Using Live's MIDI plug-ins with Reason, splitting audio outputs, saving ReWire templates and more...



1 You can do way more than simply capture the stereo input from Reason. Load the Malstrom synth into your Reason rack. Duplicate the Live track you just made in the three-part MIDI walkthrough. In the first track's External Instrument Device, choose MIDI To/SubTractor, in the second, choose MIDI To/Malstrom.



2 Delete Reason's Mixer and Mastering Suite. Hit tab to flip the rack over. Click and drag on SubTractor's Audio Output/Main, and drag the new cable to input 1 in the Hardware Device. Do the same with Malstrom's Main Output, both for Left and Right – drag them to 3/4 in the Hardware Device.



3 Hit tab again, to show the front of the rack. Go back into Live, and, in your first MIDI track's External Instrument device, choose Audio From/1: Mix L. In the second track, choose Audio From/3/4: Channel 3, Channel 4. Now each Reason device is coming in on a separate Live track!



4 Of course, this'll work with as many Reason devices as you want to use. That gives you a huge amount of control over Live's relationship with Reason. You can apply Live's MIDI devices, like the Arpeggiator, to Reason instruments, and you can save Live presets that include the routing to specific Reason sounds.



5 If you want to quickly capture some Reason parts into Live Session View clip slots, enable Start Recording on Scene Launch in Live's Record/Warp/Launch Preferences tab. This will let you capture and quickly loop several Reason inputs at the same time, this is the fastest way to capture elements from existing Reason sets.



6 If you prefer to use the Arrangement View, you can record into that like with any other multitrack source, obviously. If you want to use this setup a lot, save Reason and Live templates that already have everything in place, so you don't have to reinvent the wheel every time you start a new project.

[Home](#)
[Labels](#)
[Genres](#)
[Formats](#)
[News](#)

Latest Release

MINIMAL TECH VOL 1

Inspired by the sublime sonic works of Minilogue, Slam, Damien Lazarus, Marco Dassi, Radio Slave and Layo & Bushwacka amongst others, 5PIN MEDIA proudly presents MINIMAL TECH VOL 1.

Minimal Tech is here to stay and has evolved into one the biggest most successful genres incorporating influences from Techno, Tech House, Tribal House, Deep House and has seen the rise of Labels such as Get Physical, Cocoon, and Poker Flat into the mainstream.

So get ready for some Pulsing Bass, Heavy Swung Grooves and Stark Synths all fuelled by the unique 5Pin Media formula of MIDI, samples and loops designed to give you maximum control of your minimal productions.



Best Sellers



Mad Professor
Reel2Reel Reggae



Essential Minimal
Techno



Dubstep Vol 3



Nic Fanciulli



Dom Kane
Tech House Prod'r 2



Tribal Tech

Featured Products



Artist Series Download Packs



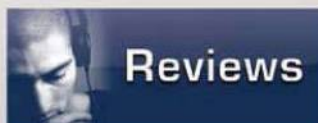
Sounds and inspiration from some of the world's best known music producers and artists directly to your desktop.



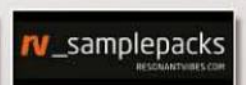
Loopmasters Sample Boutique

Loopmasters are proud to bring you some of the best collections of sounds and samples in multiple formats from some of the most cutting edge labels and producers on the planet. Visit our website today and experience a new way of buying royalty free sounds, samples and patches to inspire your productions!

- Earn 10% virtual cash with every purchase
- 1Gb+ free sounds and samples
- Independent reviews and user ratings
- Super fast server and downloads
- My profile including product registration
- Tech articles and industry knowledge
- Cutting edge labels
- Artist sample collections
- Search by label, genre or format



Featured Labels



WAV : REX2 : ACID : REASON REFILLS : LIVE PRESETS : APPLE LOOPS : AKAI MULTITRACKS : HALION : MPC : EMU : EXS : RMX : SFZ : MAC / PC

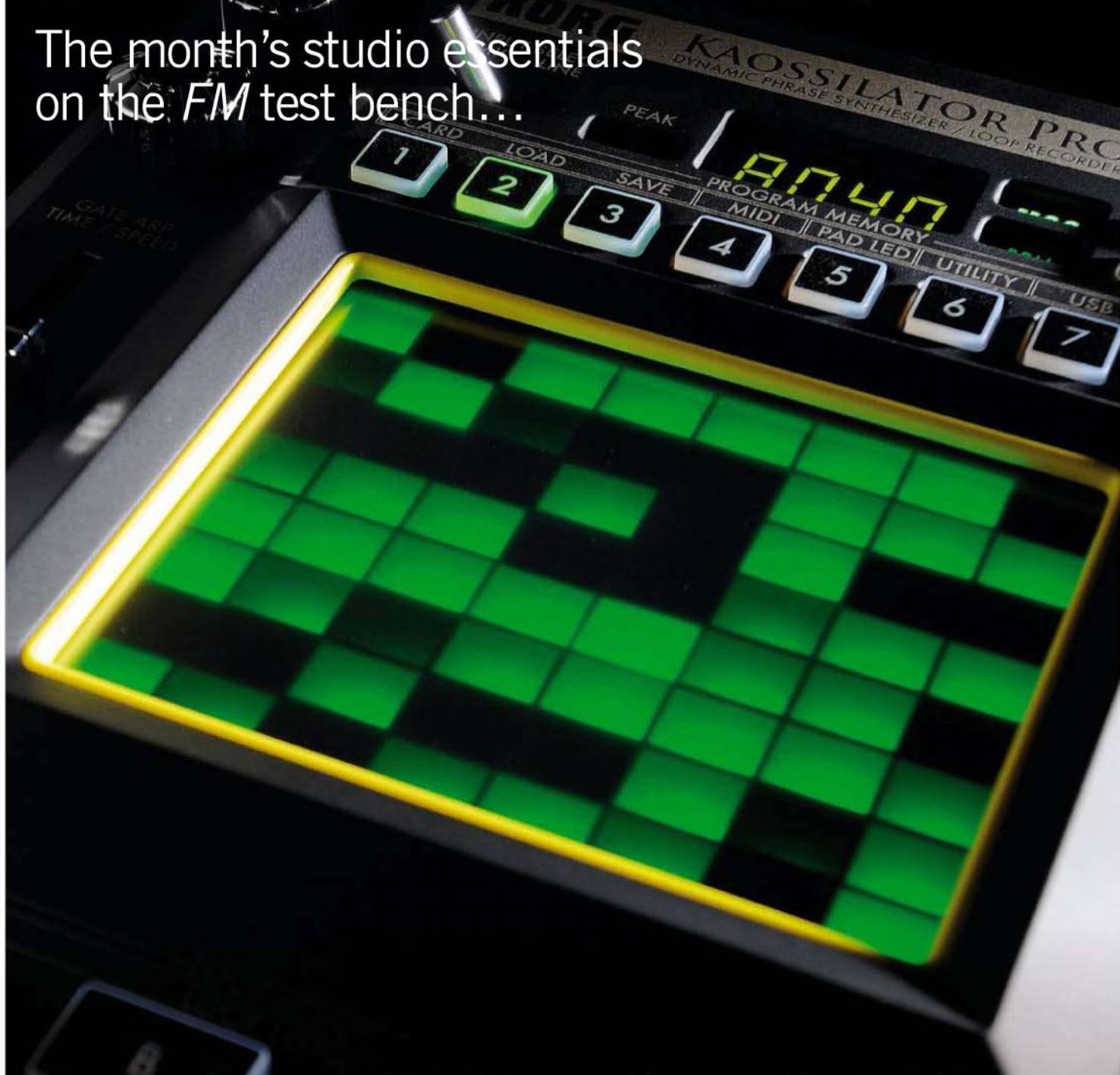
www.LOOPMASTERS.com

The source for sounds

Call +44 (0) 1273 692313 or visit the website

Reviews

The month's studio essentials
on the *FM* test bench...



OTO Biscuit
84 OTO reveal
their lo-fi
tabletop processor
that aims to grit your
sound to bits.



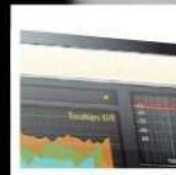
PMC DB1S-AII
86 High-end
monitors with
a mini footprint and a
big punch? We
investigate



Akai MiniAK
94 A brand new
mini synth at a
bargain price. But can
it take on the
competition and win



PreSonus Studio One
88 PreSonus
jump in the
DAW deep-end with this
new, impressively-
spec'd contender.



Lexicon PCM Native Reverb Plug-ins
100 Reverb
royalty dish
up virtual versions. Will
they meet expectations?

Highlights this issue...

Korg Kaossilator Pro | £350

Korg's mini phrase synthesizer finally grows up and becomes a man. **Greg Scarth** attends its Bar Mitzvah



WHAT IS IT?

Upgraded version of Korg's pocket-sized looper and phrase synthesizer.

CONTACT

Who: Korg UK
Tel: +44 (0)1908 857 100
Web: korg.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 New external audio features
- 2 MIDI I/O
- 3 Built-in effects

When we reviewed Korg's groundbreaking Kaossilator way back in *FM197*, we loved its

innovative approach to creating loop-based music and hoped that it might spawn a bigger follow-up. Three years down the line, Korg have perfectly granted our wishes with the introduction of the Kaossilator Pro (KO-Pro), a much more heavily featured version which offers a variety of new features and looks all set to build on the success of the original KO-1. Yuss!

To say that we were looking forward to getting our hands on it is something of an understatement.

Bigger and better

Pulling the Kaossilator Pro from its box, it becomes immediately apparent that this is a far more substantial unit than the original version. The form factor is almost identical to that of Korg's Kaoss Pad KP3, with all-metal construction and a bigger overall footprint giving the Pro a much more weighty, well-built feel than its predecessor. One side

effect here is that the Pro is less portable, requiring DC power from a mains adapter.

Retaining the ability to run on batteries would have been a bonus, but Korg's promotion to Pro for studio use and live performance suggest that it simply isn't intended to be a mobile tool like the original Kaossilator.

The layout of the KO-Pro will be familiar to anyone who's used the KO-1, but a series of key differences reflect the new features on offer. The large X-Y touchpad is backlit, as on the KP3, and the gate arpeggiator has a new dedicated slider and button. A quick glance at the connections reveals an extra pair of RCA sockets and a mic input for capturing external sounds and using the vocoder. As if that wasn't enough, the Pro features MIDI in and out, an SD card slot and a USB socket to link it to your computer. Aces.

X-Y not?

In use, the Kaossilator Pro is pleasingly intuitive despite a number of small changes from the original workflow. The four large buttons below the X-Y pad represent four separate loop locations, allowing complex multi-layered patterns to be built up with ease. During





SPECS

200 programs including a bank of 15 effects

Four loop recording banks

Power: 9V DC adaptor

Kaossilator Pro Editor software runs on Windows 7, XP SP3, Vista SP2 or later. Mac version runs on OS X 10.4 or later.

Dimensions:

210 x 226 x 49mm

Weight:

1.3kg

playback, each of these pads allows parts to be quickly muted, assigned for recording or erased using the function buttons down the right hand side of the unit. The levels of loops can also be adjusted using the new mixer feature, allowing four-part sequences to be tweaked on the fly. A few features from the mini KO have been omitted in the new version, with the lack of an undo function in particular necessitating a slightly different approach to working which may not be obvious to existing Kaossilator users.

All 100 programs from the KO-1 are included and supplemented by 100 new patches replicating everything from vibraphones to MS20 leads. Sliding your finger horizontally on the pad controls the pitch according to your chosen key and scale but most patches also offer a degree of expression control via your finger's position on the vertical axis. Typically, moving your finger higher up the pad will control a variable such as filter cutoff, vibrato or the mix of a delay or reverb effect.

Unfortunately, it's not possible to choose which of these variables you control, hampering the flexibility of most of the programs and effects, nor is

Multi-touch

The Kaossilator Pro's backlit touchpad is larger than that of the KO-1 but still only responds to a single finger. Trying to touch the pad with two fingers results in the Pro getting confused and finding the centre point of the pair... In the era of the JazzMutant Lemur and even Apple's iPhone, the KO-Pro is in danger of being left behind by multi-touch equipped

music controllers. In the same way that the iPhone's multi-touch capacitive screen revolutionised the world of mobile phones, a multi-touch pad on the Kaossilator would instantly open up a whole host of new features. Most obviously, multi-touch could unlock the polyphonic potential of the Kaossilator, allowing you to play

chords live rather than creating them by layering notes over each other. In fact, why not take it a step further and integrate multi-touch swipe gestures as featured on the latest laptops? Imagine the possibilities for a Kaossilator which knew how many fingers you were using and could respond differently for each number...

find that the Pro uses a different system. Inspired by the arp on Korg's Electribe and controlled using the dedicated slider and on/off button, the new gate arp abandons the presets entirely. This system is much more flexible and the arp is easily adjusted with the slider, which can be assigned to gate speed or time. A somewhat inconveniently placed switch round the back of the unit allows you to flip between the two. The final big new feature of the Pro is the ability to record

is particularly fun, with the X-Y pad offering excellent hands-on control of the modulation. Although a KP3 or even mini-KP contains more effect processing power, the KO-Pro's effects certainly add another string to its bow and increase its potential further.

MIDI misery

MIDI compatibility was one of the main features we thought would improve the Kaossilator, so the arrival of MIDI ports on the Pro got us seriously excited.

Unfortunately, there are a couple of major omissions from the KO-Pro's MIDI implementation. Firstly, it doesn't support standard note data. The X-Y

The KO-Pro's effects certainly add another string to its bow and increase its potential even further

it possible to control these variables from an external controller. I'd have liked to see greater control of the Pro's synth engine, even if it was just the ability to assign the vertical axis of the pad to different variables. It seems a shame that the Kaossilator hardware itself can create so many usable sounds but your tweaking options are restricted.

Arping on

Owners of the original Kaossilator will be used to its preset-based gate arpeggiator and may be surprised to

and manipulate external audio through the line or microphone inputs. Audio loops are automatically synced to the Kaossilator's tempo, making it easy to timestretch external sounds to match your synthesized parts.

The option to record audio is handy in itself, but the Kaossilator's abilities extend beyond basic looping of external sounds with the inclusion of a bank of fifteen effects programs. These allow you to manipulate external audio using effects such as a filter, delay, pitch shifter, looper or vocoder. The vocoder

coordinates are instead sent and received as CC values, meaning that if you want to play the internal synth instruments using a MIDI controller or DAW you'll need to find a way of converting notes to CC. It's by no means impossible, but it seems an unnecessary hassle compared to just plugging in and playing.

If there were a simpler way for the Pro to be triggered by note data, it would allow greater control of instruments and make it more flexible for live performance. The second flaw



£436

Worth considering if you'd prefer a keyboard interface. Huge sampling capabilities, sequencer and Kaoss-based effects engine.

korg.com



£379

A different way of working, but if you want mobile sampling and sequencing with a handful of effects, the baby of Akai's MPC range takes some beating.

akai.com



£179

The original Kaossilator is still worthy of consideration. No external audio, but the great synth programs and looping capabilities make the KO-1 a bargain.

korg.com

through External Control Mode, but the KO-Pro's synth and looping is disabled in this mode. In terms of further connections, the Pro's SD card slot allows you to save your loops and settings for later recall, which is sure to

series of improvements on the original, introducing elements from the Kaoss Pad in order to come up with something altogether more powerful, useful, full-sounding and serious.

However, there are a number of

flaws that currently stop it being the creative revolution it should be. We can only hope that a firmware update might fix these problems and

unlock the full potential of the hardware. At an RRP of £350, Korg have effectively put the Pro up against much more flexible, more 'standard' alternatives. But given how much it has to offer Kaossilator Pro deserves to be taken seriously. **FM**

In terms of further connections, the Pro's SD slot allows you to save loops and settings for later recall

Overall, the Kaossilator Pro's MIDI functionality seems like a missed opportunity. The ability to trigger notes from external controllers and sync with other devices have both been fumbled slightly. It does, however allow you to control other synths with its touchpad

be a welcome addition for anyone using a Pro for live performances.

Conclusion

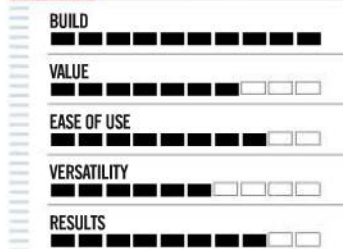
Although there are a handful of criticisms of the Kaossilator Pro, there's no doubt that it's great fun and offers a

Converting MIDI notes to CC

Despite the presence of MIDI I/O connections, the Kaossilator Pro is not as MIDI-friendly as it might first appear. In order to play the Pro's built-in synth engine using an external controller, you'll need to use software to convert note data to CC values. Luckily this isn't

too difficult to achieve. MIDI utilities such as the excellent freeware MIDI-OX (Windows only, midiox.com), or the wacky but powerful Plugue Bidule (Mac and Windows, plugue.com) allow note messages to be remapped to CC values, making this process

relatively simple. However, most DAWs offer MIDI mapping options which can carry out this task for you. It might not be as easy, but the neatest solution could be to set up a MIDI environment which automatically maps notes to the CC values the KO-Pro expects. Tsk.

FutureMusic VERDICT

A series of improvements on the original Kaossilator Pro and a great new way of making new music

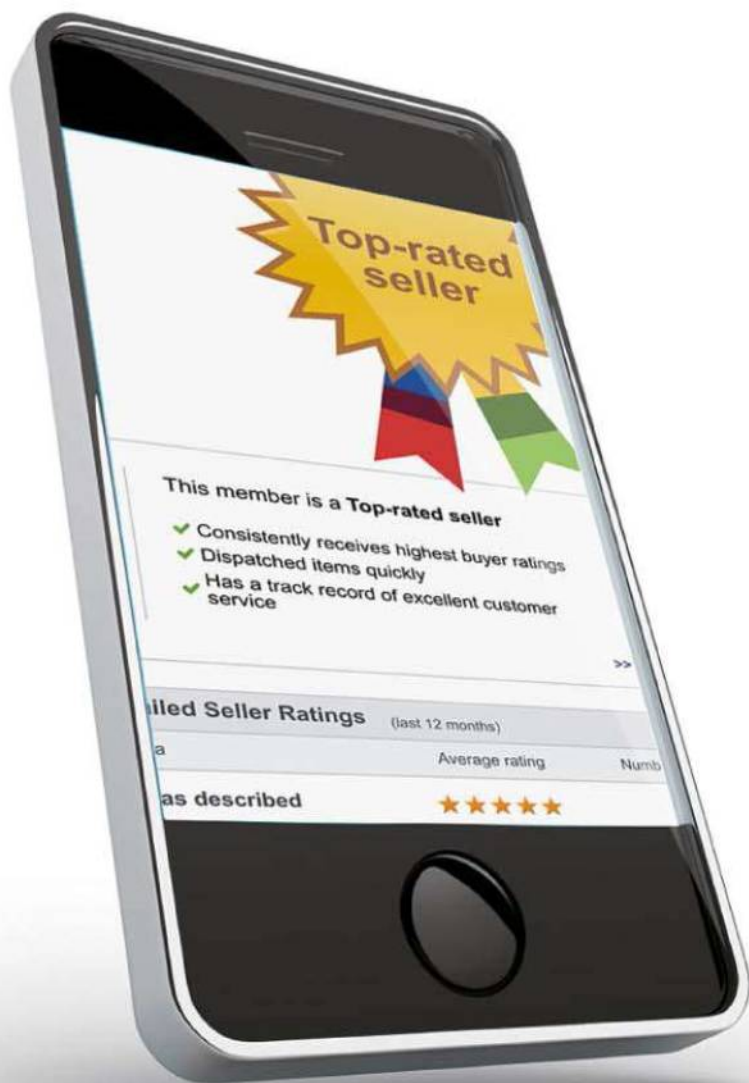


studioxchange.co.uk

The UK's fastest growing Pro-Audio retailer

Want to find out how we
became a top-rated seller?
Just pick up the phone.

Call: 01462 677 333



studio>>
XCHANGE

Studioxchange Ltd, Peak House, Works Road, Letchworth, Herts, SG6 1GB | Tel: 01462 677 333

www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

OTO Biscuit | €529

Marc '01' puts the kettle on as we prepare to taste the bitcrushing biscuit from France



WHAT IS IT?

A stereo multi-FX box with bitcrusher and analogue filter

CONTACT

Who: Schneider's Buero
Tel: +49 (0)30 9789 4136
Web: otomachines.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Dirty wave-shapers
- 2 Creamy filter
- 3 Bright multi-colour lighting

Little black boxes tend to have an alluring mystique about them, which gets heads turning and makes ears tingle. Especially when they're elegantly designed and offset with bold lighting and minimalist graphics. Despite its deceptively clean exterior, the insides are designed to degrade your squeaky clean audio using an array of lo-fi processing, including 8-bit convertors, clock rate reduction, digital effects and stereo analogue filters.

Get your kit off

The first three dials on the top row are labelled drive, naked and dressed.

While the former is self explanatory, the latter two set the volume levels of the dry and 8-Bit effect signals.

In practice, the drive knob needs to be turned a few degrees before you can hear the effect – even if the 'dressed' knob is on full. The drive stage provides analogue saturation via diode clipping, so you can dial up some gentle warmth or ramp it up a bit for some extra crunch and fizz. Either way, the drive stage boosts the effect level so it can become way louder than the dry or bypass levels if desired.

When you hit the bypass button, its green light goes dim and the whole circuit is bypassed. In this mode, the

volume is fixed and the naked dial has no effect on the dry signal.

Crunchy coating

The first-stage of signal processing are the 8-bit convertors. The conversion adds a bit of background noise to everything passing through the box, and is what we'd expect. Next port of call is the effects section, which gives you a choice of four effects, wave-shaper, pitch-shifter, delay and step filter (see *Creamy Filter* box on the next page).

Only one effect can be used at the time, turn it on by pressing the brain button, and program using the bottom row of buttons. It takes a little bit of memorising to remember what button controls what function at any different time, but the lights give a bit of visual feedback which helps keep track of things. The waveshaper is my favourite, and things can get pretty crunchy and edgy which this is engaged. The digital delay can be set manually or sync to MIDI clock, and you can tweak the feedback time and tempo using the clock rate knob.

I'm not sure how useful it is, as it omits the original signal and there is no wet/dry mix. The pitch shifter spans one octave up and two down, but lags behind by a few milliseconds so drum loops will lose timing. It does work



really nicely on silky strings to add extra harmonies via the 3rd, 5th and octave settings.

Many of the effect parameters can be edited using the clock rate knob. Because of this assignment, you can't change the clock rate until you deselect the effects altogether.

Smack my bits up

The included manual describes the art of modifying the 8-bit status of the signal through the rectangular switches as 'Biscuiting'.

The effect is controlled by the row of eight rubber switches – these represent each of the eight bits and have three positions. White is normal, red inverts the bit and off mutes it. It's easy to experiment by randomly tapping buttons, but I found that the texture doesn't vary so much, more the loudness or intensity.

The idea of using the buttons to drop the bits in and out is fun and visually stimulating, but in practice, I found the simplest settings most



Creamy Filling – The Filter

Last, but certainly not least in the chain, is the analogue filter section. This has been specially tweaked to compliment the bitcrusher effect. In contrast to the wave smashing, the filter just oozes creamy goodness.

The tri-colour filter button toggles between low-, high- and band-pass types, and there are knobs for cutoff and Q. As a bonus, there's a nice little eight-step sequencer that can control cutoff too. You can change the number of

steps as well as the speed and there are three playback modes – forward, alternate and random. The step filter lends to some old-school fun, but it's not possible to manually sweep the cutoff with it running.

useful. The effect is virtually identical when all the bits are either red or white, while the in-between mixtures didn't provide much of a variation in tone and texture.

and waveshaping give it much more textural variety. The lo-fi quality is boosted by certain sonic unpredictability when combinations of bit-verting and wave shaping are

induced. If anything is certain, this box will take your pristine audio and subvert it into a plethora of digital grains, and it will have no problem

This box will have no problem making your Moog sound like a Nintendo, should that be your wish

Crumbs

If you like a particular button combination, but fear that you won't remember it, then you can store it in one of the eight memory slots called snapshots. It's worth noting that the eight snapshots are independent from the preset save function – which saves the parameters of all the effects.

The Biscuit speaks enough MIDI to ease its way in to a studio setup. All the pots, switches and buttons send MIDI CC messages and in return, the effect settings can receive those same CCs via the In and Out ports on the rear. It can sync the internal step sequencer to MIDI clock and preset storage is handled via SysEx dumps as are firmware updates.

The final dunk

If you are looking for a genuine lo-fi processor, you've got it from the get-go here. It's one of the few devices in its class which is stereo, and probably the only one which combines all these features in one place. The crushing and filtering are both very useful to have, but the added bonus of effects

making your Moog sound like a Nintendo, should that be your wish.

There's no denying that this is a high-quality construction, with the knobs being some of the sturdiest I've used. The filter cutoff and sample rate dials have a bit more space around them, as they are undoubtedly going to get the most use. My one criticism would be to have an extra endless rotary knob for controlling the effects separately from the clock rate. This would avoid parameter jumps, and free up the clock knob for live tweaking. **FM**

FutureMusic VERDICT

BUILD	■■■■■■■■■■
VALUE	■■■■■■■■■■
EASE OF USE	■■■■■■■■■■
VERSATILITY	■■■■■■■■■■
RESULTS	■■■■■■■■■■

A magic black box for lo-fi, 8-bit and retro-game crunch. Perfect for adding quality grit.

SPECS

Stereo inputs and outputs
Input gain from $-\infty$ to 15dB with diode clipping
8-bit Analogue to Digital and Digital to Analogue converters
Muting and inverting each of the 8-bits
Variable sample clock from 250Hz to 30kHz
Analog multimode filter with resonance control

FX section: Waveshaper, Delay, Pitch Shifter and Step Filter
Separate control of dry and 8-bit signals
16 presets

MIDI: Continuous Controller, Beat Clock, Program Change and Sysex for presets
True relay Bypass

Dimensions:

190 x 60 x 117mm

Weight:

580g

ALTERNATIVES



Sherman Rodec Restyler

£550

The multi-mode filter features a unique set of controls to mix and match the three bands and the large dials and colour-coded lighting make it a top class contender.

rodec.com



Jomox T-Resonator

299 Euros

Tabletop box featuring stereo analogue low-pass filter, delay line plus an LFO and envelope to modulate the madness.

jomox.com



Alesis Bitman

£50-£150

What you get is a noisy combination of bit-reduction, decimation, ring modulation, comb filtering and compression. Pick it up second-hand.

alesis.com



PMC DB1S-AII |

£2,056 per pair

PMC have a reputation for quality in both the hi-fi and professional worlds. **Greg Scarth** investigates their latest update to the DB1S-As

WHAT IS IT?

Compact two-way active nearfield studio monitors

CONTACT

Who: PMC
Tel: +44 (0)870 444 1045
Web: pmc-speakers.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Two-way transmission-line design
- 2 140mm LF driver and 27mm soft-domed tweeter
- 3 50Hz – 25kHz frequency response

SPECS

Frequency response: 50Hz – 25kHz
Peak SPL @ 1M: 108dB
Connections: Balanced XLR input
Dimensions: 290 x 155 x 283mm
Weight: 5.13kg

During the two decades since they were founded, PMC have cemented their position as one of the most innovative brands in loudspeaker design and manufacturing. Although the DB1S compact near-field monitor has already been around for six or seven years, PMC continue to upgrade the design on a regular basis. This, the second generation of the active version, features a new and improved amplifier.

Transmission line

The obvious defining feature of the DB1 is its use of PMC's Advanced Transmission Line (ATL) design. Without wanting to go into too much technical detail, a transmission line speaker design places the driver at the end of a tube – the low-frequency sound waves produced at the back of driver are emitted from this tube in phase with those produced by the front, boosting the sound pressure level around a tuned

frequency range. If the transmission line length is correctly calculated to match the driver, the result is a loudspeaker whose bass frequency response belies the apparent limitations of the driver itself. PMC clearly have faith in transmission line designs and, for what it's worth, I'm also a big fan, believing that they offer superior bass extension with accurate transient response and cleaner, less hyped and muddled bass than more common bass reflex designs.

The listening test

Previous versions of the DB1S-A used Japanese Flying Mole amplifiers, neatly integrated into the back of the DB1's enclosure, but the key upgrade in the latest version is the new DS-001 class D amplifier module, designed specifically for the DB1S-A and its bigger brother, the TB1S-A. With a maximum output of 200W per speaker, the DS-001 can produce twice the power of the Flying Mole. One

convenient advantage of class D amplifiers' efficiency is that they generate very little heat, obviating the usual requirement for a heatsink and allowing the amplifier to fit into a more compact unit.

It's worth noting that the DS-001 offers absolutely no adjustment other than a level control and power switch for each unit. Although this might seem unusual, I suspect there's logic behind it, placing the emphasis on adequate room treatment in order to achieve an even frequency response.

Although we didn't have a pair of the original DB1S-A model to make a direct comparison with, the new amplifiers certainly delivered in terms of accurate sound reproduction. After prolonged listening tests, both with finished mixes and works in progress, the DB1S-AII proved to be revealing and accurate without inducing fatigue. If you closed your eyes you'd believe you were listening to much larger monitors, with low frequency notes and kick drums being reproduced with accuracy and punch. The design of the DB1S takes advantage of the benefits of small speaker drivers, offering lightning-fast transients and precise recreation of dynamic music, while still offering very acceptable response right down into the lower registers.

Conclusion

The overall impression is that the DB1S-AII is highly musical. Although they are clean, flat and neutral, they produce an engaging sound and punch way above their weight. I have no doubt that they'd be incredible in a home studio, but I suspect the price will put the vast majority of potential home users off and they're more likely to find their home in smaller professional studios. If you're looking for high-end monitoring but space is at a premium, these should be at the top of your shopping list. **FM**



FutureMusic VERDICT

BUILD	■■■■■■■■■■
VALUE	■■■■■■■■■■
EASE OF USE	■■■■■■■■■■
VERSATILITY	■■■■■■■■■■
RESULTS	■■■■■■■■■■

Outstanding tiny monitors which pack a serious punch. Accurately priced for their quality.



Introducing...

CMS 40

No Compromise, Place Anywhere Nearfield Monitoring

- ✓ Superior Sound: Bi-amped 25 watts woofer, 25 watts tweeter Class AB power with lots of punch
- ✓ Incredibly Compact: Only 25 cm high, can even be mounted on mike stand
- ✓ Front Ported: Means it can be positioned flat against a wall
- ✓ 1" Al-Mg inverted dome tweeter with 4" Polyglass cone woofer

Want to know more? - Hit www.scvlondon.co.uk

Call 020 8418 1470 for your nearest dealer



www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

**WHAT IS IT?**

A new player in the competitive DAW market from established and respected hardware providers PreSonus

CONTACT

Who: Source Distribution
Tel: +44 (0)20 8962 5080
Web: presonus.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Ease-of-use
- 2 Incorporation of project management and mastering tools
- 3 Flexible and clear mixer section

PRICING

Artist version
£199
Upgrade from Artist to Pro
£199



PreSonus Studio One Pro | £349

PreSonus are best known for their hardware, but **Bruce Aisher** wonders if they can really compete with the big players in the professional DAW arena...

There is always something interesting about a new arrival in the DAW arena, especially when the manufacturer

concerned is better known for hardware than software. This is all the more surprising when the software is targeted specifically to compete with the likes of the 'big boys' such as Steinberg's Cubase and Apple Logic Pro. This brings us to Studio One Pro from PreSonus, the big brother of their new DAW offering. PreSonus is best known to many as a serious player in the audio interface market, but their roots are in analogue outboard, and they now have a wide range of analogue and digital

products aimed at the recording and mixing end of the technology spectrum.

Given their expertise in audio interface design, it becomes a little more understandable why they might choose to undertake development of a DAW that matches their hardware and workflow philosophy more directly. However, for the not inconsiderable task of producing a DAW from scratch, PreSonus turned to KristallLabs in Hamburg who were already working on Capture, recording software for their top-flight digital mixer.

PreSonus ultimately took over KristallLabs and with it, the development of Studio One. Perhaps

more importantly it also brought with it the expertise of Wolfgang Kundrus and Matthias Juwan, both ex-Steinberg employees, and big hitters in the world of Cubase and Nuendo.

Studio One comes in two flavours – the Pro version we're taking a look at here, and Studio One Artist (bundled with all PreSonus FireStudio audio interfaces), that lacks a few of the more advanced features of its big brother.

The important question though is whether Studio One has enough bang for its buck to survive on its own in the commercial jungle.

The lowdown

So what does Studio One offer? At its core, Studio One Pro is a variation on the standard DAW theme of offering an integrated environment capable of recording, editing and mixing audio, MIDI and virtual instrument sources. The design team have stated that when approaching the interface, they wanted to build a piece of software that was easy to use and put functions visibly within easy reach, rather than buried in numerous menus and sub windows.

This ethos of ease-of-use throughout the creative process appears to extend from song setup on the Start page to the Project window where you can analyse and master your final track (or tracks) and burn a CD or create a 'Digital Release'.

Installation and setup

The Studio One box includes two installation DVDs, a Quick Reference and Quick Start Guide. I always like to see a printed manual, especially when confronted with new software, but no such luck here.

Of course, the danger is that a printed manual can go out of date quite quickly, but its presence would have been welcome nonetheless. Installation was simple and fast, with the core software installed as standard, and additional buttons to install the optional content. There is no dongle-based copy protection, although online activation is required. It is worth pointing out that the software runs on both Windows and Mac systems, and the bundled installation DVDs cater for both platforms.

Running Studio One for the first time allows the software to scan for existing plug-ins – it is faster on second and concurrent boots – and then presents the user with a Start page. This is the the jump-off point for starting a song or project, but also allows you to configure audio and MIDI devices. The only thing I had to do was add my USB MIDI keyboard as an External Device, and everything was ready to go. One particularly useful

Native Effects and Additional Content

Studio One comes with its own complement of effects. These 'Native Effects' are designed to run at 64-bit (assuming the program is switched to the correct mode).

As well as the usual range of dynamic, modulation and delay tools, you will also find an amp modeller, distortion processor, a couple of reverbs and some interesting analysis tools. If you have outboard

hardware you wish to integrate with your system there is 'Pipeline' hardware insert plug-in that takes care of the routing and delay compensation.

Studio One has a limited, but useful range of four virtual instruments. 'Impact' for sampled drums, 'Presence' for instrumental sample playback, 'SampleOne' for more detailed sampling and 'Mojito', a simple

subtractive synth. All these come with a healthy package of content.

This icing on the cake though is the provision of NI Kore Player with over 250 instruments, Native Instruments Guitar Rig LE, Toontrack EZDrummer Lite and over 5GB of Bandmate drum and music loops. This makes for a more rounded package in the absence of a full complement of native synths.



The software itself is split into the Start, Song and Project pages, with each addressing a particular part of the track and album creation process.

DAWs you will find a main workspace (with a timeline along the top) to which tracks can be added. There is also a button to add and view Marker and

Tempo tracks. To the left of the track display is an optional Inspector area that displays extra information for each selected track or event – volume, output,

tempo, timestretch, transpose, delay and event layer information among others. At the top of the main window is the usual set of command drop-down menus (although many of the functions contained here are accessible in some way from the buttons in the main window). Below this you'll find an editing tool icon box, snap and quantise options, and buttons for navigating to the Start or Project pages.

At the bottom of the screen sits the transport and locator bar, to the right of which are the three important buttons. 'Edit' brings up the MIDI/Audio editing window in the lower half of the main display for more detailed event work. 'Mix' displays the main mixer window, that can also be detached from the main display and shown as a separate window. Finally, 'Browse' allows you to access Instruments, Effects, Sounds, Files and the Pool (audio currently in

The software is split into Start, Song and Project pages, each addressing a part of the track creation process

feature is the News Feed (for updates and other relevant news), and the Demos and Tutorials section, where you will find a very useful introductory guide to the software.

Taking the tour

Having pressed 'Create a New Song' on the Start page, we come to the Song View. This is where most of the creative magic happens. Like most modern



Studio One's mixer window should be familiar to most DAW users

SPECS

PC: Windows XP, Windows Vista or Windows 7. At least an Intel Pentium 4 1.6GHz processor or AMD Athlon 64 (Turion) with 1GB RAM, An Intel Pentium 4 2.8GHz EM64T (or better) or AMD Athlon 64 3000+ (or better) with at least 2GB RAM is recommended

Mac: OS X 10.4.11 or Mac OS X 10.5.2 or higher, At least a PowerPC G4 1.25GHz or Intel Core Solo 1.5GHz processor with 1GB RAM, A PowerPC G5 (or better) or Intel Core Duo or Intel Xeon processor (or better) with at least 2GB RAM is recommended

All systems require an active internet connection, DVD-R drive and monitor resolution greater than 1024x768 pixels



musicradar.com

The No.1 website for musicians

Love music? Love playing music? Then log on to MusicRadar for all the best news, reviews and professional tuition

Dedicated to independent buying advice, the latest product news and expert tuition, MusicRadar is the number one website for musicians of all abilities.

MusicRadar is a community. Our reviews are enriched by user reviews, our news stories and blogs are constantly commented on and our forums are full of the banter you

would expect from musicians talking about the thing they love most.

Add all that together and you get a thriving, vibrant community of like-minded people all talking, arguing, voting, listening, watching and reading about the one thing that unites them all – making music. We hope you like it!

NEWS EXTRA! EXTRA!

Whether you're a young guitarist, a bedroom DJ, an aspiring guitarist, a laptop lover or weekend producer, MusicRadar is the only place to go for the hottest news. We've got the latest gear, software, studio and artist news from around the world, updated 24/7.

REVIEWS BUYING GEAR? READ THESE

Always written by musicians for musicians, our gear reviews are the best on the web – think expert buying advice, passionate user reviews plus studio quality audio and video clips. Only MusicRadar enables you to hear and watch a piece of gear in action before you head to the shops – all that plus the best reviews around.

PRO TUITION COME AND PLAY!

MusicRadar features step-by-step projects for beginners and experts alike. Check out our How To... walkthroughs or just grab something from our weekly Free Music Software round-ups.



COMPETITIONS WIN ££££ STUFF!

Like free stuff? MusicRadar is chocka with the best gear competitions. Over the last few months, we've given away amps, guitars, monitors and more!

EXPERTISE FROM THE MAKERS OF FUTURE MUSIC

Who writes this stuff? Experts that's who! MusicRadar boasts the same professional critics who write for Future Music plus writers from such market-leading titles as Total Guitar, Computer Music, Guitarist, Rhythm and Guitar Techniques.

NEW GEAR HOT KIT ALERT!

MusicRadar always features coverage of the coolest kit. This month, along with reviews of the latest Native Instruments releases, we feature the 10 controllers that are as cool as the Tenori-on. You'll need one of these!

IT'S UP TO YOU! WHAT YOU LIKE, HOW YOU LIKE IT

Electronica, rock, hip-hop, indie... Whatever music you like, create or play, MusicRadar has something for you. Our all-new How To series shows you how to recreate the sounds of the stars, from Justice and Kanye West to Beyonce and The Prodigy.

IN THE KNOW MUSICRADAR = FIRST FOR NEWS

MusicRadar's news section is ideal for Future Music readers. Here are just a few highlights...

- REMIXED! Top producer recreates the 14 greatest remixes...
- FREE! Our weekly round-up of free music software includes Kriminal's Octave Kitten-inspired Felix VSTi.

Would you have voted for Armand & Tori?



www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

AKAI professional



APC20



MPK25



MiniAK



MPD32

Pioneer DJ Platinum Dealer



CDJ900



CDJ2000



DJM800



DJM700

mono



EFX Producer and Backpacks

NI NATIVE INSTRUMENTS



Maschine



Kontrol X1

Tel: 020 8208 6988

Main store: 10-12 Hanway Street, London, W1T 1UB - 020 7637 3293 - *Open 7 days!*

Also: 256 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 7 RD - 020 7631 1935

Mail order / service : 970 North Circular Road, London, NW2 7JR - 020 8208 6988

email and international sales: info@westenddj.co.uk

Akai

MiniAK | £379

Akai's diminutive new synth hits the shelves. This little monster promises much, but does it pack the power we need? **Dan 'JD73' Goldman** takes a look



WHAT IS IT?

A compact virtual analogue powerhouse with powerful filters, sequencing, arpeggiator and rhythm machine

CONTACT

Who: Akai Professional UK
Tel: +44 (0)1252 341 400
Web: akaipro.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Portable and well-built plus looks great
- 2 Huge array of great sounds, effects and sound shaping available
- 3 Sequencing and rhythm machine are huge bonuses

Think Akai, and synths are probably the last thing that comes to mind. However, this is not Akai's first foray into

synthesis by any means.

In 1984, Akai released their AX range of analogue synths (AX80, AX73, AX60 and later the VX range) and though these synths came at a particularly tricky time for analogue synthesis with the advent of digital technology (and rule of the Yamaha DX7 in particular) they were nonetheless very capable analogue synthesizers. So it's good to know that Akai do have a solid synthesizer heritage at their foundation, as well as their thorough knowledge of sampling.

After some financial difficulties, Akai became part of the Numark group of companies in 2004, alongside Numark and Alesis, bringing expertise onboard from across these companies.

The MiniAK is clearly a product of the partnership with the Alesis team as it is in fact a re-branded and improved Alesis Micron.

AK facts

The MiniAK is a good-looking machine, more serious looking than its chirpier looking Micron brother. Its black livery is very much current Akai style and the branding is very strong all round –

make no mistake you know what you are playing! The build quality feels good for a low-priced synth too, with the front panel knobs, dials and buttons feeling reassuringly solid.

It's great to see three wheels on the front of this synth. I don't know why more manufacturers don't do this. My Yamaha EX5 had three and I much prefer wheels to dials as they are so quick to use and very tactile. The MiniAK's three yellow-backlit wheels (pitch plus two assignable wheels) have a nice textured rubberised surface to them, unlike those horrible overly sprung hard plastic wheels you often find in products around this price point.

A quick look around the interface reveals there is little else to grab apart from the X, Y and Z assignable dials, though in practice, these work very well and as much as it would be nice to have more control (it would be great to have dedicated envelope and filter controls) there is enough here to draw you in and keep you involved in the sound creation and performance areas.

To assign the XYZ dials to a function, it's simply a case of scrolling to the function you want using the data dial, press and hold it and turn the





corresponding XYZ dial that you want to assign the function to. Very easy. Another not too shabby aspect of the MiniAK is its keyboard. Yes it's short but it's fine to play (though slightly too stiffly sprung) but certainly not bad. Unfortunately, bad is something that can be associated with the screen.

It's very difficult to read at the best of times. Blue writing on a blue background is not the best combo, nor is the fact that the screen can only be easily viewed from directly above it. And, because it's so deeply set, it's hard to read from certain angles and can be obscured by the bottom-edge of the screen. Some serious marks off

Modulation, Vocoder and Effects

The MiniAK has 12 freely-assignable modulation slots with source, destination and level available for each. Pretty much any parameter can be assigned to anything you like – the scope is vast! The tracking generator is a neat feature too, breaking up normally linear modulations into 32 independent segments for making complex and

evolving sounds. Another bonus with the MiniAK is the stereo audio input allowing you to route audio through the filters and effects in real time. A 40-band vocoder is also provided, though as I've already mentioned, it's not the strongest aspect of the MiniAK. Though it's definitely a useful addition, it does take some work to get useable sounds from it, something

which can't be angled at the MiniAK's general sound bank.

Effects-wise, there are drive effects plus two effect slots. The first slot includes mod effects such as chorus, flangers and phasers while effect slot two includes mono and stereo delays, reverbs plus the vocoder effect. All these effects are musical and enhance the sounds in a flattering manner.

modulations) and mod routings within the presets and for the mod wheels and dials.

The synth engine is an eight-voice

polyphonic, three-oscillator, two LFO per voice, three envelopes, eight-part multi-timbral machine based on a virtual synthesis engine. Available waveforms include sine, tri/saw and pulse all with continuously variable waveshapes for maximum versatility. The overall sound is wide, full, musical and very analogue too, especially when using detuning and the fabulous analogue drift parameter. Superb.

I'm impressed by its ability to create pretty much any type of analogue sound you could want, from lush Jupiter/Prophet-like pads to edgy Moog-like basses, serene strings, cutting leads, plus it doesn't have that plasticity brittleness that many soft synths and some VA synths often have.

Aktung, baby

There are 16 filter types on board that will cover any type of sound you could want and they all sound very good. There's enough low-end oomph plus plenty of high-end sizzle too and a punchy midrange. There's Minimoog, Jupiter and Prophet filter emulations

The sound is wide, full, musical and very analogue too, especially with the fabulous drift parameter

here then, especially as it relies so heavily on its screen for programming.

MiniAK control

Other controls on the front include up and down octave buttons (you can also

set the MiniAK so that when changing octaves, held notes stay where they are but the newly played notes are in the newly selected octave) plus there are controls for pattern play which will allow triggering of rhythmic pattern from any of the keys while still playing other sounds, a phrase arp button, which allows you to record phrases on the fly for instant playback, plus a latch for the arp/sequencer, so you don't have to have your finger down all the time.

One conspicuous change between the MiniAK and the Micron is the addition and inclusion of a gooseneck mic for the vocoder, much like the Korg R3 and microKorg XL. More later.

AKhilles heel

Programming is unfortunately the MiniAK's downfall. All in all, it's pretty slow and confusing and relies wholly on the data dial and screen. It is useful though, having the keyboard linked to particular key areas of editing such as filter, oscillators, pre/post mix levels, envelopes, LFOs, track (the tracking area which allows non-linear

SPECS

Synthesis: Virtual Analogue Synthesis

Polyphony: Up to 8 voices

Timbrality: Up to 8 parts

Oscillators: 3 per voice with continuously variable waveshapes, sync, linear and exponential FM, Ring Mod, routable modulation matrix per voice

Filters: 2 multi-mode resonating filters per voice with 16 filter types

Modulation: 2 LFO's per voice with multiple wave shapes, sample and hold, tracking generator, freely routable modulation matrix per voice

Effects: 4 drive effects, 1 per part; master effects

Sequencing: Step sequencer, arpeggiator, drum machine/rhythm sequencer, and phrase sequencing

Program memory: Up to 1,000 Programs and multi-timbral Multis

Velocity sensitive: Yes

Keyboard: 37-key, semi-weighted

External control: MIDI in/out/thru

Inputs: 2 balanced 1/4" TRS, mic

Outputs: 2 balanced 1/4" TRS, 1/4" TRS headphone

Controls: Pitch wheel, two assignable Q-Link modulation wheels, X, Y, and Z parameter knobs, pattern play, phrase arpeggiator, latch arpeggiator, keyboard octave, tap tempo, program controls, data push-knob, config, store, master volume

Pedal Inputs: Assignable expression pedal, sustain pedal

Dimensions:

580 x 275 x 85mm

Weight:

5.5Kg





£350

The MiniAK's closest competitor in terms of price and style. Better vocoder, editing options and screen but a less 'balls-out' sound.

korg.co.uk



£299

Basically the same synth as the MiniAK but with different presets, look and lack of front-panel vocoder mic input, but otherwise pretty much identical.

alesis.com



£459

Not a VA synth but includes a large range of sample-based sounds, vocoder, effects, larger keyboard, audio inputs and more.

roland.co.uk

plus the usual low-pass, high-pass, band-pass and combs plus more unusual vocal formant filters and a phase warp filter for those Trance leads. While on this subject, the presets certainly cater for the Dance crowd but

But while loving the sounds and appreciating the power it's that programming interface that keeps spoiling the fun. It is possible to buy a cheap knobby hardware unit mapped to the appropriate CCs, but obviously we'd

Our biggest moan though, has to be the lack of USB port which means no software editor too. This seems like a glaring omission considering how much the MiniAK could do with one and how ideal it would be as a portable keyboard to use with a laptop on the go.

The vocoder is fun, and instant, with 40-bands but I still had problems with it picking up diction clearly using the

attached mic. It's a cool addition, just not as good, quick or impressive as microKorg in this respect.

Conclusion

Having said all this, it's the sound that counts and it has today's analogue, FM and digital timbres down very well, even surpassing established VA synths that I've used at bigger price points.

If you don't mind a frustrating interface, you're a fan of presets and you're not in it for the vocoder, then at this price point it's a great way to get some fresh sounds into your mix. **FM**

The presets certainly cater for the Dance crowd, but the scope of this instrument goes far beyond that

the scope of this instrument goes far beyond that. The effects are also pretty useful and musical (see the box on the previous page) though it would have been great to have a front-panel bypass buttons for them.

prefer a bigger screen and more controls. Moreover, the sequencer – while a great addition – is often a pain to program in step-edit mode on such a small screen. Fortunately the real-time mode is as obvious as it should be.

Sequencer, Arpeggiator, and Rhythm Machine

There's a hugely impressive array of sequencing and arpeggiating available in the MiniAK.

Sequences can work on their own in standard mode, or in multi-mode where several parts or sequences can be set up alongside arpeggiator patterns, preset/user sounds and rhythm patterns. Sequences can

also be handily triggered across the keyboard at different pitches and can be layered with rhythms too, enabling you to trigger a backing track with a single key. In multi-mode you can have sequences, rhythms, arpeggiators and standard sounds all covering different areas of the keyboard. The most important component of

the MiniAK's sequencing engine is a 'Pattern' where all note, rhythmic and pitch info is stored. Within a pattern you can either choose it to behave as a 'sequence' or as an arpeggiator pattern. Rhythm mode acts like a classic drum machine with overdub looping – great for utilising the many great analogue style drum sounds onboard.

FutureMusic VERDICT

BUILD

■■■■■■■■■■

VALUE

Journal Pre-proof

EASE OF USE

[illegible]

VERSATILITY

[illegible]

RESULTS

A great set of fresh, powerful sounds but MiniAK is let down by its lack of editing and poor vocoder



From GENESIS to REVELATION...



MXL Microphones are available at the following dealers :

West End DJ
London
020 8208 6988

ElectroMusic
Doncaster
01302 369 999

StudioXchange
Letchworth
01462 677 333

Nevada Music
Portsmouth
023 9220 5100

Red Dog Music
Edinburgh
0131 229 8211

Music Matter
Preston
01772 797 908

Kazbar Systems
Cambridge
www.kazbarsystemsinc.com

Musicland
Cardiff
02920 621 715

One Man Band
Banbury
01295 266 788

The Music King
Birmingham
0845 200 5464

Nilam Music
Hereford
01432 278 227

Music Street
Huntingdon
01480 431 222

Giggear
Harlow/Hertford
01279 432 900

Counterpoint MTC
(Education)
01903 538 844

Sounds Live
Newcastle
0191 491 3185

BEM
London
020 7733 682

Academy of Sound
Stoke-on-Trent
01782 205 100



...and a whole lot more



Distributed in the UK by Musictrack Ltd 2 The Granary Buildings • Millow • Bedfordshire • SG18 8RH 01767 313447
www.musictrack.co.uk • www.mxlmicro.com

circle

A powerful, easy to use software synthesizer

- Helps you stay in creative flow with a simple, familiar and swift way to create your own sounds.
- Comes with ready to use classic analog to modern contemporary sounds in varied styles.
- Features a high contrast, single view interface for better read-ability in your live performances.
- Runs smoothly on your Mac or Windows PC as a standalone application, Audio Unit, VST and RTAS.



Download the demo version at www.futureaudioworkshop.com

F.W

www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

Wacom Nextbeat | £1,100

Will we ditch the laptop and CDJs for good after trying this new one-box DJ solution? **Chris Barker** prepares to get touchy...

WHAT IS IT?

An all-in-one DJ solution with sampling and effects

CONTACT

Who: Henley Pro
Tel: +44 (0)1235 511 166
Web: henleypro.co.uk

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Great built-in effects
- 2 Clever touch-platter control for scratching and pitch-shifting
- 3 Very simple to learn

We first encountered this all-in-one DJ unit over a year ago and got our hands on one at

Frankfurt's Musik Messe 2009, but it was a little way from being finished. Now, complete with all the intended features and a couple of firmware updates, it's ready for the full *FM* review. The unit essentially is two decks, a mixer, an effects section and sampler/phrase recorder in a unit the size of about a dozen vinyls. It certainly looks the part.

When un-boxing the device it looks and feels very sturdy, being light enough to transport around but with enough weight to give you a sense of reliability and rigidity. This from a device by Wacom, a company better known for its creative solutions building stylus touch tablets in the graphic design arena, rather than DJ or even audio gear. Nice work.

Powering up the unit displays the colour screen and puts you into track selection mode where a small jog wheel lets you navigate your tracks.

Storage of tracks is handled via Compact Flash and the USB port on the rear of the unit enables the Nextbeat to become a simple drag and drop Compact Flash reader, but doesn't read any sticks or drives.

So, no software is required for the Nextbeat as you simply navigate folders with the device, supporting WAV, AIFF, MP3 and AAC files with a maximum of 9,999 tracks and 1,000 folders on a single Compact Flash card. A 2GB card is included.

On the Go!

Aside from the Nextbeat being an all-in-one DJ solution, they're are pinning their hopes on a feature that you'll either love or hate – the pop out wireless controller. With the whole central section being removable. This seems a little gimmicky, especially when you realise the way to release the controller is by pressing the 'Go!' button, though it does work very well and is certainly different.

Nearly everything can be controlled via the removable controller including sample playback, effects and EQ. But, you'll need a set of wireless headphones if you're looking to cue up the next track while hot-footing it around the dancefloor. The Nextbeat is





a completely self-contained system, but unfortunately, because it doesn't use any software on your Mac or PC, it doesn't scan or organise your library.

This also leads to the first negative comment about the Nextbeat – the lack of track quantising and automatic syncing, again possibly due to the lack of software analysis. Hopefully this can be updated via firmware.

Essentially, this means mixing is done in the 'classic' way, with you having to manually pitch tracks and sync them using the touch platter. This is not the end of the world, except mixing this way is much easier if you have a platter for each deck, rather than having to switch between deck A and deck B while tweaking.

The platter works brilliantly with CD-style pitching on a soft touch and vinyl-scratching on a firmer touch

Round back

The Nextbeat provides outputs for either using an external mixer splitting deck A and B on separate RCA connectors, or a master RCA output. Mixing internally with the Nextbeat isn't much fun. The touch faders do work, but aside from basic fades, they aren't the best solution if you want to do quick cuts or chops and really take some getting used to.

The platter, on the other hand works, brilliantly with CD-style pitching on a soft touch and vinyl-scratching mode on a firmer touch. This may sound like an accident waiting to happen, but the sensitivity is customisable in the machine's preferences and once you find your setting, it works very nicely. Another excellent feature is the control of loop points. Although it would have been nice for loops to be automatically

Nextbeat Effects

The effects section will be very familiar if you've ever used the mixer effects on the Pioneer DJMs. The usual suspects are present – Reverb, Delay, Phaser, Flanger, Low-pass filter and High-pass filter.

The effects can be controlled in two ways, either via a simple wet/dry



rotary or by pushing the rotary, using the jog wheel platter to attain different effects variations.

This is very simple, intuitive and a great way to control the effects, but yet again it's another shift-function for the rotary and you'll need to carefully manage control of whether you're mixing, playing back samples or triggering effects using the touch pad.

quantised, the manual method of tapping in and out points before tweaking them using rotaries is fast and accurate. Sampling is also another

I think Wacom are going to find it difficult to convince people to ditch their laptops without a track sync feature or quantised loops.

If you have the cash and want to extend your capabilities with a regular two CDJs and a mixer setup, then the Nextbeat is certainly fun and great for

dropping samples into your set.

The BPM counter works fine but until there's some firmware that analyses, syncs and quantises your tracks and loops, Wacom are going to find it hard to compete with the most recent CDJs and the ever popular laptop and DJ controller. **FM**

feature that is easy to set up, with phrases being automatically cut into four sections and placed on the four quarters of the platter for gate style sample triggering. These automatic cuts can be tweaked easily using the two rotary controllers to move the sample start points of each quarter.

Samples can be stored in four banks and you can set four playing points for each bank. Using the phrase record function you can also record loops of these samples in a performance manner and layer them to create original phrases. The only limit to this is that sampling and phrase recording is assigned to either deck A or B, so only one track can be playing while sample playback occurs.

Touch sensitive

For over a thousand pounds, the Nextbeat is a serious investment, and

SPECS

- USB connection (to use as a Compact Flash reader)
- Master output RCA
- Record output RCA
- Digital output S/PDIF
- 2 x independent deck channel RCA outputs
- 6.3mm jack headphone output
- 6.3mm jack Microphone input
- Hard plastic cover also supplied
- 3.5" colour LCD display
- WAV, AIFF, MP3 and AAC-LC compatible
- Detachable wireless controller

Dimensions:
380 x 380 x 220mm
Weight:
2.6kg

ALTERNATIVES



Tonium Pacemaker

From £300

If you want freedom when you're DJing, the Pacemaker gives you portability and mixing is made easy by pre-analysing tracks and a beat-gridding them.

pacemaker.net



**Reloop Digital Jockey
2 Interface Edition**

£350

A fantastic controller for Traktor that incorporates a decent audio interface at a great all-in-one price, when hooked up to a half-decent laptop.

reloopdj.com



Pioneer CDJ-2000

£1,499 each

It's a much bigger spend than the Nextbeat (you need two) but this device is set to become the DJ standard for CD and digital DJing.

pioneerdi.com

FutureMusic VERDICT

The Nextbeat delivers all it set out to, but the price and lack of auto features will put off a lot of people.



WHAT IS IT?

Lexicon's own software reverb bundle for Mac and PC adding seven classic Lexicon reverb algorithms to your DAW

CONTACT

Who: SoundTech
Tel: +44 (0)1462 480000
Web: lexiconpro.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Classic Lexicon sound
- 2 Tailor the exact reverb you want
- 3 Great, intuitive GUI design



Lexicon Native Reverb Bundle | £1,174

Think of reverb and you think of Lexicon. Now the hardware reverb behemoths have finally gone soft, as **Jono Buchanan** discovers...

Lexicon is a name to rank with the very highest in our industry, with the sound of Lexicon reverb central to

studio mixes for over 30 years. From single-rack classics such as the PCM80 and 90 to the white remote control unit of the 480L, which we've all seen perched atop SSL and Neve desks from the world's most influential recording studios, Lexicon remains a gold standard. While more recent Lexicon developments such as the PCM96 allowed software editing, until now it's always been necessary to accommodate their reverbs via hardware. So, it's with considerable excitement that the software-only Native Reverb Bundle now arrives, complete with seven Lexicon

algorithms, ready to slot directly into your own computer-based productions. Does the quality here match the hype and, more pertinently, the price?

Magnificent seven

The plug-ins can be downloaded directly from the net or purchased in box form but either way, installation is painless. Copy protection is ensured via iLok and once you're registered, you're away. Rather than bundling all seven algorithms into a single GUI, Lexicon has actually built independently selectable skins, so you'll see each one listed separately in your plug-in folder.

These all look broadly alike, with the upper half dominated by input/output meters, a switchable pane for

visual feedback (of which more in a moment) and an EQ section in the top-right-hand corner.

The bottom half features nine sliders which correspond to the 'most pertinent' parameters for sound-shaping, though these can be modified by clicking the 'edit' button. Doing this brings up other parameters which can be 'promoted' to replace one of the existing sliders, if you'd rather access these instead. See the *Reverb Editing* box for details.

Once you've selected one of the reverbs, you're quickly up and running. The 'Category' and 'Preset' tabs provide you with a huge array of starting points, with the former designed to fine-tune the algorithm you've picked into Small, Medium and Large variations, for example, before the Preset drop-down provides specific starting points, often with EQ options such as 'dark' or 'bright'.

Visual feedback is offered in three different ways. Frequency analysis tools break the reverb response down to show you exactly which areas are 'busiest', post-reverb, so repeatedly clicking the dedicated window at the top of the GUI cycles between a multi-band analysis tool, a more conventional graphical-style EQ and a waveform display to confirm everything is as it should be. This is beautifully designed and extremely helpful.

Algorithmic logistics

So, what of the all-important sound? Starting with the Halls, there are three options available: Hall, Concert Hall and Random Hall. The Hall sound is big and lush – everything you'd expect a Lexicon Hall to be – with a seamlessly clean release tail, even at super-long values. The Concert Hall is a touch more discrete, with a more naturally warm character which is

capacity to instantly roll off bass or treble, or target a 'problem' frequency – a real asset in the design of any treatment. At the other end of the 'length' spectrum, the Room algorithm is dedicated to specific contained spaces, with the Pattern Category able to select from Small, Medium, Large, Exterior, Artificial and the weird and wonderful 'Odd Spaces' options. Choose one of these and the Pattern

available as presets. Larger than the Rooms, the Chambers can add bite, substance and a fullness to any sound without quite taking over the mix – a useful 'clouding' effect for sounds which suit such a treatment. Plates appear in two forms too – Plate and Vintage Plate, which are perhaps as 'characteristically Lexicon' as any of the offerings here. From small and dark to long and airy, these sound

particularly great on vocals of all types, whether you want a touch of colour on an otherwise dry part, or if you're going for full-on ballads.

The Hall sound is lush – everything you'd expect a Lexicon Hall to be – with a seamlessly clean tail

perfect if you want a more 'integrated' sound for vocals, pianos, strings and more orchestral performances. The Random Hall is more atmospheric, offering a bolder, less predictable acoustic shape and space, which is wonderful on similar musical elements but which also complements sound designed and atmospheric sounds beautifully and will be the place where special effects designers will turn first.

Again, the EQ stage plays an important role in any preset, with the

slider then selects a particular space (including a Plastic Box!), before the other sliders let you design that space accordingly. This is the reverb for drum ambiences, for instance, but also a great way to enhance spoken word recordings, which will appeal to anyone working on dialogue manipulation for film, TV and radio.

The Chamber algorithm will sound familiar to anyone who's worked with Lexicon's hardware, with Small, Medium and Large variations all

Lexicon conclusion

There's no getting away from it, the Lexicon Reverb bundle is several times the price of its competitors. The PCM80 and PCM90, which contained these seven algorithms, are no longer on the market, but still fetch hefty sums second-hand.

The current line of Lexicon hardware reverbs such as the PCM92 and 96 also add delays and modulation effects that makes them compete more with Eventide's product line. The cost of those Lexicon boxes is over £1,800, so in that context, these plug-ins are reasonably priced, though they do lack some of those algorithms.

That said, quality at this level doesn't come cheap and without wishing to dip into hyperbole, this could be the only reverb you'll ever need – it's *that* good. Regardless of the audio application for which you need it, there's something here for you. In terms of designing a specific reverb for your needs, this is as good as it gets. Cheaper options are available but they don't sound like this, so it's over to you, the noisy devil on your shoulder and your credit card. **FM**

SPECS

Mac: Power PC G5 1.8GHz or any Intel, 1GB RAM, 500MB of available disk space, OS X version 10.4.10 or later, any platform supporting Audio Units

PC: 1.6 GHz Intel or AMD processor, 1GB RAM, 100MB of available disk space, Windows XP, Vista and 7

Both: Any platform supporting VST 2.4 or later, Any ProTools version from 7.3 or later, Screen resolution of 1280x800 or greater, CD or DVD drive system requirements

ALTERNATIVES



Sony Oxford Reverb
£235

Here's another extremely high-quality reverb with plenty of sound-shaping parameters and on-board EQ – all at a quarter of the price!

sonnox.com



Audio Ease Altverb 6
£449

If it's convolution reverb you favour, this is worth more than a moment of your time. Myriad impulse responses, great results.

audioease.com



Waves IR1 Native
£458

Another convolution reverb with quality and flexibility at its core.

waves.com

Reverb Editing

Tailoring each of Lexicon's reverb GUIs to provide you with control over the parameters you want is easy. Clicking the Edit button in the bottom-left-hand corner brings up four tabs, labelled 'Soft Row', 'Input & Mix', 'Reverb' and 'Reflections'. The Soft Row tab is where slider assignments can be

made. By clicking this, under the current assignments, you can click the 'gold' name under each parameter and replace it for another. Alternatively, if you want to tweak a parameter which doesn't appear in the slider row, you'll find it in one of the other tabs, which snap to provide

'temporary' sliders as long as you're in Edit mode. It's possible to edit the EQ section with a twin-stage effect possible by selecting different curves for early and late reflections. Six options are available with 1- and 2-pole options for low- and high-pass filters, bandpass and Notch.



FutureMusic VERDICT

STABILITY



VALUE



EASE OF USE



VERSATILITY



RESULTS



Not particularly cheap but worth every penny. Sumptuous reverb to the power of seven.

SPECS

Frequency response: 20Hz to 20kHz
Polar patterns: Cardioid, figure-of-8, omnidirectional with six intermediate stages
Output impedance: < 2000hms
Equivalent noise level: <16dB-A Max. SPL (@ 0,5%): 130dB
Supplied Cables: 7-pin XLR to XLR. IEC mains
 External power supply with IEC mains input, 7-pin XLR connection to mic and 3-pin XLR audio output
 Suspension mount



Newmann Retro NR47 | £999

Any microphone bearing the number 47 has a lot to live up to. **Stuart Bruce** puts it through its paces

WHAT IS IT?

A dual large diaphragm valve condenser microphone for high quality voice and instrument recording

CONTACT

Who: Newmann Retro
 Tel: +44 (0)1323 730226
 Web: newmannretro.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 A fabulous, well-balanced sound
- 2 Excellent build quality and finish
- 3 True classic looks at an affordable price

Over the years I have used a lot of valve Neumann U47s. While some have been obviously past their sell-by date, most have been nothing short of wonderful. I was recently asked to locate one for a client and having found several for sale in various parts of the globe the minimum asking price was £7,000. With the lack of money floating around the business at the moment, it's pretty hard to justify that kind of expense so I was fascinated to get my hands on the Newmann Retro NR47 with its far more realistic price tag.

Having given their first mic a resounding thumbs up in *FM*, I hoped they hadn't bitten off more than they could chew by using the legendary '47' in this one's name.

The NR47 comes in a smart looking case which contains the microphone in the now ubiquitous wooden box, a suitably retro looking power supply, a 7-pin XLR cable, a power cable and a suspension mount. The microphone is available in three finishes, distressed vintage matt-nickel, satin-nickel powder or a shiny polished nickel.

Connections

The power supply has a 7-pin XLR connection to the microphone, a standard XLR out, IEC mains connector and the polarity switch. This is stepped and has nine positions from figure-of-8 through cardioid to omni-directional.

The suspension mount is well-made and unlike those of a few other mics I have seen recently is easy to adjust and

holds its position without having to resort to a pair of pliers.

Taking the microphone from its wooden case you could be mistaken for thinking you were holding a well-preserved original. The finish is excellent and it feels substantial. The base of the microphone screws easily into the suspension mount and balances perfectly.

The first thing I put in front of it was a bass harmonica. Not the easiest of instruments to record, as you have to be close to get some proximity effect and any hint of harshness in the microphone can make it sound thin. The NR47 passed this rather unconventional test with flying colours. Powerful lows, warm mids and no nasty overtones.

Power and punch

Next came acoustic guitar, an arch top f-hole with a tendency to sound a bit 'honky'. Here the NR47 really shone. Possibly the best depth I have ever heard from that particular instrument without any lack of mid presence and a lovely smooth top. The transient response was excellent and the guitar sat easily in the mix. From there, I went straight to vocals. I stacked up a four-part harmony using a mix of cardioid and omni patterns and the result was excellent. Great detail, as smooth as silk and very easy to EQ.

This is not the brightest mic I have ever used, but it's so well balanced across the spectrum that a little EQ will bring any area forward with no nasty surprises. To their credit, Newmann Retro describe the NR47 as a homage to the great U47 and not a replacement, but by basing their design on it they could have come a cropper if it didn't deliver the goods. What they have ended up with is a great microphone which may initially get noticed because of its name, but which will ultimately be loved for its own special qualities. **FM**

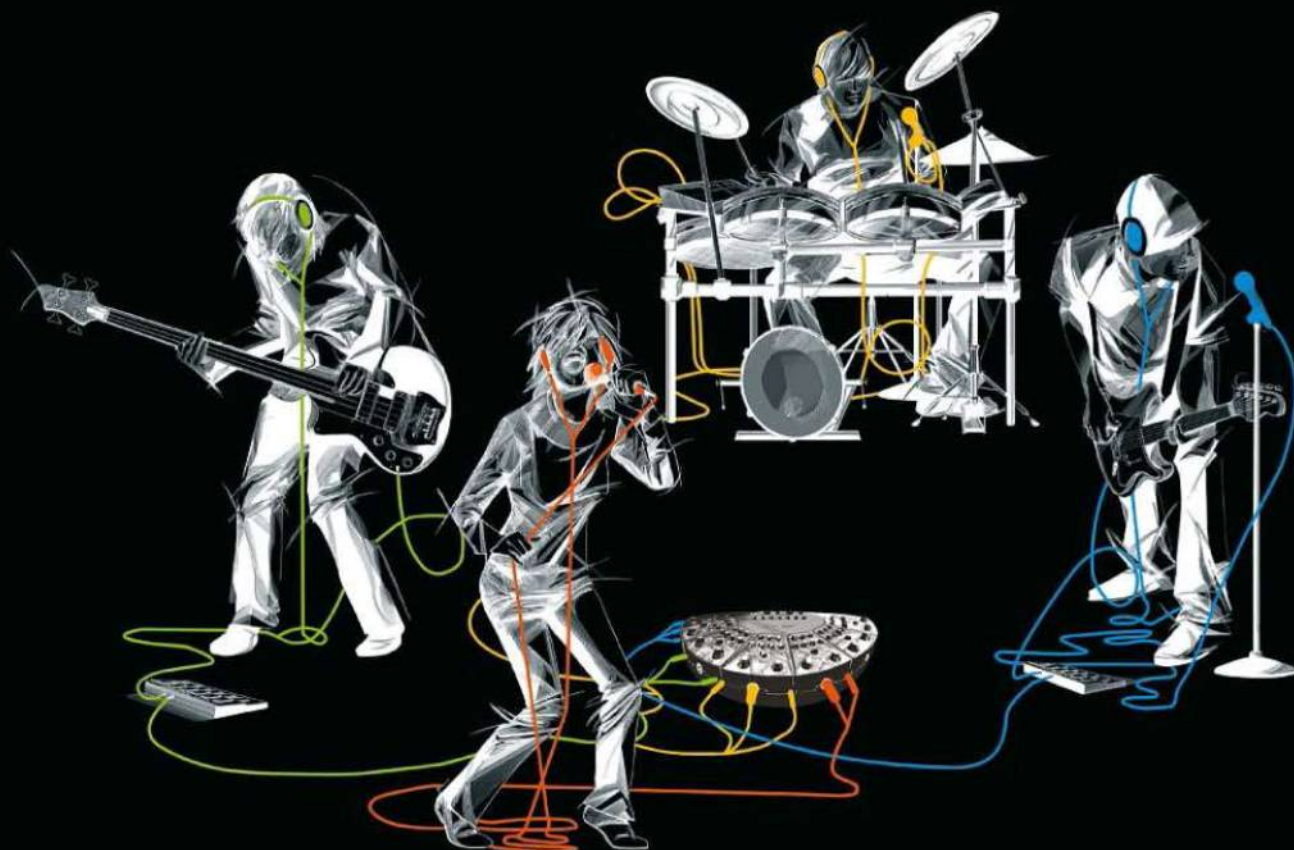
FutureMusic VERDICT

BUILD	☐
VALUE	☐
EASE OF USE	☐
VERSATILITY	☐
RESULTS	☐

Big and bold with plenty of punch, a modern variation on a classic theme. A fantastic mic.

Introducing
JamHub® the silent
 rehearsal studio

Play anywhere, anytime.



BedRoom
 Up to 5 Musicians
 24-bit Digital Effects
 Analogue Recording Output
£299 inc vat



GreenRoom
 Up to 7 Musicians
 24-bit Digital Effects
 USB Recording Output
£499 inc vat



TourBus
 Up to 7 Musicians
 24-bit Digital Effects
 With Built In RAM Card
 Recorder & USB Recording Output
£699 inc vat

***Neighbours can't hear it. Parents can't hear it. Cops can't hear it.
 But you won't believe what the band can hear.***

Every band has the same problem: rehearsing is too loud for most locations and studio space is expensive. But now you can play anywhere, anytime virtually silent to the outside world: quietly enough for your bedroom, at Uni, in your apartment or hotel room. JamHub® was created to let you play more, and the experience rocks. Just pick a color section and plug in your instruments, mics and headphones. Then control your own individual mixes with new clarity, and no volume wars. You'll hear yourself like never before, and improve faster. JamHub is also portable and affordable. And whether you're a garage band or touring professionals, there's a JamHub model designed for you. So start jamming more without disturbing the peace.

Focusrite Saffire

6 USB | £164

Saffire spawns a baby brother. **Jono Buchanan** finds out if it can stand on its own two feet...

An audio interface for musos and DJs alike providing high quality Saffire sound at the lowest price point to date

Who: Focusrite
Tel: +44 (0)1494 462246
Web: focusrite.com

- 1 Great sounding pres
- 2 Designed with DJs in mind
- 3 Useful software bundle included

System Requirements

PC: Windows Vista, Windows XP (64-bit), Service Pack 2 and above only, Windows 7 (inc. 64-bit)

Mac: Currently 32-bit only on 10.6 (Snow Leopard), Or Mac 10.5.7 and above

Latency (Minimum Buffer Size): 77 Samples

Dynamic Range: 105dB

MIDI I/O

Dimensions:

145 x 220 x 45mm

Weight:

1kg

Focusrite's own highly regarded mic pres has proved irresistible for many. But, like other suppliers of audio interfaces, until now there's not really been a Saffire model for those whose I/O requirements are low but whose sonic expectations remain high.

The Saffire 6 USB is designed to redress that balance by providing just a pair of inputs and four outputs but as the former continue to offer Focusrite's clean, great sounding mic pres, this could just be the Saffire both musicians and DJs have been waiting for.

The front panel provides two inputs for mic, line or Hi-Z instrument sources, with a switch to select between line or instrument below the gain dial. Each input offers up to 105dB of gain, with a pad switch on each for louder sound sources and there's a global phantom power button for both inputs too.

Saffire interfaces famously offer supremely low latency recording and the 6 USB is no different, with a minimum latency of just 77 samples. It offers a front-panel Mixer dial to set the balance between your input source(s) and the playback mix, while the headphone mix lets you toggle between the main mix, sent to outputs 1 and 2, or outputs 3 and 4. The outputs themselves come in two forms – line level outputs for 1/2, as well as RCA Phono connectors for both 1/2 and 3/4. DJs should sit up and take note – this is rare among interfaces of this type. Also, as the front panel headphone switch can be toggled to output 3/4, you could choose this as a cue for your sound sources.

Of course, this DJ-ready approach doesn't preclude the use of this interface for musicians with limited I/O requirements and there are some key features if that's your primary interest. For a start the unit forgoes a separate power supply, drawing instead from its USB 1.1 bus and then, of course, there are the high-quality pres. One of my favourite developments with interfaces

Plus extras

Like other interface manufacturers, Focusrite don't limit themselves to just providing the box itself, as Saffire 6 USB comes with a useful bundle of 'extras'. For starters, you get the Focusrite Plug-in Suite, featuring an EQ, Compressor, Reverb and Gate, which integrate as AU or VST plug-ins.

Additionally, you'll find Ableton Live Lite 8 included, plus a series of drum loops and other audio samples including a collection made by LoopMasters as well as a software version of the BassStation plug-in.

Overall, then, a very tidy package which brings a new level of affordability to the Saffire range. If you prefer limited I/O and have been waiting to board the Saffire train, this could well be the ticket you've been holding out for. **FM**

Category	Score (out of 10)
BUILD	8
VALUE	8
EASE OF USE	8
VERSATILITY	8
RESULTS	8

The perfect Saffire for those with restricted I/O needs and budgets. A quality package.



MO'ZART OR BEATHOVEN?

Prime Loops' brand new "Orchestral Scores" Sample Pack offers an extensive collection of 100 professionally recorded and expertly processed Symphonic Orchestra loops.

Inside this stunning Sound Suite you will find over 500mb of royalty-free inspiration for your musical adventures. Sweep through soaring melodies, paramount string ensembles and intricate piano progressions, experience moody ambiances and hear the deep thump of epic percussions resonating into the distance.



PRIME LOOPS

www.primeloops.com

Future Music Exclusive 15% OFF brand new "Orchestral Scores"
Use coupon code **ORS15**



Mini Reviews

The latest musical bits and pieces racked and rated



BookBook | \$80

twelvesouth.com

Protecting your laptop is almost as important as looking good and finally, the two are combined in the most urbane manner imaginable. The BookBook from the quirky folk at Twelve South is a zip-closable case for your 13- or 15-inch MacBook (Pro) disguised as an antique, and rather large, book. No joke.

What's kind of surprising about this is that not only would I be more inclined to pick up and inspect an over-sized antique book than a laptop, I'm also a lot more likely to throw it around the room. That being said, the BookBook certainly delivers where it counts – once your MacBook (Pro) is zipped-up inside, not only will you be at a loss to distinguish it from an over-sized copy of Ulysses, but it will be well-protected from the cruel world. It's not the sturdiest case available, especially at this price, but its velvety lining and quirky styling mean it's secure for use in a shoulder bag or to studiously tuck beneath an arm. **Declan McGlynn**

7/10

Shure SRH750DJ Headphones | £140

shure.com



We're always on the look out for a robust set of headphones in the *FM* office, as most of us

destroy about two or three sets a year in various acts of DJ booth clumsiness. Opening this box we were disappointed, as all of our hopes were on the shiny silver exterior being made of aluminium were quashed as we lifted the light plastic cans from their box. Once the initial disappointment faded and we took into account the £100 price difference between these and the Pioneer HDJ-2000s (which are made of metal), the experience of the Shure package is actually pretty good.

In the box you get a spare set of ear pads, a lead and screw-on gold adaptor. Now, here's the real treat – these headphones sound great, really great. They're quite flattering and probably not ideal for referencing but they have been the headphones of choice for listening to music in the office for weeks. As DJ headphones go we're unsure about their long-term durability but they're one of the best set of DJ headphones in their price range and sound better than most of the main DJ-branded cans. **Chris Barker**

9/10



Alfred's Pro Audio Series training DVDs | £18 each

alfreduk.com

This new series from Alfred Publishing, one of the oldest educational music publishers, offers specialised advice on a number of different DAWs. DVDs are available for Cubase 5, Logic 8/9, Sonar 8, GarageBand '09 and Pro Tools LE 8, with each delivering its content in video form, featuring a teacher walking a

student through a series of lessons on computer-based music making.

Topics covered start from the most basic fundamentals of Electronic music, introducing equipment including keyboards, microphones, audio interfaces and even computers themselves, then working through demonstrations of how to

perform simple tasks in your DAW. The teacher takes things slowly – which is admittedly probably better than rushing through complicated subjects – and at times, the pace can drag as the student asks for simple ideas to be explained multiple times. It may be too basic for most *FM* readers, but if you have no idea

where to start with music technology then the advice and basic tutorials on these discs could come in handy.

By no means a must-have, but worth checking out for complete beginners.

Greg Scarth

7/10



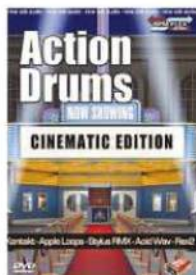
Deep Tech-House | £60

timespace.com

Proof yet again that the boys at Sample Magic can be relied upon to come up with the goods, this solid Tech-House package hits the spot nicely. All of the 24-bit samples are neatly classified by type and everything's at 125 or 127bpm, which should make things easy to work into club-orientated productions.

By my count there are the best part of 800 loops, all of which maintain high production levels and sound slick and polished. In addition to the loops, you'll find the best part of 250 individual hits and one-shot FX ready to slot into just about any kind of House or Techno tracks. Great stuff and very usable. **Daniel Griffiths**

9/10

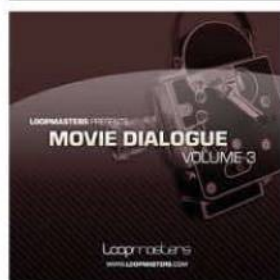


Action Drums: Cinematic Edition | £65

timespace.com

When this new release from Nine Volt Audio dropped out of the FM postbag we weren't exactly thrilled. Soundtrack sample packs don't usually offer much in the way of versatility and the samples tend not to lend themselves well to anything other than film score work. Against all odds, *Action Drums: Cinematic Edition* exceeds all our expectations with a package of fun, funky drum loops and hits which could slot into a variety of genres. If you dare to think a little different with your drums and percussion then you won't go too far wrong. Well worth a look. **Declan McGlynn**

8/10



Movie Dialogue Vol 3 | £15

loopmasters.com

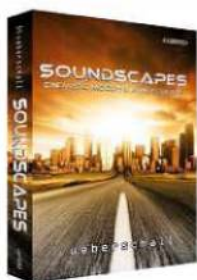
Sampling dialogue from films is one of the oldest tricks in the book for adding a bit of atmosphere and interest to a track, if not a slightly dated approach.

The one huge drawback, though, is that if you want to stay on the right side of the law, you're going to have to try and get clearance. With this package of 824 fully cleared samples from genuine movies, Loopmasters have taken the hard work out of clearing vocals while also making it easy to find fun dialogue without sitting through hours of movies and sending your Blockbuster account into the red.

Content is genuine but unrecognisable and unfamous. That said there's plenty of effective call outs to fire your imagination.

Greg Scarth

7/10



Ueberschall Soundscapes | £90

timespace.com

Soundscapes offers sweeping pads, echoing riffs and otherworldly vocals to bring some atmospheric magic to your tracks. The samples are grouped into 24 construction kits, each of which contains intro and outro parts as well as a main theme, and individual hits are provided in addition to the full loops. As usual for an Ueberschall product the samples are supplied in Elastik Player format, which requires you to install the proprietary software. It's definitely priced towards the higher end of the market, but *Soundscapes* provides plenty of versatile tools for producers of a variety of genres.

Greg Scarth

8/10

PRIME LOOPS

WE'RE IN THE MIX

Prime Loops provide award-winning sound libraries, fresh in-tune with the evolving music scene. We are an extremely passionate team of engineers, sound designers & DJs, based in London, UK.

See below some of our most recent, state-of-the-art sample pack releases, all 100% royalty free and designed to inspire:



DUBSTEP NATION

Ready for the ultimate Dubstep experience? "Dubstep Nation" features over 200 heavyweight Dubstep Drum Loops, Basslines and Synth Hooks, complemented with over 200 pounding One-Shots and 130+ mind-blowing multi-patches for Kontakt, EXS24, INN-XI, Sonar & Halion.

£29.95



NYC PIANO SESSIONS

Prime Loops are proud to announce the arrival of one of their most inspiring, genre-spanning sound suites to date. Inside this royalty free songwriting pack you will find over 200 expertly recorded Grand & Upright Piano Loops from a wide selection of styles, vibes and genres, ranging from 60-190Bpm.

£19.95



ORCHESTRAL SCORES

Mo'Zart or Beethoven? "Orchestral Scores" delivers 100 professionally mastered Orchestra Loops, String Ensembles, Percussion Elements and a lot more, ready to inject into your mix! Expect an uplifting collection of over 500Mb of crystal clear 24bit audio, nothing less than cinema ready.

£16.95



R&B PROGRESSIONS

Silky grooves, official jams & soulful flavours? "R&B Progressions" boasts over 600Mb of inspiring piano loops, string arrangements, synth hooks and more! Expect a jam-packed collection with over 180 royalty free R&B Loops, all professionally recorded and produced to ultimate perfection.

£16.95

Future Music Exclusive
15% discount off ALL sample packs
Use discount code FM15



www.primeloops.com

Q&A

Our panel of experts answer your music-making questions, from hardware issues to software ideas, with tips and tricks along the way

Best soundcard live?

Daniel Morris asks:

Q I'm looking to buy a soundcard for live use with my laptop running Sonar 8. I don't need much in the way of ins and outs, as the mix will be sent to FOH as a stereo feed, but I do need to be able to setup foldback for the guitarist, singer and bass player and a click track for the drummer. Most of all, I need rock solid performance. Is FireWire really better than USB? Any ideas as my brain hurts?

Dan Goldman replies:

A Good question! There is one particular interface that would suit you perfectly – the MOTU Ultralite Mark 3. The beauty of this little box is that it has both USB and FireWire connectivity, plus MOTU drivers are generally very solid.

It also features a very low latency onboard mixer for setting up foldback mixes, along with built-in DSP effects, all coupled to some very decent converters/pres, and solid build for live use, with plenty of ins and outs and MIDI.

This particular box will also eliminate the worry regarding whether USB or FireWire is best, as you can use both with just this one unit and decide for yourself, though in most tests I've seen (and also when I've compared USB 2.0 hard drives with

FireWire models myself) FireWire seems to be faster, though USB 2.0 is certainly no slouch!

The main difference between the two protocols, apart from the speed factor, is that FireWire does not solely rely on a computer to function, so for example, two FireWire devices can be connected together without a computer while USB is reliant on a host computer and relies on its processor for maintaining high speed transfers/connections.

Where's Share?

Todd Eavis asks:

Q I remember that, early in 2009, Ableton announced a new feature for Live called Share – it was supposed to make it easier to share Live Sets with other users over the internet.

However, to the best of my knowledge, this still isn't working, so I was hoping you could tell me why? Surely it should be finished by now...

Mark Gyver replies:

A Good question, Todd, and one that I'm sure quite a few Live users have been asking. Share was announced at the 2009 Winter NAMM Show, and promised to enable Live 8 users to upload and download Live Sets with a single click. Not only that, it also promised to do this behind the scenes (without

THE EXPERTS

Mark Gyver computer music expert



With 15 years of music production experience, Mark knows everything (and more) about the current and classic software market.

Doug Kraul technology author



Doug Kraul is an electronics and computer industry innovator, who has designed analogue modular synthesizers and MIDI devices.

Dan Goldman artist/producer



Aka JD73, Dan is a session keyboardist, producer and remixer, specialising in vintage gear, mixing and production techniques.

To send in your queries you can email us at futuremusic@futurenet.co.uk and we'll pass them on to the relevant expert. Or write to **Future Music Q&A, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW**

interrupting your workflow), to only transfer non-duplicate files (speeding up the whole process) and to automatically freeze tracks so that there weren't any plug-in issues.

It all sounded great – the only problem is that, late last year, Ableton sent a message to those who were beta testing the feature to say that the experience of using Share was “clearly below the standards we strive for here at Ableton”. It continued: “Even beyond the expectable bugs, the approach to sharing that we have pursued so far suffers from conceptual flaws that cannot be fixed cosmetically. Meanwhile, we have drafted a new solution that we find much clearer and more powerful. We have decided to make a painful cut and start over.”

In other words, they're going back to the drawing board. It seems that Share is still on the Ableton agenda, but who knows when it'll now be finished. I do have some better, slightly related news, though: SoundCloud have announced that Live users will soon be able to upload to their service from within their DAW. This functionality will be added at some point in 2010, following its implementation in PreSonus's Studio One and Audiofile Engineering's Wave Editor.

Master buss plug-ins

Dave Lever asks:

Q Hi guys. I often wonder if I should mix with plug-ins on my mix buss or leave them off completely.

Sometimes I really like the effect that certain plug-ins add to my mixes but I'm scared it might ruin the mastering session and not give the mastering engineer much to play with leaving me with wonky sounding masters. What do your experts think is the best approach? Thanks.

Dan Goldman replies:

A This is a great question Dave. I'm sure many people have wondered the same thing. What it boils down to is whether you like the sound with the plug-ins or not. If you do and the plug-ins you use brings something special to the sound, then you should go for it.

Some engineers are staunchly against putting processing on their mix busses and that's fine but as we all know, audio engineering is by no means an exact science and there is



MOTU for You

MOTU are well known for their stability and routing options

Are dual monitors
really better than one
giant screen?

Are Two Better Than One?

Erica Peters asks:

Q I'm debating purchasing two 24" displays or one high-res 30" display. Which approach do you think works best for music production?

Doug Kraul replies:

A Two good 24" LCDs cost significantly less than a single high resolution 30" LCD, and actually provide more total pixels. So initially

two displays seem the better choice. But there are other factors worth considering: usability, ergonomics, and physical placement.

Some music applications are designed around a single window and do not work as well with two displays. Often the second display is relegated to displaying plug-in windows. Other applications offer the option of placing the sequencer edit/arrange view in one window, the

mixer in a second, and plug-ins in their own. These work well with single or dual displays, though window management is sometimes less fiddly with two displays. It's worth mentioning that CPU will only be marginally affected between the two options.

Space is another consideration. Dual 24" displays consume more horizontal room between your monitors. Your listening 'sweet spot'

will be further back to correct for the wider speaker placement.

Two displays may also force you to sit further back to avoid endless head turning. The higher resolution 30" model though has smaller pixels and will need to be closer to compensate. This can make the field of view too large for comfortable viewing.

So, in the end, it depends on your budget, studio ergonomics, and production methods. Each approach has ups and downs, and the choice is very personal. Often, it simply boils down to whether you like interacting with two screens or one!

no right or wrong way to do things in many instances. However, there are a few pointers that are worth considering if you are going to approach your mixes with plug-ins on the main mix buss.

First off, it's generally a good idea to mix with the plug-ins on the end of the chain as soon as possible, mainly because you may find that once the plug-ins are on, the whole feel of your mix could change, perhaps for the worse. So my suggestion is, if you are going to mix with buss compression and EQ (for example) then insert them at the start of the mix so you don't get any nasty surprises. Buss compression in particular can massively change the feel and sound of your mix. Also, be careful as whatever has the loudest peaks in your pre buss processed track will generally trigger your buss compressor first and bring down the whole mix level, so make sure nothing is sticking out of your mix too much before adding buss processing.

It's worth experimenting with different orders of processing too. For example, try putting the comp after and before your EQ for different effects. Also, make sure you're not over-compressing or limiting as you will end up giving the mastering engineer headaches. Once the life



Music Pad

Apple's iPad has the potential to run its own music apps and be used to control your existing DAW

has been zapped out of your mixes its very hard to put back. Perhaps 3dBs of compression/limiting is a good figure to aim for, unless you are going for a heavily compressed or pumping mix. I often mix through an EQ, compressor and limiter on my main mix buss and I love working this way as it can really help glue a mix together and give that professional finish. Generally, I will take off the limiter before I send the mix to mastering (and set my mix to peak at between -3 and -10dB) while leaving

any EQ and compression on that I like the effect of.

Should I buy an iPad?

Trevor McGee asks:

Q Everyone seems to be talking about the Apple iPad at the moment, but from what I can gather, it's mainly aimed at people who want to browse the internet, read eBooks and watch TV/movies.

There doesn't seem to be any mention of music-making on Apple's

site, but I was wondering what your thoughts were on this? Do you think the iPad will be useful for musicians?

Mark Gyver replies:

A In a word, yes, though it might take a while for the iPad's potential to be fully realised. That said, anyone who buys one will be able to run all the iPhone/iPod touch music-making apps on it immediately, so it's fair to say that the iPad is already a machine you can make music on. As for the future, my hunch is that the first wave

Smooth Operator

Jim Baker asks:

Q I am new to Live and would like to dive into its clever Operator software instrument. I'm not

a synthesis expert by any means but know my way around analogue classics like the Roland Juno. I have absolutely no FM experience

and I've heard it's very difficult to learn. Is there a way to program operator like the Juno and leave learning FM for another day?

Doug Kraul replies:

A FM synthesis is Operator's primary method but it is not a pure FM synthesizer in the mould of something like Yamaha's classic DX7.

Operator 'does FM', but it's signal path, which includes a nice filter, has more in

common with subtractive synths, like the Juno, than one of the Yamaha DX family members.

Use it as a subtractive synth to wet your toe in the Operator pool, slowly introduce FM synthesis concepts, then dive into the FM synthesis deep end. Let's test the water.



1 Operator behaves like a four oscillator subtractive synth when the four across algorithm is selected. Its rich oscillator waveform palette includes normal analogue ones, some uniquely digital ones, and a user programmable one. Numerous filters types are on offer, including the Moog inspired 'low ladder'.



2 Envelopes include filter, one per oscillator, an auxiliary envelope labelled 'pitch', but no dedicated volume envelope. Thus, four oscillator patches are fiddly. Instead, neutralise all oscillator envelopes by setting as shown. Route the pitch envelope to overall volume only and use it as the volume envelope.



3 Basic sine wave FM technique and the '2 x 2' algorithm provide a dual oscillator synth whose waveform timbre is determined by oscillator B's (and D's) level. Use simple pitch ratios like 1:1 or 3:2. The C-D pair (lower diagram) provides a 'saw-ish' timbre - A-B is more saw-like.

MAMA & CLASSIC ROCK FESTIVALS PRESENT
HIGH VOLTAGE
FESTIVAL

SATURDAY 24 JULY 2010

SUNDAY 25 JULY 2010



heaven & hell

RONNIE
JAMES DIO

TONY
IOMMI

GEEZER
BUTLER

VINNY
APPICE

FOREIGNER

JOE BONAMASSA

GARY MOORE



BACHMAN & TURNER

Black Label
Society

HAMMER STAGE



PROG STAGE

TRANSATLANTIC

marillion



MAGNUM
STEVE HACKETT

Argent

MARTIN TURNER'S WISHBONE ASH
(PERFORMING ARGUS)

URIAH HEEP
(PERFORMING DEMONS & WIZARDS)

THE REASONING • TOUCHSTONE • PENDRAGON • FOCUS

VINYL EXCHANGE, CLASSIC ROCK CINEMA
BEER TENT, CLASSIC MOTORBIKE & CAR EXHIBITION

LONDON VICTORIA PARK

FESTIVAL'S 24 HOUR HOTLINE: 0871 230 5582

JAZZ CAFÉ BOX OFFICE, CAMDEN.

OPENING HOURS MONDAY TO SATURDAY 10.30AM TO 5.30PM

WWW.HIGHVOLTAGEFESTIVAL.COM

SUBJECT TO LICENSE

Custom built by rock fans, for rock fans

www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

of music-making apps will come from those developers who've already created software for the iPhone/iPod Touch – in fact, these may just be enhanced iPad versions of their previous releases.

I suspect, though, that because of the increased screen size and more powerful processor, we might soon see more 'serious' music software companies getting involved – don't rule out conversions of apps that are currently available for the Mac. Oh,

and you can pretty much guarantee that the iPad will soon play host to dozens of controller apps that will enable you to tweak your existing Mac and PC music software via its multi-touch screen.

All that said, I'm speculating here, so if you want to play it safe, give the iPad a miss (not all of Apple's products have been successful) and wait and see what happens. Within a year or two, you're probably going to want one.

Netbook for production?

Glenn Boyle asks:

Q I'm considering a netbook for production. After researching I'm concerned that they lack the CPU. Can today's netbooks be used for serious music production?

Doug Kraul replies:

A Rewind the clock seven or so years and ask the same of desktops that we know were widely used for

music production. Today's Windows XP netbooks with a 1+GHz CPU, 1GB of RAM are comparable to these older desktops. The trick is adapting your workflow to the limitations, much as was done in the past.

The first step is to focus your mobile endeavours on a practical subset of your overall studio workflow. View the netbook as a portable extension for specific tasks like song writing. Activities like recording that require additional resource, say a soundcard, may be impractical. Experiment to find what works, and what does not.

What if your favourite sequencer does not run well? Try installing a version from a few years back, or look at a sequencer better suited to the netbook's limited resources. Reason has always been known for its usability with modest computing resources. Alternatives like ReNoise (renoise.com) also deserve a fresh look. Just make sure your choice offers a way to bring your netbook projects into your studio sequencer!

Leave final mixing for the studio (you need good monitoring anyway) and focus on activities prior to final mixing. If you need effects, use less CPU-demanding plug-ins. You can always substitute a more demanding plug-in back in your studio. Wherever practical, replace an insert plug-in with a send effect, like sharing one delay instead of one per part.

If you use software instruments do not worry about final sound design – that is what your synth arsenal back in the studio is for! Instead use instruments with modest computing needs to sketch the part's sound. Large, streaming sampled instruments are going to have limitations so substitute sampled instruments that offer smaller, 'RAM friendly', libraries. Budget your polyphony and use the instrument's polyphony limit setting.

Bouncing or track freeze can help lighten the CPU load, provided your netbook can handle the track count. When you run low on tracks create temporary submixes, then disable the original tracks. Remove the submixes and reinstate the originals for the final mix. All of this may seem like a lot of effort but with time it becomes second nature.

If you were doing music production a few years back it will be nothing more than dusting off some once honed skills!



My Songs on Rock Band

Zach Brennan asks:

Q This might be pie in the sky, but someone told me recently that it's soon going to be possible to convert your songs into the Rock Band format so that they can be played by people who own the game. Is this really going to happen, and if so, can you tell me how I'll be able to do it?

Mark Gyver replies:

A Your 'someone' has it right – the project they're referring to is

called the Rock Band Network, and it's designed to make it possible for anyone to get their tracks into the Rock Band Network Music Store.

So, what do you need to do it? Hardware-wise, an Xbox 360 and either a Mac or PC (testing of tracks can only be done on a PC, but you can create them on a Mac) and on the software side, a copy of Cocks's Reaper software (plus a few free plug-ins) and an account with Microsoft's Xbox 360 XNA Creators

Club. I'm not going to give you a tutorial on the process of authoring a track, but the basics are that you need to load the stem files from your song into Reaper and create what are called MIDI Charts for each instrument. Once you've uploaded the finished track, it goes through a peer review process that involves other members of the Creators Club evaluating it.

You may be required to make some changes, but once it's passed this

process, it goes into the Store. Then Rock Band users can buy it (you can set your own pricing and you'll receive a cut of the royalties) and play it.

Cost-wise, as well as the Xbox 360 and computer you're looking at \$60 for a Reaper license and \$99 per year for the required Premium membership of the Xbox 360 XNA Creators Club. After that, you'll be ready to go. Rock Band Network is currently in beta – go to creators.rockband.com for all the details.

Fattest Of The Fat

Q **Warren Mitchell asks:** Can your experts show me a process for making beefy analogue-style bass sounds in Logic? I want to get a really fat and juicy bass and I'm wondering which native plug-in to use and the best way to set it up. There are so many choices!

A **Dan Goldman replies:** Logic has a mind-boggling array of bass-making plug-ins, but there are plenty of options to make it sound fat with a hint of analogue stylings. For this example, I'm going to use ES1: it's modulation options as well as its hefty sub oscillator and filter functions make it perfect for bass



1 Load up ES1. It will load with the default setting, which is a great place to start from. The ES1 is great for making synth basses, due to its one oscillator plus sub architecture and powerful filter functionality.



2 Set the mode to legato in the voices box at the bottom right. This will turn the ES1 into a mono synth, and add subtle glide between notes for that smooth analogue bass feel.



3 Next set Osc 1 to saw for adding buzziness to the sound and the Sub Osc to -1 octave pulse for a bit of low-end filth. Set Osc pitch to 16' and keep the sub/wave mix slider in the midway position initially, but move it to taste as necessary.



4 Set the filter to 24dB 'fat' mode and bring down the filter cutoff control to remove highs and make a thicker tone. Now set the resonance control to about half-way to add some more grit and squelch to the sound. Set the analogue control to full to add some extra warmth.



5 Experiment with the 'ADSR via velocity' slider to change the attack of the filter for more punch or softer attack. Also, use the ADSR sliders to add a slower or faster volume attack/sustain/decay/release to your sound.



6 Finally experiment with the LFO speed/wave, Mod Envelope and Router parameters to add further shaping to the sound. Use the LFO for wobble and subtle/chaotic movement. If in doubt, turn everything on and see what happens! **FM**

ESSENTIAL READING FOR THE CUTTING-EDGE PRODUCER



Get **Computer Music: Make Music Now, Volumes 1 and 2** for iPhone and iPod Touch free in the App Store now!



EVERY MONTH IN CM



In-depth, jargon-free tutorials to help you make better music



No-nonsense reviews of the latest computer music gear



Technical advice, production tips, producer interviews and more!

ON SALE NOW!

Featuring a full virtual music studio on the DVD-ROM every month
Computer Music is all you need to make incredible music on your PC and Mac

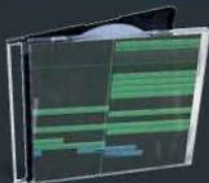
www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

Demos



Are you unsigned, under-appreciated and looking for your first break? Get your tracks right on track!

Demo Of The Month



SELECTED KIT

Hardware

- > Apple iMac
- > Akai MPK49 keyboard

Software

- > Logic Pro 8
- > FL Studio
- > DCAM Synth Squad

FAVOURITE GEAR

- > "Easy. DCAM Synth Squad by FXpansion. Amazing piece of analog modeling VSTi. I'm using it on everything that I make these days. I can always get the sound I want out of it..."



I Want Drop Circuit

Contact: soundcloud.com/circuit-music



Simple is efficient and this weighty slap in the face is laser-guided for maximum power. It's chunky, funky

and we love it. There's a great weight to the bottom end, the hi-hat and gating effects keep things brilliantly uptempo and pacy and that lead sound... Really is something else!

The changing, almost Dubstep timing that relents to four on the floor with a brilliant aural elevator sounds superb. And the slow relentless peak for the reintroduction of the drums is nicely conceived.

Personally we'd like to hear a little more of the hook and while that bitcrushing trick is very effective once you hit your stride with it you're very reluctant to let it go. Restoring the lead to the more 'in control' levels at the start of the track would give you room to move and get another build and climax out of it.

The drums and bass are as tight as they can be and we're impressed with the overall EQ and presence considering your monitoring on some rather tame hi-fi speakers! It's a great beginning. Some new gear, plugs and a bigger palette of sounds will all find a good home with you!

The Artist



Name:

Andrew Reid

Where:

Auckland, New Zealand

My track:

"Dissonant electro house, full of dirty clashing sounds and glitchy leads!"

Which bit of this track are you most proud of?

"Probably the lead in the second break, and only because it was a complete fluke! Just one of those things, out of the blue decided to layer the original lead one octave up and it came out as a really dissonant hit that I liked."

If we were to give you £5000 for gear what would you spend it on?

"Damn that's hard, there's a lot of gear that I want... Well firstly I would get a Moog Voyager so I would be able to satisfy my analog needs. Then some KRK VXT 8 monitors. I'm using some old random home theatre speakers at the moment. And then cap it off with a PreSonus audio interface and Native Instruments Kontakt 4, with some extra sound libraries too."

What are you working on now?

"An unnamed dirty little ditty with a Phil Kieran/BSOD style, though it's still in the planning stage."

The Best of the Rest...

Anniversary Song Citizen Call

myspace.com/citizencall



Hailing from Herzeliya, Israel is Tamir Hativa and this quirky, scary downbeat track is his latest work. "The best bit

for me is the build up and transitions," says Tamir. "The sounds are from the Covert Operators pack for Ableton's 10th anniversary. All of the sounds there are great, and I've used them alongside some clips from the Ableton Simplification pack." The choice of sounds here (love the bleeps

and the fat bassline) certainly give the sound an atmosphere all its own.

"I use an Intel Quad Core PC, with 2GB RAM, Axiom 49 MIDI keyboard, RME Fireface 400, and Behringer Truth monitors. For software I use Ableton Live Suite 8.1 with those Simplification pack

samples and plenty of Loopmasters samples too," says Tamir. "I'd like to get all of Spectrasonics synths. Trillian, RMX, Ableton Max for Live, Akai APC40, Komplete 6, the new M-Audio Axiom Pro, a Neve summing mixer, if I had the cash!"

"Right now I'm working on finding the right producer for my first single!" Best of luck with that. We're not sure as to your overall style – this track is certainly individual and

interesting but a little too downbeat for a commercial release – but we wish you every success with your latest work! .

Abusement Park thORAX

myspace.com/thoraximus



Yes! This is absolutely insane! It's impossible to get a finger on what this track is doing and

why it's doing it. And the movie folio studio work by Richard Keith Ivy its maker is clearly responsible for it's insanity. "Ever since graduating school and getting my degree in Recording Arts, I have been trying to get my foot in the door, so needless to say I am very excited about this opportunity," he says.

"I have been making my rounds trying to find a job in sound design, and more or less making music on the side, but having said all that I have an abundance of songs by now and I'm willing to do what it takes to get my name and music out there.

"This is a track that showcases how I have been approaching music making as of late, meaning that this has combined my new love of breakcore-ish type percussion/beats, paired with post production/sound design type sound (glass breaking, Foley, violins etc.) I really just meticulously pieced this one together in Ableton using everything from loops I made myself to found breaks that I reconstructed, to making some of the pads and atmospheres using Propellerheads Reason 4."

It's certainly one of a kind and must have taken ages to slice together. Technically brilliant it might not be to everyone's tastes musically but we insist that everyone should give this one a listen. Top stuff.

Moody A.L.T.Z

myspace.com/altzuz



The work of Vincent Chan in Hong Kong this has all the clarity and futuristic vision of the city he hails from.

"To be honest, musicality wise, there are not any complex or beautiful melodies here. Mostly it's arps and pattern stuff. Technical wise, there aren't any crazy effects going on. It is quite a straight forward and simple track," he confesses. "For myself, the beauty of the track is the feeling and the atmosphere. I love the progression, building up the track. You cannot expect what it will sound like when you hear the intro on your first listening. I love the lead sound and the melody at the end of the track. With the drums and bassline, it



SELECTED KIT

Hardware

- > Apple iMac
- > Alesis M1 Active MK2
- > Akai MPK 49 Controller
- > M Audio Firewire 1814
- > Nord Lead 3

Software

- > Logic Studio
- > ARTURIA Minimog v2
- > Guru
- > PSP vintage warmer v2
- > Sugar Bytes Effectrix

FAVOURITE GEAR

- > My Alesis monitors as they have a great sound."

Vez RuDeDog

Contact: myspace.com/ross_michael_dyson

It's quite the month for Electro House this month and here's another block of it. Nice

rippling and shimmering bassline, nice shuffling rhythm, nice work!

"My track has Tech house feel that makes you want to smile with a controlled energy that just keeps you waiting," says its maker Ross Michael Dyson. "I am most proud of the feel of the track, the way the arrangement keeps the listener interested with it's groovy baseline and exciting lead, the vocal in it self was the first thing that inspired

me to write this track, which was featured hidden away on a sample CD."

The vocal is a nice addition (giving a much needed element of variety) but we're not sure about its level, and pitching. It's obviously been stretched to fit but is presented here in high and dry form so it never fully sits in the track. And it seems to trigger at some rather unusual points too. A slapback delay, and a short reverb would sit in the same place as the rest of your track.

That said, love the feel and tension here. Awesome.

Hot Pick



SELECTED KIT

Hardware

- > Custom built PC
- > Echo Gina / Creative Audigy (used for MIDI) sound cards
- > Focusrite Penta
- > Lexicon MX200
- > Liquid Mix 16
- > Tannoy Reveal Actives
- > Behringer MXB10/2 mixer
- > Roland TD 8K V drums
- > Access Virus TI
- > Roland V-Synth XT.

Software

- > Windows XP SP3
- > Cubase Studio 4
- > HALion 3
- > Sony Acid Pro 6
- > Sony Soundforge 8
- > Ableton Live Intro

FAVOURITE GEAR

- > "Has to be my Roland V drums and computer."



Chemistry Trip Doctors

Contact: stephen_burrows@hotmail.co.uk

Hang onto your hats, this is going to be one wild ride. Fast, energetic and packed with tracks and sounds this euphoric Tribal House really cuts loose with everything but the kitchen sink thrown at it and all given time and space to show off.

Inevitably we have to question the mix (there really is so much going on here that there's not even a glimmer of silence) but on the whole the boys have pulled it together to create a wall of sound that doesn't muddy up when you

play it loud. We've got to ask about that heavy rock guitar though... "I've learnt from bitter experience that more than 20 minutes spent on one sound is probably a waste of time, so the guitar samples, though risky, had to work out of the box and I think they did," says Mick Rybak-Rajewski of the band. Well they certainly keep the track rocking along.

"We're also really proud of the breakdown, which began as a print of the reverb buss." It's a neat trick and just one more great moment in a track that's bursting at the seams!



The Artist

Names:

Stephen Burrows / Mick Rybak-Rajewski

Where:

King's Lynn, UK

This track: "Funky tribal dance (but we're open to offers)."

Which part of the track are you most proud of?

Steve: "During the mastering I was able to bring out a lot of inner mix detail which owes a debt of honour, in part, to Bob Katz's excellent *Mastering Audio*. And a certain music magazine!"

The £5000 question:

Steve: "Originally, having started life as a drummer (sorry) I would invest in the new Roland V drums. Also TC Electronics Finalizer 96K looks cool."

Mick: "Ableton Live Suite 8. Oh, and that nice APC 40. And the MKII version of the Virus TI. That leaves about £2000 for aspirin!"

What are you working on right now?

Several projects including *Funk Groove In E Minor*, *Glitch-Hop Project*, and *The Fast One...*

is so full of energy. It is from my Korg R3. It is my favourite lead sound on that synth (although it is preset).

"Also, the gated vocal effect is another beautiful thing. I just grab a vocal sample, gated it, add some delay and reverb, then I get the sound. It gives the track soul as 90% of the sounds in the track are from synth or drum samples. I do not want the track to be 100% synth sounds or electronic, that's why I add that vocal sample FX."

It's certainly a heady mix. We'd like a little more bottom end to your bass sound but this is easily this month's cleanest most sci-fi track!

The One To Beat Coma

myspace.com/bporigamil



From Jacob Topper in L.A. we have this smart experimental dance tune that does it's best to defy description. "I'd say it's like swimming through a bowl of Jell-O as it's hardening," says Jacob. "It tastes amazing and feels even better between your toes but the texture becomes so much more pleasing as it solidifies!"

"I love the sub/top combo that makes up the bassline. Both top and sub were created using Massive. The top is Massive (times three) sent to Space Designer, Bitcrusher, EQ, Direction Mixer, and Rocket Compressor then bounced to audio where I chopped, reversed and screwed the samples from there." It's certainly an amazing sound that works great with the Dubstep timing to create something that not only sounds

unique but breaks a few rules in the process too!

Phon Bubbins Bonito Flakes

Michael L Penman

soundcloud.com/michaellpenman



Ah, a little more madness for you! This time from Michael Penman also in L.A.

"This track is a new sub genre (yes a other one) Minimal Dubtech!" he says. It's certainly a stern, unrelenting mix of styles that sounds awesome (read: scary) when you blast it out loud.

"The vocal processing is with Ableton's Simpler and manipulated the loop points to create a messed up time stretched sound. This is what got the ball rolling and from there the rest of the track was a blur. I knocked out the main beef of the track in a few hours. The main dubstep sounds where created when I used to work for Photek. I would spend days creating dub sounds." Wow. That's a job?

I Am All About Arthur Keen

myspace.com/arthurkeenlive



"I call it sexy techno. I have heard this term from Sven Vath and I think this track ticks the box," says it's maker Artur Ostrowski. We couldn't agree more.

It certainly has a great sheen and a class all its own. "When the track comes out of that deep build up. When the beat hits your ears again there is a great energy behind it I think. I like that moment a lot!" **FM**

Hot Pick



SELECTED KIT

Hardware

- > AMD Athlon 64 X2 6400+
- > Les Paul guitar
- > Tascam monitors
- > MXL large diaphragm condenser mic
- > Art tube preamp
- > M-audio Audio Buddy preamp

Software

- > Cubase 5
- > Plugsound Synth
- > Ni Guitar Rig
- > Waves plugs
- > Magnus Ambience
- > Izotope Ozone

FAVOURITE GEAR

- > "Cubase with its flexibility and editing facilities and Izotope Ozone as a powerful mastering suite."



How Much Marquee69 feat. Nasayano

Contact: myspace.com/marquee69

Time for something a little more laid back and moody now. How about a little

Rock with a Trip Hop hat on?

"This is a bouncy, modern take on a classic rock theme with a twist. The track builds up to release in a guitar riff explosion, with an extended outro in sort of a style of Derek And The Dominoes Layla 3000AD!" says it's maker Mark Monwid.

"The bit we're most proud of is the vocals. They were first overdubbed with three different reverbs on top. Then, gradually added Izotope Trash filter and put it

through NI Guitar Rig amp sim. I used that setup in various combinations throughout the vocal tracks." There's certainly a great sound there – we're reminded of Massive Attack, given the vocal sound and shuffling beat.

We're not big fans of the guitar explosion though. It seems as though the part was sampled and jacked into this track given the issues with pitching and timing. If it were up to us we'd cut it altogether, and lean on the drums, moody deep synth and great vocals to carry the track through.

Unsigned and unloved? Get your tracks on these pages!

If you're an amateur music maker wanting to take the next step up then we want to help. Broadcast your music via the *FM* DVD and bravely subject your work to our expert advice!



1 Non pros please!

Are you unsigned, non MCPS or PRS registered and making music that you think could be something special? Then our *Demos* pages are for you. We're here to help and want to broadcast your work to *FM* readers around the world! If you're already making money and living the dream then thanks, but no thanks. Everyone else should head to futuremusic.co.uk our virtual home and blog site where you'll find regular input from the *FM* team.



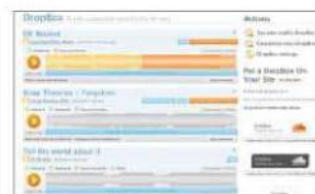
2 Look for the SoundCloud DropBox

We're big fans of SoundCloud, the online audio sharing service that let's you effortlessly pass around your audio to your friends or collaborators. SoundCloud lets you audition the audio in your drop box without the need to download it first – it plays in your browser with a click – making it the fastest and easiest way to get at audio files ever. Check out soundcloud.com to get your own SoundCloud box. Ours is on the right, just below the advert.



3 Click on the box and upload

Click on *FutureMusic's* SoundCloud DropBox then click on the big 'Choose files' button and upload your very BEST work. We haven't the time to wade through 12 tracks to get to the good ones! They need to be MP3s please. AND YOU MUST take the time to add a description – your name, address, band name, track name please – and give us your email address too! Include your track name and band name in any correspondence please!



4 Start work on that bio...

If your track is selected to be featured in the magazine we'll email you and ask you a whole bunch of questions such as your favourite gear, how you got your sound, you know – all the things you see us ask people! We're always up against one deadline or another here at *FM* so a rapid concise and easily understood reply to our questions is appreciated. Make sure you put your real name, artist name and track name on all correspondence!

All offers are subject to availability! We do not take any responsibility for any misprints or misinterpreted information!

All prices include 17.5% UK Vat and Tax paid is clearly shown on all invoices. For VAT registered companies this can be deducted at source. Please note that all our invoices will be in euros.

All transactions are carried out in euros and as such the GBP price can vary dependent on the current day's rate of exchange. Thomann are not liable for any surcharges added by your bank or card issuer.

The prices below are based on the published day's rate of exchange:
1 EUR = 0.890 GBP | GBP = 1.124 EUR

thomann
MUSIC IS OUR PASSION

Musikhaus Thomann
Treppendorf 30
D-96138 Burgebrach
Germany
T +49 9546. 9223-0
F +49 9546. 6774
E international@thomann.de
I www.thomann.de

HOT DEALS

www.thomann.de | International Hotline: +49 9546 9223-55 | Fax: +49 9546 9223-24

Swissonic MDR-4

Mobile digital audio recorder

24bit, sample rate: 44.1/48kHz, record format: WAV (16/24bit) and MP3 (64/96/224/320kbps), 5 effects (delay, chorus, room, reverb, pitch shift), built-in speaker, 128 x 64 pixel LED display, 1/8" stereo line in, 1/8" external mic in, built-in stereo mic, 1/8" headphone out, Mini-B type USB connector, powered by PSU or 2 AA size batteries, incl. power supply unit, 1GB SD card and USB cable, dimensions WHD: 6,7 x 2,9 x 10,7cm.

€ 89.- **78.-**

a. code 226599

Tascam DR-07

Mobile digital audio recorder

Record and play MP3 (up to 320kb/s) and WAV files (up to 24bit), 44.1/48kHz, built-in stereo mic, analog automatic level input control, analog limiter, stereo in for external mic, stereo line input, headphone and line-out (3.5mm TRS mini jack), USB 2.0, powered by AA size alkaline or NiMH batteries, incl. 2 GB SD card and windshield.

€ 159.- **142.-**

order code 223287

Zoom H2 UK

Mobile MP3/WAV recorder

1-point stereo mic design, MS stereo technique, built-in USB interface with audio interface function, WAV 96/48/44.1kHz and MP3 up to 320kbps VBR, headphone out, time stamp function, uses SD-cards (up to 4GB), perfect for interviews, podcasts, meetings and live recordings. USB cable, stand, mic-stand adapter, windscreens, UK power supply and 512MB SD card included.

€ 169.- **150.-**

a. code 213436

Zoom Q3

Handy video audio recorder

Stereo condenser mic, true X/Y configuration, 2.4" LC display (320x240px), video resolution 640x480 at 30 frames per second, video format MPEG-4 SP, NTSC/PAL TV out, audio formats with video: 44.1/48kHz 16/24bit Linear PCM or MP3 up to 320kbps, without video up to 96kHz/24bit Linear PCM WAV, up to 1 hour video with 2 GB SD card, auto record level, includes TV cable, soft case, wind screen, 2GB SD card and 2 AA batteries.

€ 239.- **210.-**

order code 234280

Edirol R-09 HR 4GB SD Card Bundle

24bit/96kHz MP3/WAV recorder

Up to 320 kbps MP3 playback and recording, recording on SD or SDHC card (up to 8 Gbyte), built-in stereo condenser mic, OLED display, USB 2.0, stereo mic in, stereo line in, stereo headphone out, incl. power supply, 512MB SD card, USB cable, Cakewalk Pyro AudioCreator LE, wireless remote controller and a small table mounting plate. Bundle incl. 4GB SD card.

€ 289.- **257.-**

a. code 207377

Sony PCM-M10

Portable 24bit/96kHz audio recorder

Built-in stereo mic, internal speaker, cross-memory recording, internal 4GB flash memory + MicroSD/MemoryStick Micro slot, limiter and low-cut filter, 5sec. pre-record buffer, recording level control, USB 2.0, includes power supply, Soundforge Audio Studio LE, cable remote and cable, finish: grey. Bundle includes accu charger BCG-34H S, MDR-V150 stereo headphones and 4 accus NH-AA B4F.

€ 325.- **286.-**

order code 239061

Zoom H4 N UK

Digital recorder

Perfect for interviews, podcasts, meetings and live recordings, 24bit/96kHz, MP3 up to 320 kbps bitrate, two built-in stereo microphones switchable between 90° and 120°, needs 24V or 48V phantom power, USB port, incl. 1GB SD card, windscreens, UK power supply, mic clip adaptor, USB cable, bag and Cubase LE4.

€ 329.- **290.-**

order code 228789

Olympus LS-1 I

Digital recorder

24bit/96kHz, 2 built-in mics, internal 8GB HDD, expandable up to 32GB with SDHC card, up to 23 hours record time, edit functions, PCM/WAV/WMA/MP3 record & playback, built-in stereo speaker, display with backlight, SD/SDHC slot, USB, headphone out, silver metal housing, weight: 165g (incl. batteries), connection for external power supply, incl. wireless remote and Steinberg Cubase 4 LE.

€ 349.- **307.-**

order code 234496

Zoom R16

USB audiointerface and DAW controller

16-track playback and 8-track record, 24bit/48kHz PCM recording, internal stereo condenser mic, battery or USB, 8 mic ins (2 with 48V phantom power), 2 outs, 8 balanced XLR / 1/4" TRS connections, internal effects, Mackie Control emulation via USB, for Win XP/Vista and Mac OS, incl. Steinberg Cubase LE4 and 1Gb SD Card (Support for SDHC-Cards up to 32GB).

€ 369.- **342.-**

order code 232058

Tascam 2488

NEO Bundle

24-track harddisk recorder
24bit/44.1kHz, 8 mic/line inputs (4 XLR with phantom power), internal FX processor, 16x CD-RW drive, new effects for mastering, 250 virtual tracks, high speed USB 2.0 connects to PC or Mac® for data backup and SMF/WAV file exchange, 80GB hard drive, bundle incl. the t.bone HD-9900 headphones and 5 Sony CDQ80N CD-Rs.

€ 771.- **692.-**

a. code 223374

KRK RP5 Rokit G2 SE

Active studio monitor

75W, 5" + 1" speaker, frequency response: 53Hz - 20kHz, magnetically shielded, dimensions WHD: 27,6 x 18,5 x 25cm, weight: 6,3kg. Unit price!

€ 135.- **129.-**

order code 240101

ESI nEar05

Active 5" studio monitors

Magnetically shielded, 31Hz - 22kHz, bi-amped, bass: 42W, treble: 33W, balanced XLR input, 6,3mm jack input, dimensions: 25 x 16,6 x 20cm. Pair price!

€ 169.- **150.-**

order code 160180

M-Audio EX66

Active studio reference monitor

Bi-amplified with 200W PWM power per channel, high-impedance analog inputs (XLR and 1/4" TRS balanced), S/PDIF and AES/EBU digital input up to 24bit/192kHz for total digital studio connectivity. Unit price!

€ 258.- **230.-**

order code 190176

Yamaha HS80M stand bundle

Active 2-way studio monitor package

120W bi-amping bass-reflex system, 8" woofer, 1" tweeter, frequency range 42Hz to 20kHz, XLR and jack input, mid EQ, room control, high trim, low cut switchable, magnetically shielded. Bundle including 2 pcs. HS80M and 1 pair of Millennium BS-500 nearfield stands.

€ 468.- **425.-**

a. code 227555

Mackie HR824 MK2

Active 2-way studio nearfield monitor

8.75" low-distortion LF woofer, 1" titanium dome, ferrofluid cooled tweeter, twin FR series amps (150W LF / 100W HF), passive radiator provides tight, articulate bass extension down to 35Hz, balanced XLR/TRS and unbalanced RCA inputs. Unit price!

€ 525.- **467.-**

order code 138446

the t.mix Mix 502

5-channel mixer

1 mic in with 2-band EQ, 2 stereo ins, 2-track I/O, 1/4" balanced jack out, dimensions: 13,8 x 22 x 2,8/4,5cm, weight: 0,8kg.

€ 27.- **24.-**

order code 207200

Alesis Multimix 4 USB

4-channel mixer with digital output

16bit, 44.1kHz signal on USB, 4 line level ins, 2 XLR ins with gains and switchable 48V phantom power, high impedance guitar input, 2 channel EQ on mic ins, multicolor LED metering, main and headphone outs with independent level controls, incl. power supply, dimensions WHD: 15,2 x 19,6 x 5cm, weight: 0,6kg.

€ 88.- **77.-**

order code 235244

Yamaha MG 124c

12-channel mixer

4 mono mic/line ins (XLR/TRS), 2 stereo mic/line ins, 2 stereo line TRS ins, integrated compressor per channel, 2 stereo aux returns, 2 aux sends, 1 subgroup, 4 inserts, 3-band EQ, low cut filter 18dB, high-end mic preamps, 48V phantom power. Weight: 3kg.

€ 238.- **212.-**

order code 109340

MG 124cx

16 digital effects.

order code 109573

€ 285.- **254.-**

Soundcraft EFX 8

8-channel mixing desk

8 mono inputs, 2 stereo inputs, inserts on all channels, 1 FX send, 1 aux send (pre/post), solo/mute switch, integrated Lexicon FX with 32 presets, peak LEDs on all channels, integrated power supply, dimensions: 33 x 9,1 x 36,2cm, weight: 4,6kg, rackmount optional.

€ 269.- **239.-**

order code 118879

Mackie 1402 VLZ3

14-channel mixer

New XDR 2 preamps, 6x mono mic/line inputs (XLR/jack), 4x stereo line inputs (jack), 2x stereo aux returns, 2x aux sends, 6x inserts, 3-band EQ, 18dB lo-cut filter, PFL, 48V phantom power, internal power supply, balanced master outputs (XLR/jack). Dimensions: 8,1 x 35,6 x 32,9cm (HxWxD). Weight: 4,5kg.

€ 359.- **320.-**

order code 112366

Yamaha MG 166cx

16 channel mixer

8 mono mic/line ins (XLR/jack), 2 mic/line ins (XLR/stereo jack), 2 stereo line ins (jack), 3 aux sends, 8 inserts, 3-band EQ with parametric mids, internal compressor on each mic channel, SPX FX processor with 16 programs, 18dB high pass filter, high-end mic preamps, +48V phantom power, dimensions: 47,8 x 10,2 x 48,9cm, weight: 5,5kg.

€ 379.- **337.-**

order code 115511

Alesis Multimix 16 FireWire

16ch. mixer with FireWire interface

8 mic/line ins, 4 balanced stereo line ins, 3-band EQ per channel, 2 aux send/returns, 100 28bit FX programs, headphone out, FireWire interface: 18 ins, 2 outs, 24bit/48kHz, ASIO/WDM drivers for Win XP SP2, Core Audio drivers for Mac OS X, incl. Cubase LE.

€ 398.- **354.-**

order code 186079

Mackie 1642 VLZ3

Compact 16-channel mixer

8x mono mic/line channels, 2x mic/line stereo channels, 2x stereo channels, 4x subgroups, 4x aux (2x pre/post switchable), XDR mic preamps, 60mm faders, 3-band parametric EQ (mono channels), 4-band EQ (stereo channels), 48V phantom power. Dimensions: 42,5 x 13,1 x 42,1cm (WxDxH). Weight: 8,3kg.

€ 535.- **476.-**

order code 112362

Allen & Heath WZ 16:2 DX

16-channel mixer

16 mono ins with insert/direct out, PAD, 100Hz HP and 4-Band-EQ with para. mids, 48V phantom switchable, 6 Aux, Aux 5-6 internal effect, 2 stereo Aux returns, PFL, mute, phones, master I/O, A/B out, 2 Digittech FX processors, MIDI input, internal power supply.

€ 939.- **836.-**

order code 132316

suitable flightcase

order code 161855

€ 179.- **159.-**

Yamaha 01V96 VCM

Digital mixing console

24bit / 96kHz, 24 analog inputs, 12 Mic inputs, 40 channels expandable, included ADAT interface, 4 effect processors, parametric EQ, incl. Studio Manager Software.

€ 2390.- **2127.-**

order code 161112

suitable flightcase

order code 199056

€ 188.- **167.-**

www.thomann.de

Telephone Hotline: +49 9546 9223-55

Fax: +49 9546 9223-24

The Thomann services

- 30-day money back guarantee
- free shipping to the UK and Ireland on orders above £159

Akai LPK 25

USB MIDI controller keyboard

25 mini keys, arpeggiator, sustain button, octave up and down, tap tempo controls, 4 programmable memory banks, includes software editor for Mac and PC, plug-&-play USB connection on Mac and PC, requires no driver installation, dimensions HWD: 2,79 x 34,04 x 9,65cm, weight: 635g.



order code 235491

€ 48.-
£ 42.-

Thomann SP-5100

Stage Piano

88 hammer action keys, 20 sounds, 20 styles, 60 songs, dual mode, split mode, metronome, DSP, transpose function, headphone output, stereo aux input, stereo aux output, MIDI in/out, USB port.



order code 154090
Thomann SPWS-5100
Wooden stand for SP-5100
order code 154141
€ 329.-
£ 293.-
€ 46.-
£ 41.-

Novation Launchpad

Ableton Live and MIDI controller

Bi-directional communication, 64-button Grid with color synced feedback over the status, scene control switchable to control volume, sends, muting and more, up to 6 units at the same time, USB bus-powered, large rubber grips to hold it steady, automap-enabled, incl. Dedicated Launchpad Ableton Live 8 version, weight: 0,76kg.



order code 236641

€ 175.-
£ 154.-

Focusrite Liquid-Mix 16

FireWire plugin processor and remote 24bit/192kHz Sharp DSP processing with dynamic convolution technology, over 40 compressor & 20 EQ models, 7-band EQ (freely configurable as vintage EQs), 16 channels each with compressor and EQ @ 44.1/48kHz, 8 @ 96kHz, or 4 @ 192kHz, optional available DSP extension-board for 24 plugins @ 44.1/48kHz, bus or PSU powered, for Mac or PC.



order code 210257

€ 175.-
£ 156.-

Akai APC 40

Ableton Live DAW controller

USB plug-and-play, 40 triggers, 16 rotary control knobs with LED, 8 channel fader, 1 bus fader and 1 cross fader, 2 footswitch connections for tap tempo, tempo nudge, record enable, solo/cue function, for PC/Mac, incl. Ableton Live Lite Akai APC40 Edition.



order code 223229

€ 398.-
£ 354.-

ESI DualFire

24bit/96kHz FireWire audio interface

2 ins with level controls (1/4" jack), mic preamps with phantom power (XLR), 2 Hi-Z ins, 4 analogue outs, direct input monitoring with level control, headphone out, bus powered or by separate power supply, supports DirectWire 3.0, MME, ASIO 2.0, GSIF 2.0, DirectSound and Core Audio, incl. power supply and Steinberg Cubase LE 4.0.



order code 206255

€ 95.-
£ 85.-

M-Audio Fast Track Pro

USB audio interface

4x4 24bit/44,1kHz, in stereo up to 24bit/96kHz, USB powered, 2 mic/instrument preamps with switchable phantom power, 2 inserts, 2 balanced line outs, 4 additional RCA outs, S/PDIF coaxial I/O, S/PDIF out even for AC-3/DTS surround sound, MIDI I/O, compatible with both Mac and PC.



order code 184360

€ 144.-
£ 128.-

Cakewalk UA-25 EX CW

USB audio interface

2 channels, 24bit/96kHz AD/DA, mic/guitar/line ins, 48V phantom power, USB powered, integrated limiter and analogue compressor, ground lift, headphone out, MIDI I/O, direct monitoring, compatible with Windows (XP/Vista) and Mac OS X 10.3.9 and higher.



order code 235896

€ 185.-
£ 163.-

Steinberg C12

USB audio interface and DAW controller

USB studio with 24bit/48kHz, 2 mic/line XLR/TRS inputs with switchable 48V, input 1 with Hi-Z switch for direct input of guitar and bass, 2 balanced line outs, 1 stereo headphone output, latency free hardware monitoring, incl. Cubase AI 5, compliant to Mac OS X, Win XP and Vista.



order code 235705

€ 189.-
£ 166.-

Tascam US-1641

USB 2.0 audio interface

24bit/96kHz, 8 mic/line ins with phantom and level meters on the front, 2 balanced line instrument ins on the front and 4 balanced line ins on the rear, 4 line outs, monitor out, S/PDIF I/O (switchable to AES/EBU), MIDI I/O, 19"/1RU, for Win XP, Vista 32 and Mac OS X (10.4 or higher), including Steinberg Cubase LE 4.



order code 138750

€ 279.-
£ 248.-

Apogee Duet Bundle

FireWire audio interface

24bit/96kHz, 2 channels, FireWire 400 I/O, breakout cable with 2 XLR mic ins, 2 1/4" jack instrument ins, 2 1/4" jack monitor outs, multi-segment LED display input and output levels, multi-function controller knob, headphone out, Maestro software for advanced control and low latency mixing, compatible with any Core Audio compliant audio application, compatible with Mac OS X Core Audio, Bundle incl. original Apogee carry case and 2GB USB stick.



o. code 209773

€ 418.-
£ 373.-

Focusrite Saffire PRO 40

24bit/96k FireWire audio interface

20 I/Os, 8 mic preamps, 8 analog I/Os (2 mic/line/instr. combo XLR, 6 mic/line combo XLR), ADAT I/O, 2 S/PDIF I/Os, 2 monitor outs, monitor switch, 2 separate headphone buses, MIDI I/O, zero-latency DSP mixer/router, incl. plugin suite, 19", 1RU, internal power supply, weight: 3kg.



order code 219725

€ 435.-
£ 387.-

MOTU Ultralite MKIII Hybrid

FireWire and USB audio interface

24bit/192kHz, 2 mic/instrument ins, 6 bal. ins and 10 outs (1/4" TRS), 48V phantom power, S/PDIF I/O, headphone out, CueMix FX, internal DSP, LCD display, suitable for use as a standalone mixer, compatible with Windows and Mac, supports WDM, ASIO and Core Audio, incl. AudioDesk software for Mac.



order code 239141

€ 479.-
£ 422.-

RME Fireface UC

USB audio interface

36 channels, 24bit/192kHz AD/DA converter, 48V phantom power, 18 I/Os usable at the same time, instrument input, 8x analog I/O, ADAT I/O, S/PDIF I/O, 2x MIDI I/O, WordClock, intelligent clock control, SyncCheck, SyncAlign, SteadyClock, DIGICheck and TotalMix, 9,5", 1U.



order code 228395

€ 822.-
£ 723.-

Digidesign Digi 003 Rack Factory

24bit/96kHz FireWire interface

8x analog I/O, 4x prof. mic preamps, 48V phantom power, 8-channel ADAT optical I/O or 2-ch. S/PDIF optical I/O, 1x MIDI in, 2x MIDI out, BNC WordClock I/O, dedicated studio monitor out, alt control room out, alt source in for external device monitoring, dual headphone outputs, incl. Pro Tools LE, Factory plug-in bundle and Pro Tools Ignition Pack 2.



order code 111200

€ 888.-
£ 790.-

Peavey Q1311

31-band equalizer

Constant Q factor, 1/3 octave, switchable 6dB or 12dB, 40Hz low cut feature, frequency range: 20Hz to 20kHz, XLR and 1/4" TRS inputs and outputs, output LED display, dimensions HWD: 4,4 x 48,3 x 18,7cm (19"/19"), weight: 3kg.



order code 238485

€ 45.-
£ 40.-

the t.racks EQ-2331E

2x 30-band equalizer

20Hz - 20kHz, status LEDs, volume control per channel, low cut filter on each channel, balanced 1/4" Jack and XLR I/O, ± 12 dB, 19"/2U.

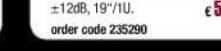


order code 235291

€ 75.-
£ 66.-

the t.racks EQ-1215E

2x 15-band EQ, 25Hz - 16kHz, low cut 10 - 250Hz on each channel, range: ± 6 dB and ± 12 dB, 19"/1U.



order code 235290

€ 55.-
£ 48.-

StudioProjects VTB1

Tube preamp

Incorporating true class A/B switching, the VTB1 is a totally discrete circuit, the tube drive is a variable drive to a 12AX7, that allows the user to blend as little, or as much of the tube drive they want, 48V phantom power, balanced outputs on XLR and 1/4", TRS Insert, phase reverse, high pass filter, 5-segment LED metering.



order code 183260

€ 111.-
£ 99.-

Focusrite Octopre LE

8-channel Class A microphone preamp

8 analog outs, 8 balanced 1/4" jack ins located on front panel for quick and easy access, first two channels can be used for DI free plug-in of guitars and basses, channels 1 and 2 also allow a microphone signal, frequency response: 10Hz - 122kHz, 19"/1RU.



order code 178709

€ 259.-
£ 231.-

Octopre LE ADAT Bundle

incl. Focusrite ADAT converter.
order code 235373

€ 329.-
£ 293.-

Mindprint Invoice MKII Digital Edition

Valve microphone preamp

Mic/Line preamp, semi-parametric bass & treble, fully parametric mid, EQ, 19"/1U, incl. DI-MOD USB digital interface with USB.



order code 182221

€ 469.-
£ 417.-

the t.bone Micscreen Mini

Portable absorber and diffuser

With microphone clamp, reduces the transmission of unwanted room reflections, echos and ambient noises, recommended for vocals, instruments, live and studio applications, quick and easy mounting on nearly every standard microphone stand.



order code 223803

€ 66.-
£ 58.-

the t.bone Micscreen

Portable absorber/diffuser

Positioned behind any microphone, reduces the transmission of unwanted room reflections, echos and ambient noises, recommended for vocals, instruments, live and studio applications, quick and easy mounting on nearly every standard microphone stand.



order code 209023

€ 83.-
£ 83.-

AKG C1000S MKIII Set

Cardioid/supercardioid, battery or phantom power, battery check LED, pattern switch, 50Hz-20kHz, 2000 Impedance, 137dB max SPL, Weight: 275g, Includes K&M 27105 microphone stand, 10m Cordial XLR cable with Neutrik connectors, windscreen, clip and mic case.



order code 105776

€ 148.-
£ 132.-

Audio Technica U841A

Condenser boundary microphone

Omni-directional, frequency response 30Hz - 20kHz, 132dB SPL max., switchable low-cut 80Hz, 18dB/octave, UniGuard technology offers outstanding rejection of radio frequency interference as mobile phones, phantom or battery power (1x 1,5V AA), XLR out, incl. battery.



order code 187087

€ 155.-
£ 138.-

Rode NT5

Condenser microphone stereo bundle

2 matched small diaphragm condenser microphones, 0.5" gold sputtered capsule, polar pattern: cardioid, frequency response: 20Hz to 20kHz, excellent for drum overhead, acoustic guitar and stereo live recordings, including plastic case, microphone holders and wind screens.



order code 154595

€ 269.-
£ 239.-

the t.bone SC440 USB

USB condenser studio microphone

USB connection for direct access to Mac and PC (doesn't work with Windows Vista!), cardioid polar pattern, frequency range 20Hz to 18kHz, incl. plastic case



order code 197603

€ 55.-
£ 49.-

SE Electronics SE 2000

Large diaphragm studio microphone

Cardioid pattern capacitor, gold sputtered 1" mylar diaphragm, frequency response: 20Hz - 20kHz, sensitivity: >16 mV/Pa -36" ± 2 dB, impedance: <200 Ω , output noise: <17dB typical (A weighted), THD: <0.5% at 125dB SPL, phantom power 48V ± 4 V, incl. wooden case and shockmount.



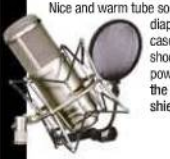
order code 223700

€ 88.-
£ 77.-

the t.bone SCT700 Set

Studio tube microphone

Nice and warm tube sound, 1,07" gold diaphragm, incl. transport case, wind shield, cable, shockmount and external power supply. Bundle incl. the t.bone MS180 pop shield.



order code 203197

€ 149.-
£ 133.-

EV RE20

Dynamic large diaphragm microphone

RE series, polar pattern cardioid, switchable HP, variable D design, 150 Ohms, frequency range: 45Hz to 18kHz, incl. clamp and box, weight: 737g, length 217mm, diameter 54mm, ideal for vocals, brass and bass drum.



order code 128926

€ 449.-
£ 400.-

AKG C414 B-XLS

Universal multi-pattern mic

5 polar patterns (including cardioid and hyper-cardioid), 20Hz-20kHz, 6/12/18dB pad, 40/80/160Hz hi-pass filter, includes H85 shockmount and windscreen.



o. code 105783

€ 655.-
£ 583.-

Swissonic CDMP 1

Compact CD/MP3-Player

40 seconds anti-shock, pitch $\pm 16\%$, loop function, slot-in drive, balanced XLR output, direct headphone output with volume control, master level for the line output, IR remote control, 19"/1HE.



order code 221521

€ 139.-
£ 124.-

Pioneer CDJ-400

MP3 single CD player

With ID3 tag & CD text, MIDI controlled via USB, jog wheel, scratch jog FX, ± 6 /10/16% pitch control, master tempo control, reverse play function, shock-proof memory, hot loop & beat loop for 10 cue/loop points per disc (maximum).



o. code 139321

€ 666.-
£ 593.-

suitable flightcase

order code 206436

€ 93.-
£ 83.-

Vestax VCI-300

DJ MIDI controller

24bit, 4-channel soundcard (2x I/O), 1 stereo input, 1 microphone input, 2 stereo outputs (master/monitor), USB-connection (bus powered), 1 microphone input, 2 AUX-inputs, 1 headphone output, 2 master outs (cinch), dimensions WHD: 41 x 28 x 27,5cm, weight: 3,2kg, incl. I/O Software, power supply optional.

Gear Chart

Are you giving your music a fresh kick? In the market for new kit? Finally putting together that dream set up? Then you'll need *FM's* exclusive guide to all our favourite gear

1

2

3

4

5

Hardware Synths



Dave Smith Instruments Tetra | £552

Review FM219 Super Mopho meets cut-down Prophet '08 in this fantastic analogue polyphonic synth.



Dave Smith Instruments Prophet 08 | £1,499

Review FM194 A beast of analogue power. Warm, fat and wooden-ended – what more do you want?



Clavia Nord Wave | £1,395

Review FM196 If you liked the Nord Lead you'll love the Wave. It's more versatile and sounds fantastic.



Dave Smith Instruments Mopho | £280

Review FM208 So much fatness, for such little cash – you'd be silly to miss this analogue bargain.



Use Audio Plugiator | £329

Review FM202 A software and hardware hybrid that is brilliant value for money. We all want one at FM!

Soft Synths



FXpansion D.CAM Synth Squad | £179

Review FM217 A powerful synth collection from FXpansion, favoured by Electro House heroes.



Rob Papen SubBoomBass | €299

Review FM215 Another superb synth from Rob Papen that caters for all your bass-in-your-face needs.



Spectrasonics Trilian | £215

Review FM224 A long-awaited update to the monster of all bass software. An instant classic.



Arturia Jupiter 8V | £150

Review FM189 One of the definitive, all-time great polysynths is now a plug that delivers thunderous bass as powerful as its searing leads.



u-he Zebra 2.1 | \$199

Review FM183 Subtractive and analogue synthesis with an ultra-fat sound. Ideal for shaking ground and wrecking speakers. In a good way.

MIDI Controllers



Novation LaunchPad | £149

Review FM220 Greta features at an amazing price make this Ableton controller a performance dream.



Akai APC40 | £400

Review FM215 Although there's still a few things that could be addressed, this is still the best option for performing with Ableton Live.



Livid Instruments Block | £349

Review FM223 Built out of wood and metal, the Block is a great alternative to the more mainstream controllers.



Native Instruments Kontrol X1 | €199

Review FM223 An intuitive, well-built controller at a great price. If you're a Traktor user, try this.



Vestax VCM-600 | £649

Review FM216 A fantastic way to control Ableton Live. Vestax deliver a well built, fun and feature packed DJ style performance controller.

How Our Chart Works

We've fought, bitched, whinged and racked-up all our favourite gear that's available today into our Gear Chart. If it makes an appearance on these pages, then it's well worth a look. We've appraised the hardware in terms of its price point, performance and usability, along with the fond memories and sheer joy factor of cranking it up for the first time. We're not saying that keyboard number six is 'better' than keyboard number seven, for example. We're saying that you should have a think about the music you want to make, read our recommendations below, and check out the gear that sounds cool. Each month we'll be updating our charts with new finds and introducing new lists to keep things fresh. Special mention to the Digital Audio Workstation bit at the back, which should help you nail your ideal recording solution.

The FM Awards

Editor's choice. If you see this little flag tagged on to one of our reviews it's impressed us above and beyond the usual excellence.

Platinum. Buy these. Unless you've got a perfectly good alternative or produce your music on comb and paper.

Value. A special chapeau to bits of gear that deliver the goods without breaking the bank. Value awards mean great gear at even better prices.

The Charts This Month...

120	Hardware Synths	From two-octave upstarts to two-grand monsters
120	Soft Synths	Our pick of sound-producing software
120	MIDI Controllers	The best performance and studio controllers in town
122	Monitors	Record, mix and master with confidence
122	Keyboard Controllers	Everything you need from portables to studio staples
122	Audio Interfaces	Get audio into your computer with quality and style
122	Effects and Mangers	Warp your sound and break new ground
124	Performance Samplers	Take control of your audio live and direct
124	High-end Audio Plug-ins	Treat yourself to the best that money can buy
124	Field Recorders	Record your band or go searching for found sound
124	Microphones	The best mics around for everyone's budget
125	eBay Classic Retro Finds	Keep an eye out for our suggested list of nostalgic love
125	Ways To Stand Out	Dare to be different and reap the rewards
125	Digital Audio Workstations	Which DAW is best for the music you want to make?

6

7

8

9

10



Waldorf Blofeld Keys | £699

Review FM211 A huge amount of exciting presets and solid good looks make for a killer all-round synth.



Korg microKorg XL | £439

Review FM210 This fresh update of everyone's favourite mini-synth gives a new engine and a great vocoder.



MFB Kraftzwerg | €580

Reviewed FM219 German-built modular synthesis on a budget. Prepare to get addicted to analogue with this flexible patch-happy synth.



Doepfer Dark Energy | €398

Review FM223 A good introduction to modular analogue synths, in a lovely wooden-edged box. Nice!



Analogue Solutions Telemark | £689

Review FM217 A semi-modular upright beast, with plenty of unique sonic possibilities.



Spectrasonics Omnisphere | £299

Review FM207 Great sounding, flexible and unique, this is truly a powerhouse of sound design.



GForce Virtual String Machine | £90

Review FM201 Classic string sounds, with hybrid patching, plus a lovely tweakable interface - great stuff!



Waldorf Largo | £175

Review FM217 Waldorf take their Blofeld sound and technology and create a powerful and unique soft synth. Check it out.



Native Instruments Absynth 5 | 179Euro

Review FM220 The super soundscape synth with a much improved feature list and GUI.



Lennar Digital Sylenth1 | £139

Review FM208 This simple-to-use, Virus-like synth comes packed with a great set of presets.



Novation Nocturn | £69

Review FM199 Once you integrate this Automapping wonder into your studio, you'll wonder how you lived without it.



Moog MP-201 | £400

Review FM211 MIDI and CV control in a unique one-of-a-kind package. LFO generators and USB MIDI are just some of the other great features.



Akai LPD8 & LPK25 | £45 each

Review FM224 A better keyboard design and build than its rivals. Shame about the short throw rotaries.



Korg nanos | from £36

Review FM209 The keyboard let's the series down, but these portable controllers are still a bargain. They're bundled with great software, too.



Behringer BCF-2000 | £140

Review FM153 Eight 100mm motorised faders for such a low price, this is still a great controller.

Gear Chart

1

2

3

4

5

Monitors



Event Opal | £2,498

Review FM215 Easily the best active monitors you can get for this price. Our reviewer bought a pair and the rest of the FM team want a pair too!



Focal JM Labs Twin 6 BE | £829 each

Review FM206 These are some of the best sounding speakers we've ever heard. Worth every penny.



Genelec 8040 | £1,000

Review FM181 Genelecs are always a favourite with FM and most of our experts use them so it's no surprise that we love these.



Samson Rubicon R5A | £235

Review FM181 Trustworthy for reference monitoring but priced at an unbelievable level. Get some in.



Acoustic Energy AE22 | £899

Review FM201 For accurate mixing, these are one of the best sets we've used. Very highly recommended.

Keyboard Controllers



M-Audio Axiom Pro 49 | £318

Review FM216 Our reviewer found this to be the most tightly integrated DAW controller ever.



Novation Nocturn 25 | £190

Review FM221 A well-rounded well-priced controller that does plenty of great work with Automap 3.3.



Korg Kontrol 49 | £319

Review FM160 Great keys and pads, and its looks and build elevate this above the competition. But there are easier to set up controllers out there.



Akai MPK49 | £299

Review FM197 A well made deck that's the control section from the legendary MPC with 49 keys strapped to the front. Sleek.



CME VX5 | £499

Review FM192 It's built like a tank and adds some awesome motorised faders into the mix. An excellent professional choice.

Audio Interfaces



M-Audio ProFire | £359

Review FM202 A brilliant interface that includes the great Octane Mic Pres, making it a superb recording solution at an amazing price.



MOTU Traveler | £795

Review FM177 Came out on top in our FireWire group test. Enough outs and ins for any project studio and still portable too. A real all-rounder.



Apogee Duet | £329

Review FM200 Getting the quality Apogee sound on the move is now easier than ever thanks to this tiny silver wonder.



RME Fireface UC | £746

Review FM219 Robust reliability, rock-solid build quality and the trusted RME sound. Plus it's now on a lovely USB connection.



Metric Halo ULN-2 DSP | £1,279

Review FM206 Great sound, onboard DSP and some of the best pres we've ever heard inside an interface.

Effects Plug-ins and Sound Manglers



Rodec / Sherman Restyler | £649

Review FM219 A live filter that sounds good enough for the studio. Missing MIDI, but worth a look.



Moog MoogerFooger MIDI MuRF | £419

Review FM220 The old MuRF filters combine with the attractive features of MIDI and software patch editing.



Peavey ReValver MkIII | £179

Review FM208 This amp-modelling software let's you delve deep into the amps circuits for true soft-modding.



Native Instruments Guitar Rig 4 | 179 Euros

Review FM221 A stack of new amp and microphone models make this a tasty upgrade at a great price.



Electro-Harmonix Voice Box | £160

Review FM213 Give this a decent input and it will output robot voices or perfect harmonies with ease.

6

7

8

9

10

**PMC DB1S-AII** | £2,056

Review FM225 You get what you pay for with these monitors. Adding a PMC sub will help you feel the real bottom end though.

**KRK Rokit RP5 G2** | £270

Review FM205 These are so nice to work with our reviewer bought a set for his own studio. Great value monitors with a great punch.

**Adam A5 Studio Monitors** | £499

Review FM209 Though they're at the budget end of the Adam range, these compact near-fields still deliver.

**APS IO Active Monitors** | £919

Review FM216 These provide an honest listening experience that could threaten the big boys.

**Focal Professional CMS65** | £1,230

Review FM215 The natural and detailed sound of Focal, delivered in a compact and affordable package.

**Edirol PCR500** | £200

Review FM189 Great-looking, sturdy, Roland-style 'board. Laden with controls and a cool software editor for making set-ups for all your plugs.

**Novation 49SL Compact** | £269

Review FM193 The stripped-down alternative to a full-size SL. Cheaper, but still packed with unique features.

**Yamaha KX25** | £185

Review FM205 Although a tad small and fiddly in its controls, Cubase users will love the advanced integration and creative capabilities.

**M-Audio Mid Air 25** | £199

Review FM181 Not only can you sling it in a bag, but you can also stride to the front of the stage thanks to its wireless power too.

**Korg microKontrol** | £275

Review FM143 Great build quality and looks and while its reduced-sized keys are an acquired taste, it's certainly more portable as a result.

**Novation nio 2|4** | £149

Review FM196 Well-built, jack-of-all trades portable solution for guitarists, producers and DJs. Complete with an awesome software bundle.

**Mackie 1220i** | £799

Review FM224 This hybrid mixer and interface covers all recording bases in a neat package, with the added benefit of Pro Tools compatibility.

**Focusrite Saffire 6 USB** | £163

Review FM225 A fantastic interface for the studio or for anyone looking to get into digital DJing or Ableton Live

**Presonus FireStudio Mobile** | £269

Review FM224 Not the cheapest mobile interface, but great I/O make it worth a look.

**Steinberg C12** | £226

Review FM222 A tidy package that works well as an introduction to the DAW recording environment. But, lack of MIDI let's it down.

**Boss SL-20 Slicer** | £175

Review FM205 There are many ways of chopping up audio, but this convenient stomper will work both live and in the studio.

**OTO Biscuit** | £529

Review FM225 Gorgeous design details and fantastic for anyone who fancies a bit of lo-fi 8-bit computer game crunch in their music.

**TC Helicon VoiceTone Synth** | £225

Review FM221 A few teething problems, but this is still a fantastic hardware vocoding and tuning tool.

**Audioease Speakerphone 2** | €400

Review FM217 This creative and comprehensive speaker emulator adds air to your sounds and mixes.

**Avid Digidesign Eleven Rack** | £789

Review FM222 It's a guitar processor that makes re-amping a breeze. Plus it's a Pro Tools interface to boot!

Gear Chart

1

2

3

4

5

Performance Samplers



Korg microSampler | £436

Review FM219 Easy to use sampling with some clever extras. Another micro-dominator from Korg.



Akai MPC 5000 | £1,549

Review FM203 The 5000 isn't perfect, but it's without a doubt the best pad-ridden studio-in-a-box on the market. Check it out.



Roland SP-555 | £410

Review FM195 The latest in Roland's line is packed with features. A durable and flexible partner for the loop experimentalist.



Roland SP-404SX | £289

Review FM220 This new update tweaks the original SP-404 but lacks anything really special, so it doesn't climb any places in our chart.



Electrix Repeater | £649

Review FM117 Used by our current fave Imogen Heap for building whole tracks, this discontinued unit still has a healthy second hand market.

High-end Audio Plug-ins



Celemony Melodyne Editor | £319

Review FM222 A plug-in that has the potential to change music production forever. A killer tool for every genre.



Lexicon Native Reverb Bundle | £1,174

Review FM225 The motherload of all reverbs brings the original digital algorithms straight to your DAW.



UAD Moog Multimode Filter | \$199

Review FM210 The classic Moog filter sound is replicated to a T with this impressive UAD plug-in.



UAD 4K SSL Plug-ins | from \$199

Review FM215 Brilliantly modded pieces of SSL goodness that are begging to be on your UAD card..



Brainworx BX Digital | €398

Review FM200 There's no other plug-in quite like BX's top of the line mastering tool – incredible software.

Field Recorders



Tascam HD-P2 | £729

Review FM186 Built to last and definitely the pro's choice. A multitude of formats and mic settings and superlative sound too.



Roland R-09HR | £259

Review FM204 This flagship recorder will produce crystal clear, 24-bit 96kHz recordings, all from the palm of your hand.



M-Audio MicroTrack II | £229

Review FM202 Not only does this new version look better, but it's also cheaper. A superb update.



Yamaha PocketTrak | £260

Review FM202 This ultra-compact 2GB recorder is a really useful weapon in your recording arsenal.



Edirol R-44 | £499

Review FM205 Record four tracks simultaneously via its quality pre-amps. If you need the flexibility it does the lot and more besides.

Microphones



Newmann Retro NR47 | £999

Review FM225 Despite the choice of name this mic definitely delivers the classic sound you would expect.



sE X1 and Project Reflexion Filter Bundle | £169

Review FM223 Unbelievable value for a robust recording solution.



Blue Bottle Rocket Stage One | £600

Review FM222 Interchangeable capsules make this great sounding mic even more of a must-buy.



Lauten Audio Horizon Mic | £649

Review FM213 This mic is a serious competitor to classic models that sell for many, many times the price.



AKG C214 | £450

Review FM205 As part of the classic AKG family, this mic sets itself up nicely to be a recording bargain that holds its own around the studio.

1

2

3

4

5

eBay Classic Retro Finds

**Roland HS-60** | £250

Released 1984 Same guts as the Juno-106 but the ugly built-in speakers mean it's often overlooked.

**Korg EX800** | £100

Released 1984 This rack-mount version of the Poly800 has a similar sound to the Roland Juno but with the added bonus of a sequencer.

**Yamaha MK-100** | £30

Released 1983 Bargain analogue style workstation that has limited synthesis options but a great programmable drum computer.

**Yamaha TX7** | £80

Released 1983 With DX7s back in vogue, get your hands on the true hardware sound at a fraction of the price with this desktop module.

**Sequential Circuits Multi-Trak** | £250

Released 1984 Easier to program than a Six Trak with a better sequencer – a gem find.

Ways To Stand Out

**Snyderphonics Manta** | £398

Review FM218 Space-age-style control with incredible good looks and amazing control possibilities.

**Yamaha Tenorion** | £599

Review FM193 The amazing lights-in-a-frame synth 'n' sequencer that'll test the way you think about music. Grab one while stocks last.

**Jazz Mutant Lemur** | £1,799

Review FM166 Techni-coloured touchscreen controller. Why not put a camera on it feeding a projector?

**Percussa Audio Cubes** | 399 Euros

Review FM207 Expensive, but one of the ultimate ways to stand out when performing electronic music.

**Moog Etherwave Theremin** | £300

Review FM207 Even 50 years on, people will still gawp as you flail your arms around making Sci-Fi sounds.

Digital Audio Workstations

Best all-in-one solution

**Logic Studio** | £399**Review FM218**

The home studio regular and all-in-one studio package goes V9.1 adding 64bit support – if your Mac can handle it.

Best features include:

- > Incredible time-stretching with Flex Audio technology.
- > New amp designer and pedal board options for guitarists.
- > The best and biggest range of 'built-in' plugs and synths of our favourite DAWs.

Good and bad:

Fantastic Flex Audio raises Logic's appeal even further and despite that stealthy price increase to £399 it remains a bit of a bargain all told.

Best combo of ease and power

**Cubase 5** | £499**Review FM212**

Cubase 5 sees Steinberg lower the price and raise the plug-in and feature list. VariAudio, Batch Export and new effects plug-ins all come bundled with 5.

Best features include:

- > The new VariAudio Melodyne-style pitch editor.
- > Plenty of built-in plugs to get you creating professional tracks from the moment you install the software.

Good and bad:

Although Cubase is playing catchup in terms of both bundled content and price, it's can't be argued that it's only getting better. Loyal Cubase users rejoice – Cubase 5 is a winner.

Best for recording audio

**Pro Tools 8** | £319**Review FM210**

The industry standard DAW gets a fresh modern update with a brand new GUI, enhanced MIDI editing capabilities, and a heap of new instruments and plug-ins.

Best features include:

- > For mixing, recording, processing and editing audio there isn't anything easier to use or more stable and reliable.
- > Now that it's MIDI is finally up to scratch, it's a great choice.

Good and bad:

Great performance and stability with tempting upgrade offers to a HD system. Well-conceived though limited plug-ins.

Best for jamming and creating

**Ableton Live 8** | £315**Review FM214**

Bigger and better than ever. If you like chucking loops together and experimenting then this is for you. Flexible and creative, it'll spark ideas you wouldn't otherwise have.

Best features include:

- > Instantly beat-match any audio and trigger samples in time. DJs can use this instead of decks.
- > Flexible routing and modulation options let you mess and mangle.

Good and bad:

It's a dream for mixing and messing. It's getting a little costly (thanks to that bulging library content) but the cheaper versions remain a bargain and a real studio essential.

Best bangs for your bucks

**Sonar 8** | £349**Review FM207**

Updated from the much loved Sonar 7, this new version adds even more features and amazingly puts less pressure on your CPU due to a streamlining of its core. It's a firm favourite with PC-based producers.

Best features include:

- > Beatscape – a fantastic slicing and warping groove-based beat and drum machine.
- > The TS-64 Transient Shaper is a simple but brilliant plug-in addition.

Good and bad:

A continuous effort to streamline and an incredible amount of features make Sonar 8 a great choice DAW on PC.

FutureMusic MARKETPLACE

DEALER



HARD TO FIND

www.htfr.com

Vinyl House, 10 Upper Gough Street, Birmingham City Centre, B1 1JG



KRK RP 5 G2 (WHITE) MR326934
 • 45 Watts RMS Per Speaker
 • 5" Glass Aramid Woofer
 • 1" Neodymium Soft Dome Tweeter
 • Self-powered, Bi-amplified
£249.00



0121-687 7777
sales@htfr.com
FREE catalogue
 call or email: catalogue@htfr.com
 for a Free copy of our Full Colour 84 Page Catalogue

INSURANCE

Music insurance we're tuned in

www.musicguard.co.uk

Tel: 0845 408 1810

DJ insurance that stands out from the crowd

www.djguard.co.uk

Tel: 0845 408 1817

DUPLICATION

1000 CDs with Booklet and Inlay c.£600
 Quality CDR / DVD copies from 51p
 Mastering and Artwork £70ph
 DVD, CD-audio, CD-ROM



Over 23 years experience
 Graphic design, colour print
 Large and small run specialists
 Excellent quality and presentation

RPM

Repeat Performance Multimedia

6 Grand Union Centre
 West Row
 London W10 5AS

Tel. 020 8960 7222

Recommended by MCPS

www.repeat-performance.co.uk

MASTERING

Get Your
 CD Mastered By
 Pink Floyd's Grammy
 Nominated Engineer.

www.TubeMastering.com

07734 422 490

EDUCATION

16 years of teaching classes of 5 or less

We have been teaching people how to produce their own music, become sound engineers and producers for over 16 years...

Audio Engineering, Music Technology and Music Production courses

A non-academic and practical approach to learning. No previous knowledge or experience necessary. Professional 48 track analog and digital recording studio in West London.

Part-time courses

2 to 15 month courses: beginners to advanced. Up to only 5 people per course. Daytime, evenings or weekends.

With over 2000 students since 1989 we are one of the longest established and experienced sound engineering schools in the UK.

Full-time 9 month and 2 year Diploma courses

If you want to be a sound engineer

2 month summer Diploma course

Work experience placement provided on successful attainment of the diploma. Overseas students welcome.

Cubase SX

Logic Pro 6 & 7

Reason 3

ProTools TDM & LE

Sampling

Synthesiser Programming

Mixing & Production

Analog and Digital Multitrack Recording



THE RECORDING WORKSHOP

For prospectus + bookings
 call free:
0800 980 7455



Study for a Career in Music... in London or Online

"If you're serious about your music, Point Blank is where you want to be"

Pete Tong, Radio 1



Point Blank

www.pointblanklondon.com

www.pointblankonline.net

Call now on 020 7729 4884

FutureMusic

ALCHEMEA

creating the next generation of audio engineers since 1992



Erica Basnicki: 3 hours sleep between a 16-hour recording and Pro Tools editing session ...we are open 24/7

Our objective at Alchemea is to provide the highest standard of audio and post production training. Whether you are looking to gain the skills & confidence to carve out a successful career in the pro audio industry, or are a producer aiming to improve your sound, Alchemea has the course for you.



MOBILE STUDIO
FOR DIPLOMA STUDENTS



iTunes MUSIC
FOR LOGIC 9 STUDENTS

www.alchemea.com

info@alchemea.com

+44 (0)20 7359 3986

Weekend courses from just £300

SUBBASS DJ ACADEMY



In 2008 we helped over 60 students get their first gig at some of the UK's top events and nights including; The Gallery, Dusted (The Egg), Push (The Whitehouse), Starf*cker (Herbal) and at the Electric Garden Festival. We have the necessary connections to some of the biggest clubs and record labels in the industry.



DJ Courses:

Basic to advanced including 3 month DJ course, digital dj and urban music weekend, turntablism including scratching and beat juggling techniques. And our new Ableton DJ course.

Music Production Courses:

1 month, 3 month or weekend courses (beginner and advanced) available using latest industry standard software. Choose from either Logic pro, Cubase, Reason or Ableton Live.

Professional Course Tutors:

Course tutors include Graeme Lloyd (Stripback), Mike Koglin (DJ Mag Top 100 DJ), John Taylor (Punx Soundcheck), Joe 2 Grand, Peo Haggstrom (Nocturnal Records) and Chris Finke.

Former Subbass students have had their tracks released upon completion of the course. Students are automatically considered for our monthly club nights where they will play alongside established names. This month catch our course students DJ at Ministry of Sound and Pacha. Tracks from the production course will also be considered for our new record label Stripback Records!

Contact: 02074047080/info@subbassdj.com
Website: www.subbassdj.com



ABLETENCOURSES.COM

the online ableton training resource



Welcome to next generation **Ableton** training. Learn. Produce. Compose. Perform.

Abletoncourses.com is a new website which features two Ableton Live online video courses for Beginners/Intermediate and Advanced level students which are designed and delivered by Ableton Certified trainer Rob Jones.

Our online video training courses can be studied at times which suit you, wherever you are located, and are supported by course materials, notes and projects which you download as you progress, making this the first course of its kind in the music software industry!



ableton CERTIFIED
TRAINER
Rob Jones

- Modular Format
- Online Delivery
- Custom Access 24/7/365
- Certified Trainer
- Course Notes for every Module
- Certificate on Completion
- Online Forums for Discussion
- Free Novation Bass Station Synth
- Over 750MB Free Royalty Free samples
- Study whenever and wherever you like!
- Ableton 8 compatible

Don't take our word for it –
View a free 15 minute course module at the
abletoncourses.com website today!



ABLETENCOURSES.COM

the online ableton training resource

**SPECIAL OFFER
FOR**

FutureMusic
Technique and technology for making music
READERS

Use this code to get your special **20%**
discount for a limited time:
FM20

Go online today to
www.abletoncourses.com
and register for your
FREE INFO PACK
and watch a
FREE SAMPLE MODULE TODAY!



Our sponsors

Focusrite

novation

KRK
SYSTEMS

Loopmasters

SOUND KNOWLEDGE



www.sae.edu

Study degrees* and diplomas in audio, film & music business.

Scholarships available at: mycreativefuture.com

Next Open Day: Sun 16th May 2010

* Validated by Middlesex University



www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

Subscriptions | North American offer

I've been reading FM
for over 10 years. In
my opinion, it's the
best Electronic music
mag by far

Claude Von
Stroke

Artist and Producer



WHY WE'RE NO1

Since 1991, FM has featured every incredible piece of new gear and been in the studio with every hi-tech recording artist who's setting the pace. Our reputation for behind-the-scenes access and in-depth analysis is second to none. No-one is better primed to help you make great new music now and into the future!

FutureMusic®
Technique and technology for making music

Save \$78 on the store price!

Pay only \$8.99 per issue! Subscribe today for **only \$29.23** every three months by quarterly credit card payment*

ORDERING YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS EASY

Log on to: www.imsnews.com/mus-A004
Or call Toll-Free: 1800 428 3003

To benefit from this offer please quote code A004

Terms and Conditions: *This offer is for new subscribers only. You will receive 13 issues per year. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. Minimum subscription term is 12 months. If at any time during the first 60 days you are dissatisfied in any way please notify us in writing and we will refund you for all un-mailed issues. Payment will be debited in Pounds Sterling.

www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net

Your **DVD ROM** section by section...

Frequency Splitting

We show you how frequency band splitting can create depth and clarity in your mixes



Reader Demos

Check out the top 10 reader tracks sent to *FM* this month



Reviews

Hear this month's gear including the Korg Kaossilator Pro and Lexicon Native plugs

FutureMusic

DVD ROM



Tutorials

Master your DAW with our regular Cubase, Logic and Live audio and video tips



Knowledge Base

Get to grips with the ancient art of sampling

DVD missing?
See the newsagent

In The Studio with...

Rex The Dog. *FM* offer a unique fly-on-the-wall view of how REX goes about creating a new track from scratch

DVD problems?

If the DVD is faulty please return it with your name and address and a description of the fault. A new working version should be returned to you within 28 days. Send it to: **Disc Department (FM225/04/10)**, Reader Support, Future Publishing Ltd, Bath, BA1 2BW. Email: support@futurenet.co.uk



A whole new soundscape...



...at your fingertips



With the diminutive but massively spec'd microSAMPLER, you can create epic-sounding, multilayered soundscapes, easily and in realtime.

Sample anything, anytime, anywhere – you can hook it up to a huge range of audio sources and it comes with its own gooseneck mic – it'll even run on batteries! The unique sampling method allows you to record, edit and map as you sample – directly from the keyboard. And with built-in loop sequencer, studio quality effects, resampling capability and ultra-intuitive interface, you've got one of the most expressive live performance music tools in your hands.

microSAMPLER
SAMPLING KEYBOARD

KORG

www.korg.co.uk/microsampler

www.journal-plaza.net & www.freedowns.net