



ON THE DVD

WHAT IS IT?

A drum sample library for BFD 1.5 and BFD 2

CONTACT

Who: Sonic8
Tel: +44 (0)8701 657456
Web: FXpansion.com

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 A unique sample library at a great price
- 2 The bass drums, the rim shots, the side sticks, the snares and the cymbals all bring an feisty edge to any drum collection
- 3 The timpani and chimes are superb and are a great addition to the BFD percussion library



FXpansion Big Orchestral Marching Band | £117

When you've comprehensively sampled every sound of a drum kit, what's next? *Steve Hillier* finds out...

SPECS

BFD 1.5 or later, supports VST, AU, RTAS

PC: Windows XP (SP2 recommended) or Vista, Pentium 4 or later, 1 GB RAM, 38GB hard drive space, DVD drive

Mac: OS X 10.4 or later, G5 or Intel CPU, 1 GB RAM, 38GB hard drive space, DVD drive

A marching band? I'll forgive you if your first reaction is the same as mine – what use do I have for such a collection, I'm not Brazilian! But wait. It might surprise you to learn that the sound of marching bands have been incorporated into worldwide smashes by artists as varied as Gwen Stefani, Snoop Dogg and, er, Jona Lewie. These world-beating artists have already recognised that there's plenty of scope for more esoteric drum sounds in their tunes.

They've been overlooked until now, but if you need edgy beats, why not turn to the edgiest drummers of them all – a fully tooled up marching band? FXpansion have a new collection entitled 'Big Orchestral Marching Band' but almost always referred to as B.O.M.B. (clever marketing there guys).

B.O.M.B.s away

B.O.M.B. installs in the usual FXpansion fashion – you have two DVDs, and the installer routine can be configured to write up to 38GB of samples to your hard drive. Once this process has completed (which took me just under twenty minutes) you need to authorise your installation online. This

was straightforward and I was up and running with no hassles.

My first impression of this collection was simply WOW. You have five preset kits that cover most of the collection. With a small amount of balancing between the dry and ambient channels, I found a wealth of drum samples that I could put to work immediately. These are not your usual drum kits though – we have seven marching and orchestral snares played with various sticks, brushes, mallets and hotrods, four tonal bass drums with various beaters, quad toms and plenty of other lesser known percussion instruments.

Many of the kick drums come with a virtual 'extreme advisory low end' warning sticker. I was a little skeptical about how extreme these low frequencies would be. However, checking the frequency spread of the bass drums with Multimeter in Logic, I spotted some very loud bass frequencies, some as low as below 30Hz. With the long ring on these bass drums, I can now see that the warning is warranted. In some ways you have an acoustic version of the classic 808 kick here. A good thing? Definitely. These kicks are perfectly suited to Hip Hop,

and bring an extra rough edge that electronic drums have never managed. They can be as laid back or as aggressive as you need, with all the extra detail inherent in real drum recordings too. Outstanding.

I'm pleased to report that B.O.M.B. also fills the gaping hole in the BFD percussion collection - timpani and chimes. Both are presented as percussion instruments, and can be loaded into a regular drum kit setup. They sound awesome. I've been searching for timpani sounds for months, and now I've found them.

My only gripe is that I would have liked some kit presets that give you the full pitch range of these instruments with a single click - at the moment, you have to make your own setup by loading them in individually which is a bit of a chore. Although, you only have to do this once.

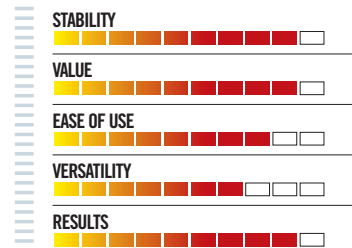
Marching on

It's becoming a cliché for me to say this, but once again I was mightily impressed with this BFD library. This collection is a very shrewd move on the part of FXpansion. Having covered virtually everything you could need from traditional drum kit libraries, they've turned their attention to this previously ignored family of percussion instruments and excelled at the task.

Through my ignorance, I was expecting to be scratching my head wondering how I could incorporate these sounds. But, the moment I loaded in the Hip Hop Street Beats kit, I had a revelation. Here were the laid-back yet edgy drum sounds I'd been hearing on the big hits for years yet, not able to find in my sample library.

In 2005, I said that FXpansion's 8-bit kit would soon be heard on international hits. I was right. I'll put my neck on the line again – this collection will be heard on a dozen international hits by 2009. It's that good. **FM**

FutureMusic VERDICT



Another winner from FXpansion. Don't overlook this library, it might just be exactly what you need.