



ON THE DVD

WHAT IS IT?

Expansion packs for Superior Drummer 2.0

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Massive range of extra drums to choose from
- 2 Recorded by top name drummers and producers
- 3 Dozens of mic choices



SDX: The Metal Foundry & SDX: The Lost New York Studios | £125 each

Toontrack offer two huge libraries of samples for their excellent Superior Drummer software. ***Greg Scarth*** checks them out...

SPECS

Supported technology:
Requires Superior Drummer
2.0 software (not included).

Minimum requirements:

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The Lost New York Studios requires 12 GB free hard disk space. Metal Foundry requires a minimum of 8 GB free hard disk space and 35 GB for a full installation.

When we reviewed Toontrack's Superior Drummer 2.0 drum sampling software a few months ago we were seriously impressed with the flexibility it offered. The process all starts with the initial selection of drums to fill each of the slots in your virtual kit. S2.0 comes bundled with a fairly decent selection (known as the Avatar kit) but it's also possible to install SDX expansion packs that allow you to choose from an even wider range of drums and cymbals. The first two SDX packs offer two quite different approaches.

New York, New York

The samples on *The Lost New York* Studios were recorded at two of New York's most famous studios, both of which have now shut their doors for good. Between them, the Hit Factory and Allaire Studios have hosted sessions with big names like David Bowie and Paul Simon, and it's that

classic pop-rock sound that Toontrack have captured by recording these samples in their live rooms.

It's a slight shame that different drums were recorded in each studio as it would be nice to be able to pick and choose which room sound you use, but the recording quality is top notch and the sounds are outstanding. From the Allaire sessions you can choose a variety of kick drums from Gretsch, Ludwig and Slingerland. Toms are from Ludwig, snares from Ludwig and Rogers. At the Hit Factory, kicks and toms are GMS while snares are Ludwig, GMS and Trick. Cymbals at both studios are Sabian.

Very metal

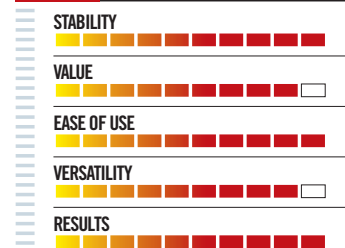
The Metal Foundry expansion pack focuses less on the room sound and more on the drums and drummers, making it an even bigger package than the NY SDX. The sounds are far more extreme, with an emphasis on heavy rock, metal and the dirtier end of punk

and industrial music. There's a quite incredible range of drums available to add to your kit, including the Sonor Tomas Haake signature range plus kicks, snares and toms from Tama, DW, Ludwig, Pearl and WFL. Cymbals mainly come courtesy of Sabian, with a handful from Paiste, Bosphorous and Zildjian thrown in for good measure. The full list includes over 100 options and everything's recorded with the same high standards as the rest of the S2.0 samples. If you can't put together a decent metal kit out of this lot you should probably give up!

Metal Foundry's credentials are further reinforced by the fact that big names like Tomas Haake of Meshuggah played a part in the recording process. The presets are instantly usable and come courtesy of a host of metal drummers and producers, most notably Dirk Verbeuren of Soilwork and the legendary Gene Hoglan of Dark Angel/Strapping Young Lad fame. As with the original S2.0 presets (and the New York package), the quality of the MIDI patterns here is astonishing and when combined with the vast array of samples it's easy to create drum arrangements which sound as good as the real thing.

The verdict

My initial feeling was that £125 was expensive for an expansion pack. The SD software itself carries a price of over £200 so once you factor in either of these packages you're looking at a big investment. However, after getting to grips with the packs I soon realised that the quality (and quantity) of the sounds included really justifies the price. When you consider that the price of each expansion pack is comparable with a couple of good sample DVDs it puts it into perspective, especially since I'm unaware of any sample DVD offering anything approaching this level of flexibility. **FM**

FutureMusic **VERDICT**

Both packages offer a huge upgrade over the range of sounds bundled with Superior Drummer.