



WHAT IS IT?

An updated version of the popular drum sample library

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Simple and useful improvements to the GUI
- 2 'Load On Demand' RAM optimisation is a godsend
- 3 Now includes PSP's Vintage Warmer



FXpansion

BFD2.1 | £199

FXpansion announce an update to their popular drum library series. **Steve Hillier** beats it...

SPECS

Supported technology:
AU, RTAS, VST

System requirements
PC: XP SP1 or later, Vista 32, Intel Pentium 4 or better, 1GB RAM, 60GB of available hard drive space.

Mac: G5 or Intel processor, 1GB RAM, 60GB of available hard drive space, Mac OS X 10.4 or later, internet connection for authorisation.

BFD2 is FXpansion's drum sample player, delivering the sound of drum kits and percussion. What made BFD

a world beater (pun intended) is that it was the first plug-in to present a collection of drum samples as a real drum kit, with scope to mix in real overhead, room and ambient mics too.

2.1 today, 2.1 today...

BFD2.1, the new update, is available as a free download for existing users and concentrates on improving the user interface and handling of samples, with some new effects for good measure. 'Load On Demand' limits the number of samples that BFD2.1 loads in by default, thus leaving more RAM available for other tasks. A typical kit is now reduced from 500MB to around 100MB in size.

One possible down side is that with many layers of samples now missing, the jump between velocity levels could be painfully obvious. However, BFD gets around this by loading in the missing samples as and when you play them.

This is an excellent facility, helps BFD to coexist with your other plug-ins and justifies the upgrade in itself.

New effects include four reverb algorithms licensed from Overloud, the manufacturer of the Breverb Reverb plug-in. These give you plate, hall, room and 'inverse' reverb sounds – all are good, but I can't imagine I'll be using any of these in preference to the reverbs I already use in Logic.

However, the inclusion of PSP's Vintage Warmer is a surprising move – now you can roughen, toughen and saturate your drums in the way that only Vintage Warmer can. The new envelope generator enables you to adjust the overall loudness shape of the drum sound in a similar way to using a compressor. You can add emphasis to the attack portion of the sound, or soften it if you need to.

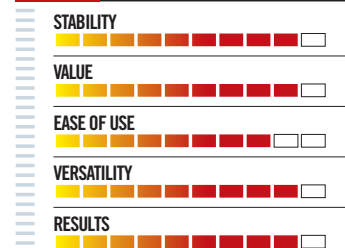
The improvements to the user interface are welcome, and long overdue. You now have the ability to replace, swap or move around instruments between the slots of a kit. This might not sound like a big deal,

but it actually speeds up the creation of new kits no end.

Conclusion

BFD2.1 is an amazing product – stable, well-priced and featuring some of the best drum samples on the planet. There's nothing to lose for existing users and lots to attract newcomers – the new effects are really good but it's the inclusion of 'Load On Demand' and the changes to the user interface that justify the download. **FM**

FutureMusic VERDICT



BFD2.1 is a great update, and best of all, it's free. New users should definitely take a look too.

Glamouflage pack



Also new for BFD is Evil Joe Barresi's Glamouflage Kit. Evil Joe is known for producing and engineering a

huge roster of modern Rock bands such as Tool, Queens of the Stone Age and many more. The Glamouflage Kit, a combination of Pork Pie kick and toms and Zildjian snares and cymbals comes in at 19GB for a full installation.

Joe gives us variations on the typical kit sound by recording his drums to two-inch tape, then playing the snare and kick through his Helios console, the same console he uses for his mixing. This adds analogue warmth and a distorted edge to the kick and snare, but don't let that put you off – this is a versatile kit suitable for many styles.

Still, if you're after huge sounding Rock drums that can cut through the mix, this collection is an obvious choice for you.

Highlights include the wonderful toms, huge snares and over 1,200 new grooves in both BFD2 and 1.5 format. At £80, this is definitely worth a look.