

Nord Electro 5D 61-Key | £1,299



keyboard on my Stage 2 SW73, which is a welcome improvement too.

Performance control-wise you'll need to budget for a Stage 2(EX) if you want a pitchbend, modwheel and aftertouch but you can connect a foot control pedal for volume changes on both parts and to control Effects block 1. Did I say both parts? Yes I did! This is the biggest change for the Electro 5. You now have two parts available at once that can be split and layered and addressed from separate MIDI channels. For example, you can place an organ on the left, and a piano on the right, (or layer them) or piano on the left and sampled strings on the right (or layer them). The benefits of this are huge and make the E5 a much more self-contained machine than previous models. You can also have an organ on both parts and address the upper manual from an external controller. I also tried connecting my Moog Minitaur

Electro 5 is the biggest upgrade to the Electro range since its launch. **Dan 'JD73' Goldman** investigates

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WHAT IS IT?

Fifth incarnation of the Nord Electro, featuring EPs, pianos, organs, samples, effects and some tasty new features

CONTACT

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Splitting and layering at last, plus more general flexibility
- 2 New OLED screen and Setlist modes are a welcome addition
- 3 Extra memory allows a much bigger range of sounds onboard

Since its launch in 2001, the Electro series has established itself as a solid, dependable and authentic-sounding

electromechanical piano and organ emulator, with Clavia adding sample-loading ability for 2009's Electro 3. The Electro 5 series comes in three models: the 5HP – a 73-note weighted model with LED drawbars; the 5D73 – a 73-note waterfall-action model with physical drawbars; and the 5D61 – the most compact model with a 61-note waterfall-action keyboard and physical drawbars, and which I'm reviewing here.

This latest Electro is bright red and it looks very similar at first glance to the Electro 4D. As with all current Nord's, you get a full metal chassis/case and wooden end cheeks, sturdy rubberised knobs and tough selector switches. These boards really are built to last – they're proper gigging workhorses you can rely on. The Electro 5D61 is very portable and for most situations the

61-note keyed will suffice, though you can grab the 73-note version or the weighted HP model if you require extra range for piano performances. The waterfall keyboard feels great for playing pianos and synth sounds and seems to feel less spongy, more positive and less heavily sprung than the waterfall

Samples And Effects

Along with increased piano memory, the E5 now has a dedicated Sample Synth section and more memory (256MB up from 68MB) for samples from the excellent Nord Sample Library. There's a great range of samples onboard, including Mellotrons, acoustic sounds and analogue

synths but, using the Nord sample editor, you can also drop in your own additional samples.

There's a very comprehensive effects section onboard. This includes a powerful EQ with sweepable mids and plenty of modulation effects including Phaser, Flanger, Chorus, a new Vibe effect, plus Deep

mode for deeper modulation. Then there's Tremolo, Pan, Wah and Ring Modulation, which can all be controlled via the control pedal. All the effects are now stereo and have a great vintage mojo/warmth about them (like the Stage 2) – they sound superb throughout, though only one effect is available per part.



