

Mini Reviews

The latest musical bits and pieces racked and rated



Native Instruments Audio 2 DJ | £79

nativeinstruments.com

The Audio 2 DJ weighs in at just over 80 grams and just under 80 bucks, making it easily NI's most affordable option for digital DJing, and the world's smallest interface. It's hard not to be taken aback by the tiny size of the A2DJ. Unsurprisingly, there's not a lot to the specs – two quarter-inch outs, two volume controls and a USB port make up the hardware but Native are adamant that the sound quality doesn't suffer, and I'd have to agree – it's crystal clear and delivers a huge punch across the board. Impressive. The channel A and B output LEDs light up green when a signal is present, but they don't turn red when the signal is peaking. Without any real level reference on the hardware there's no way to know if the signal is peaking from the interface itself.

A quick glance at the chart comparing the 2 DJ with Native's more expensive interfaces really does say a lot in the 2's favour. If you don't need timecode and are happy either DJing in-the-box or have a mixer to cue with, it's almost a no brainer to go for the Audio 2 DJ. A separate headphone out would seal the deal, but for what it is, it's hard to fault.

Declan McGlynn

8/10

116 FutureMusic

Beyerdynamic DT990 PRO Headphones | £183

beyerdynamic.com

The name Beyerdynamic has been synonymous with studio cans for decades, with their DT100s being a staple recording tool since the dawn of time itself.

The 990 PROs feel a lot more expensive than their price tag would suggest, with a very comfortable headband and earpieces that engulf your ears with a very open and vast sound. In terms of response, everything is as it should be with the exception of sub bass being rounded off, very common in headphones this open. At lower levels you might struggle to dissect sounds but at the right volume, there is almost no compression, with the stereo field remaining intact and the crisp highs and thick mids happily coexisting and never fighting for attention. Though the price may seem

high at first, when you consider the competition, these cans stretch way beyond their outlay. A must try for your new studio headphones.

Chris Barker

9/10



The Secrets of House Production | £35

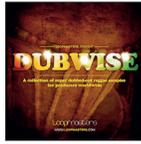
samplemagic.com

Sample Magic have teamed up with Future Music's own Marc '01' Adamo to provide a glossy paperback reference manual to all things House production. Starting with kicks and bass and following all the way through to arrangement and mastering, The Secrets of House Production is very useful for beginners with its clear explanations and clean cut design, while its charts and diagrams will come in handy for professionals too.

It would have been useful for the included CD to provide audio examples of each tutorial, but nevertheless, it's modern approach makes it fairly unique as an all round package. I can see it thriving in the DJ-to-producer world, one which continues to grow. *Declan McGlynn*

8/10

**Loopmasters present
Dubwise | £35**
loopmasters.com



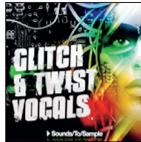
Back in December, I gave *Drumdrops in Dub* a nine-out-of-ten – maybe some of you went and bought it. If you did, then you'll definitely want this batch to complement it tastefully. If you didn't, then it's time to shell out. 1.3GB of 24-bit Dubtastic dynamism covering everything you need to make Dub inspired tunage or to add a touch of Jamaican spice to your track.

Melodica and horns, vocal one shots, riddims – it's all covered here. The guitar loops are skanking and the bass loops have the monitors sweating like an accountant in a traffic jam. Get the samplers out, open the windows and make the best of the present good weather – hear me now one time! **Roger Watson**

9/10

**Sounds/To/Sample Glitch and
Twist Vocals | £15**

soundstosample.com



Sample houses are doing more and more vocal batches these days and Sounds to Sample pitch up with this offering – pretty cheap, price wise, for 152 24-bit loops / one shots. Split into six folders (Electric, Glitched, Melodic, Nu-choir, Sleaze and Spoken clips) this collection covers a lot of ground, albeit within one field. Vocoders, extreme auto tuning, properly tweaked into next door's greenhouse type tomfoolery as well as re-constructed big gospel styles.

This could contain that little something you've been missing. Visit the website and check out the free samples to get a wee sniff of where they're at.

Greg Scarth

7/10

**Tech House and Deep Minimal by
Loopmasters | £30**

loopmasters.com



809MB of material from Marc Adamo includes 10 construction kits as well as 50 drum loops, 50 synth loops and a host of one shots, synth stabs and 'superdubbed bass loops'.

The overall vibe is inspired by producers such as Joris Voorn, Claude Von Stroke, Trentemøller and the like, with plenty of scope for getting progressive in a House like fashion. Clicks and glitches are well covered, as are the usual soft samplers with nine ready to play patches. All in all, a very usable collection, whether you stick within the genre or take some of the more versatile elements and run with them. **Roger Watson**

8/10

Tonebuilder Hi-Fi 909 | \$23
drivenmachinedrums.com/hifi909



Following on from the excellent *Driven Machine Drums* package, Tonebuilder release this tribute to Roland's classic grey box. Sample master Nathaniel Shreve rates the TR-909 as his all-time favourite drum machine, and this lovingly-crafted collection of 819 drum hits shows off the legend in all its glory.

Processed through high-end tube equipment and recorded in 24-bit 96kHz resolution, quality is outstanding. Sounds are in WAV or AIFF format with 27 Kontakt and EXS-24 sampler patches plus eight GURU starter kits included to get you started. If you don't have a real 909, this is the next best thing. **Greg Scarth**

10/10

Supalife House | £25

producerloops.com



Producer Eddy Beneteau has worked with Producer Loops to create this excellent House package, which offers everything from drums to bass, leads, pads and one shots. Taking its name from his Supalife Records, the package follows a classic 125bpm House formula so it should slot into your productions fairly comfortably.

The 442 hits and loops are available in all the major 24-bit file formats, with MIDI files thrown in for good measure. As usual for Producer Loops, production values are outstanding and all the sounds are supplied dry and wet along with 'decay' versions for times when you need a long reverb tail. Excellent and highly versatile sounds for any House producer.

Roger Watson

9/10

Prime Loops Bleep Machine | £10

primeloops.com



New from Prime Loops, *Bleep Machine* is a collection of 115 individual hits and loops, with the emphasis firmly on special FX and analogue synth sounds in the vein of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop. The one shots are great, but it's a shame there are just 15 loops to choose from. A few more variations and ideas would have added a lot to the package.

Overall though, this is a entirely versatile, excellent quality collection available in just about every format you can imagine. A little on the small side but then so is the price, and I think it's fair to say that *Bleep Machine* could come in handy for producers of just about any style of Electronic music. **Greg Scarth**

8/10

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