
A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by blud - 2006/05/22 13:42

Hello everybody,

I've already an MPC1000 sampler to go with my MnM, but I'm not quite satisfied with the way it integrates with my Elektron gear.

The MPC1K is monotimbral, and I find it very hard to sequence it with the MnM (mainly cause it's a pain in the ass to tweak samples with the MnM locks).

What kind of (hardware would be a plus) sampler do you use with your MnM?

I've heard of old samplers like the ASR-10 from Ensoniq, but having to deal with floppy disks sounds weird to me now... Moreover, the lo-fi sound is not a priority to me.

Any suggestions?

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by dangulberry - 2006/05/22 14:19

The ASR-10 is fantastic, with great sound quality. Also, you can get a SCSI upgrade for it that means you don't have to deal with floppies. Try to find the rack version - I think they were better built. Alternatively, the ASR-X or ASR-X Pro is an ASR made in an MPC style. Loads of Autechre's good stuff has the ASR all over it.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by jsrockit - 2006/05/22 14:53

How about a rack sampler? If you are not using the sequencer on your MPC...you are wasting your cash. The pads and the sequencer on the MPC are the only things that make it worth paying the money for.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by blud - 2006/05/22 19:03

jsrockit wrote:

How about a rack sampler? If you are not using the sequencer on your MPC...you are wasting your cash. The pads and the sequencer on the MPC are the only things that make it worth paying the money for.

You are terribly right!

The MPC1000 was my first piece of gear after several years of laptop experiment.

At this time, I wasn't sure of my feelings toward the MPC way of composing and wanted to give a try.

Now that I've tasted the MnM, I realise that pad composing in real-time is not my cup of tea.

So it's true, that a MPC without pads is a bad sampler and the worst step-sequencer I've ever touched (although I agree with you on the whole sequencing unit).

So! A rack sampler?

Should I stick to AKAI or other brands?

I've got a mac and floppy or SCSI aren't a good things for me.

Anyway, thanx for the advice.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by jsrockit - 2006/05/22 19:19

Man, I'm not sure of any rack samplers with HDs or CF Card slots.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by Thunder - 2006/05/22 19:23

Maybe I am missing something, but the 1000 is NOT monotimbral, and no sampler that I am aware of will allow you to use the Mono's parameter locks any differently than you do with the 1000 (you are using MIDI machines to sequence the 1000, right?). Please correct me if this statement is wrong. The obvious solution is the UW, but I'm not sure you have an extra \$1600 sitting around.

I would also disagree that the 1000 is a "bad" sampler. Not quite as fully featured as say the S5000 or a software sampler (or the UW:-)), but still a great sampler. If you must use hardware and need more features, I would probably say the S5000 or S6000. Personally I would stick it out with the 1000 though, or go with software.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by crixmadine - 2006/05/22 20:56

Personally, I get great results from using MPC's with Elektron gear. I slave the Elektron gear to an MPC2000 and trigger MD and/or MM pattern playback from the pads on the MPC which lends itself well to taking advantage of the param locks feature and tempo mapping. I can't remember if the MM have different trigger modes like the MD does, but I like the fact that you can change the pattern trig behavior on the MD. This makes for all kinds of pattern variation and fills at your fingertips just by programming simple patterns on the MPC that in turn trigger patterns on the Elektrons (i.e. gated pattern playback). Muting/unmuting patterns on the MPC is my favorite way to change patterns remotely on the Elektrons. Of course you can further the integration of the two by sampling MM/MD patterns onto the MPC and manipulate from there as well.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by glitched - 2006/05/22 22:35

A hardware sampler? In this day and age? Why, oh why? I suppose if you're playing live, it makes a little sense, but wouldn't a cheap laptop with FLStudio work? Software samplers are so flexible and it's so easy to setup programs/instruments/drum maps.

I wouldn't recommend a hardware sampler (aside from the UW) unless you want to waste half your life setting up key mappings.

-d

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by - 2006/05/23 16:45

glitched wrote:

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-d

hmm..a cheap laptop with flstudio, or an mpc1000 decisions decisions....

software samplers are as good as your ad/da's in my opinion, and your controllers. Well...if you prefer tactile interaction like I do

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by zaque - 2006/05/23 19:41

I love my MPCs with my MnM and MD. I also have an SP-404 but don't really rely on that much for use with other gear (other than turntables) but it's a fun little box and could be really useful with the elektron gear...

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by uct - 2006/05/23 19:57

Why not a hardware samplar any day every year? Just to look at it, just to feel it. Get a software editor if you can?t stand the keygroup setups... If you have everything in your laptop, you will most likely be missing the wibe in your music. Hardware boxes keeps it alive.....!

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by zart - 2006/05/24 03:24

Why a hardware box unless it has a unique function ? I keep an akai hanging around but only because I have old sessions and files I occasionally return to (and it has a lovely timestretch).

Are you sequencing from the mac ? There's plenty of soft samplers able to do what you need and as for A/D conversions I wonder what kind of samples you are using that you would even notice ?

You might come across some timing issues depending on what is master and slave. An all-hardware setup will probably be very tight but there could well be a drift if you are sequencing from the mac. I'm talking microseconds here, but I think all mac midi starts to drift even with the fancy emagic buffers.

I found that if I copy an akai kit onto the EXS and then play the two together, it is the EXS that stays tighter with the master clock, while the akai (or the interface) has drifted by varying amounts from one note to the next. Hardly noticeable but definitely there if you compare the waveforms.

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by glitched - 2006/05/24 03:50

I have to agree with zart (again; check the kraftwerk thread). A hardware sampler only makes sense if it does something completely unique, like the VP-9000's groove/formant shifting tech, the SP1200's unmistakable grittiness, or the MPC's sequencer (a thousand hip-hop producers can't be wrong).

And yes, I always noticed timing abnormalities when using my S2000.

I'll be putting the Akai up on ebay tonight if anyone's interested.

-d

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by cchocjr - 2006/05/24 04:20

So what are some software samplers people are using out there that they are happy with, by count of hands? I can rattle off a bunch of names, but I've little experience with any. I'm trimming down my setup to 'lean&mean' status--primarily my UW and a x0xb0x (will be assembling a MidiSid as soon as the parts arrive). I have a strong feeling that the UW will probably do all I want in terms of sampling, but would be interested to hear peoples' experiences with various soft-samplers and/or recommendations. I have a powerbook with some oomf in it, so I've toyed with the idea of using it to sequence in tandem with the UW.

Charles

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by jbuonacc - 2006/05/24 08:35

wanted to mention that there's more than a few hardware samplers out there that have hard drives in them, including the ASR-10 itself (the ASR actually features direct to disk recording). the E-mu E4/5/64's, Yamaha A-series, Akai s5/6000, Akai z4/8 as well. also, if a sampler has a floppy drive i think it's theoretically possible to swap it for a SM/CF reader. might have to mod the power and another thing or two.

i guess i'd ask what do you use samples for right now? what do you require from a sampler? how much real-time control? how many sounds (in MB, i guess) do you use at one time or in a live set? etc...

if you really want a hardware sampler, i'd personally suggest either the ASR-10 or an E-mu E-series Ultra. the sound on these units is fantastic, i'm not sure how to explain it. then again, you say you're not concerned with that. i always thought the newer Akai stuff sounded way too 'thin' compared to these. if you're happy with the sound of the 1000 there's a lot of choices out there. one thing i always look for is an expansive modulation matrix, and being able to modulate sample start and/or loop points via midi CC. the Akai samplers don't really have this (though you can actually do it via velocity on the MPC1000 and 2000xl at least). the modulation options on my E-mu e4X are astounding (it's almost 'modular' in the way it works), i hear the ASR is no slouch either. the Yamaha A-series seems well equipped as well, though i hear load times are painful. a flexible mod matrix can bring you close to what you can do in real-time using the MD/UW sampler (if you're into crazy shit like that).

there's also the 'WaveBoy' custom OS disks for the ASR that can do all sorts of things. really nice!

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by blud - 2006/05/24 13:47

Thx a lot for all these nice comments and suggestions!

My point wasn't to do a flame war on MPCs and AKAI products.

The MPC is not monotimbral, ok, but it can only listen to one midi channel at once. So when it's sequenced, you can only sequence one "prgm" at once...

A thousand hip-hop producers can't be wrong when it comes to the MPC sequencer, but in my opinion the MPC step-sequencer is not for me.

I'll think about your comments on the superiority of software samplers right now (except for special hardware).

I'm using a mac (1st edition of the PB17') but still want to control the whole thing from the MnM.

It seems also that de MD-UW is a good sampler, but does the sampling function worth it? I may then sell my MPC, save a little and buy it oneday...

Now I really dream of an Elektron Gear dedicated to sampling.....

:lol:

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by glitched - 2006/05/24 18:35

Really, this all comes down to what type of music you want to make and how a sampler can really help you create it.

If you love to tweak and mangle samples and you want to sound like Autechre, the UW is your machine. I don't think anyone would recommend the UW for those that want to get into sample-heavy music like Public Enemy, Prefuse 73, or DJ Shadow--the UW just doesn't have enough memory. (You could probably still do some great old school hip-hop, à la 1988.)

The Akais are no-frills, and frankly, no fun. If you don't like the MPC's sequencer, you should probably forget about Akai, altogether.

jbunacc mentions the ASR-x/10, which has a lot of features that anyone would love in a sampler, from hiphoppers to techno-heads. The ASR-X has pads, like the MPC.

The emu samplers (E4k, E64k, E5k...) have lots of filters and a unique sample manipulation architecture. I'm sure this would be good for any type of music.

If I was anti-software, I'd probably go with an E-mu 64k Ultra, Emulator II+ (so I could be Depeche Mode), ASR-X, VP-9000, or one of the early Ensoniq samplers.

Sample transfer for most of these machines is based on diskettes/SCSI. (Another annoyance.)

Just forget the whole thing and get Logic.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by uct - 2006/05/24 18:39

zart wrote:

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I didn't mean that software sucks. I suppose all hardware samplers color the sounds in their own way, and that gives them, in my opinion, character. I will probably be stuck with my Roland W-30 just for that reason, but nowadays when even the newer samplers from AKAI that uses *.wav, has plenty of RAM (and a real nice editor) is so inexpensive what do you gain from using a software sampler, besides from space in the rack? I don't combine software/hardware so I guess all my gear is equally out of sync :-)

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by Thunder - 2006/05/24 20:48

blud wrote:

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:lol:

Yes! It is! The ONLY drawback in the UW is the amount of sample time IMO, but I think 2MB is plenty for one song, you just have to do some loading if you want to work on a different song.

I will also note that the combination of Propellerheads Recycle and Spectrasonics Stylus RMX is the absolute bitchinest software sample option available, although perhaps not for everyone.

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by jsrockit - 2006/05/25 14:41

glitched wrote:

The Akais are no-frills, and frankly, no fun. If you don't like the MPC's sequencer, you should probably forget about Akai, altogether.

If you are not crazy about tweaks per second...the MPC can be loads of fun.

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by - 2006/05/25 16:52

cchocjr wrote:

So what are some software samplers people are using out there that they are happy with, by count of hands? I can rattle off a bunch of names, but I've little experience with any. I'm trimming down my setup to 'lean&mean' status--primarily my UW and a x0xb0x (will be assembling a MidiSid as soon as the parts arrive). I have a strong feeling that the UW will probably do all I want in terms of sampling, but would be interested to hear peoples' experiences with various soft-samplers and/or recommendations. I have a powerbook with some oompf in it, so I've toyed with the idea of using it to sequence in tandem with the UW.

Charles

hey charles

I see you've got a x0xb0x, I'm on the list for run 4...

I was just wondering how you are enjoying it, and how long it took you to make and if you are an experienced 'solderer'?. Do you have any samples/demos/tunes of it online?

I'm getting itchy, and I'm not sure wheter to get the x0xb0x or a retro revolution ... does anyone know if the retro revolution completely covers the possibilities of the 303 and also its own features, or if its mostly a synth that sounds like the 303 and misses out on some 303 specific stuff...

I've got a hard-on for making acid basslines , and being able modulate my CV gear with one of the above mentioned units. Heard some moog acid basslines over at the x0xb0x forums, sounded dope.

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by glitched - 2006/05/25 17:23

Sorry to interrupt this section of the thread, but I put my S2000 on ebay. Very cheap considering all it has. Check the post.

Thank you.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by cchocjr - 2006/05/25 18:52

b0unce wrote:

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I've got a hard-on for making acid basslines , and being able modulate my CV gear with one of the above mentioned units. Heard some moog acid basslines over at the x0xb0x forums, sounded dope.

I love it. I took me around 20-30 hours to complete it, I'd say. This includes fabrication, trouble-shooting, modifications, and trouble-shooting the modifications :-D . I do a fair amount of soldering at work, but mostly in cable construction (I'm an AV Systems Installer). It helped, but I was (and am) pretty much green concerning electronics. The x0xb0x forum was immensely helpful when it came to troubleshooting, too.

In my opinion, if you can solder (or are willing to learn), are patient, don't break shit when it doesn't work right off the bat, and will follow directions meticulously, then you can do it. It was a GREAT learning experience. I'm going to start phase one of my MidiSID construction as soon as the parts arrive (today, I think?).

The most fun part of the x0xb0x was recreating 'classic' 303 mods (bass boost, increased filter cutoff range, increased envelope range, filter modulation with a switchable waveshape source, custom faceplate).

You'd probably love the x0xb0x, and you'd probably love the Revolution, too. I still wouldn't mind having one for the cool sequencer features. The x0xb0x, however, is a straight-up clone of the 303, except for certain parts that are no longer in production. AND it's OS is open source, so there are already some cool hacks out there that implement swing, selectable pattern endpoints for crazy acid rolls, and so forth.

My track 'ill?' on this site has some x0xb0x, though it's really not indicative of the sound, since there aren't any slides in there and since I'm processing it through the MD (oh, and x0xb0x through the MD with distortion way up...sweet!). I'll see if I can't post some more stuff.

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by jbuonacc - 2006/05/26 08:49

cchocjr wrote:

The x0xb0x, however, is a straight-up clone of the 303, except for certain parts that are no longer in production.

any idea exactly what components these are? i'm wondering if maybe they could be salvaged from some sort of other early 80s electronic devices that could be found for cheap? stereos, boom boxes, toys, etc... if so, would it be worth it?

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by udenjoe - 2006/05/26 15:56

One would have to assume he means ICs. Other than that the usual components can be found in many electronics.

I was just playing around with my mpc2500 last night. I have to say what an improvement. I was playing around with a sequence and was able to trim and change sample start/end points. It's quite tweakable. There is also alot of room for improvement on the 2500. Stay tuned... Once you get a hang of it the 2500 can be very tweakable. You do have to take the time to set up your programs but it doesn't take long. I'd say setting up programs on the 2500 is faster than sequencing on the MD.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by cchocjr - 2006/05/26 18:58

jbuonacc wrote:

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any idea exactly what components these are? i'm wondering if maybe they could be salvaged from some sort of other early 80s electronic devices that could be found for cheap? stereos, boom boxes, toys, etc... if so, would it be worth it?

The rarest components are the high-gain transistors the tb-303 used (2SA733ap) to get its square wave and its distinctive resonance. 2SA733p's are used in there place. Supposedly one could score some of the original parts from old VCRs and such. I've personally ripped apart about 6-8 old VCRs and TVs and found not one.

Conversely, what many have done is buy a large batch of the 733p transistors and used a fancy multimeter or dedicated beta (or gain) testing circuit to identify transistors that have betas in the range of the 303's original parts.

The other rare component is the BA622A chip used in the 303 and other Roland synths of that era. These can be found relatively easily on Ebay for those willing to pay \$20 or \$30 for a component that does little, if anything, to the sound of the x0xb0x. Perhaps it makes it a little noiser.

If I were you, rather than salvaging, I would try these alternate methods. Either way, you will love the x0xb0x sound, for sure, and you'll be amazed at how many people you can bore to tears by telling them all about how you built your own analog synth..."which is actually a clone of the Roland TB-303, one of the more distinctive voices of early techno...blah...blah...blah."

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by synthy - 2006/05/26 21:20

somewhere along the way, I heard that Roland pedals of that era had those desirable components...

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by - 2006/05/28 19:43

hmm....I dunno, I think I'm just gonna pack away some more dough and get a retro revolution instead.

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Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by rgmccaig - 2006/05/28 21:29

I expect you will be happy with the Revolution...

I have one and I'm not aware of any specific feature or sound missing on it vs. the 303.

I'm not going to tell you they sound 'identical', but I do think the Revolution sounds 'just as good', and importantly, it is able to get into all the different _types_ of sound I've heard from 303's (wormy, growly, nasally, whistley, etc.).

It definitely met my expectations.

=====

Re: A sampler for my MnM?

Posted by cchocjr - 2006/05/28 22:24

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It definitely met my expectations.

Just to be clear. I wasn't trying to knock the Revolution at ALL. I still could see myself having one in the future. Future Retro is a badass company--I might just have to get their rack monosynth when it is released. In all honesty--the price of the x0xb0x and the experience of putting it together is what primarily sold me on it. And as a added bonus, it sounds very nice!

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