

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BUY 14 NEW RIDE CYMBALS FOR 100 BUCKS? Perhaps you'd prefer four top-of-the-line drum sets or a huge collection of exotic percussion instruments from the Mid-East, Far-East and Africa — all at around the same impossibly-low price? Sounds like somebody's selling hot gear from the trunk of an '83 Fleetwood, but that's only half right. These instruments are hot but they aren't stolen — they're sampled, and you can get them at your local music store on CD.

Samplers are fantastic musical machines that record sounds from the outside world and play them back through pads, keys or MIDI messages. Today's samplers make CD-quality recordings, which you can use by simply connecting the outputs from your CD player to the inputs of your sampler. There are plenty of libraries to choose from. Here are a few to help you get started.

Super-Charge Your Sound Library

A SAMPLING OF SAMPLES

SAMPLES ONLY

Bob Clearmountain Drum Samples, Volumes 1 & 2, \$99.95 each. East West Communications Inc., 8787 Shoreham Dr., Suite 807, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Clearmountain is one of today's most respected producers. His first disc consists primarily of snare drums, some bass drums and a few toms and cymbals (259 drum samples in total). The dry bass drum and snare drum samples are all recorded in mono, while the samples with ambiance are stereo.

Each sample has four different strokes. Many are quite similar dynamically, but you may find that one of another seems to work better in a particular situation. You could even decide to use all four to achieve subtle variations in your sound. As you might expect, rimshot strokes have more variation between performances.

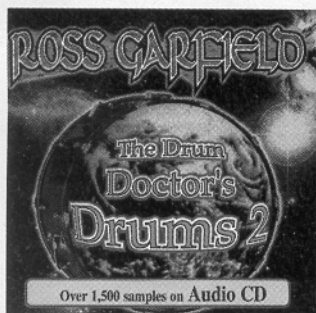
B Y T R E Y B A T T U T E

Jeff Kahan's tom samples have lots of punch and full reverb tails. The Remo Quadra snare drum is thin and bright and would be great for any type of urban music. The Noble & Cooley piccolo snare has a nice ring for that "in-the-room" feel. Shelly Yakus' Noble & Cooley piccolo cross-stick with compressed room mikes is something special, and Paul Jamieson's maple Gretsch toms sound fantastic.

Volume 2 contains more bass drums, toms and a nice variety of cymbals. These samples were recorded with more effects and a wider variety of dynamics. Instead of four strokes for each sample, there are only two, but there are hard, medium and light hits. A few samples are recorded at five different dynamic levels but have only one stroke each. More realistic performances can be obtained with samplers that can map these dynamic strokes to velocity.

The Gretsch 24" x 16" maple bass drum with Pinstripe heads and a Teflon beater is fat and ballsy. This sample with U47 tube mikes from three feet away is quite distinctive. The Remo 22" x 20" bass drum with Pinstripe heads has a definite pitched sound that could be used as tuned bass drums when sequencing drum corps arrangements. The Drum Workshop 24" x 16" bass drum is an outstanding instrument, and the sample with arena reverb is extra fat and heavy.

The Yamaha toms on this CD have a nice full-bodied tone with very pure tuning. The 16" tom has a touch of head rattle on the sustain, which makes the sample ultra-realistic. Cymbal samples include hi-hats, ride cymbals and crashes. Of special mention are the Zildjian 14" New Beats, Sabian 13" hi-hats, Zildjian 20" Medium ride, Zildjian 18" Thin crash and a nice selection of Sabian China cymbals.



ROSS GARFIELD: THE DRUM DOCTOR DOES DRUMS, VOLUMES 1 & 2. \$69.95 each. Big Fish Audio, 11003 Penrose Street, Suite C, Sun Valley, CA 91352. This CD set has a full complement of snares, kicks, toms and cymbals, along with enough percussion samples to handle all but your most esoteric requirements. Recordings are dry and with a variety of effects, including reverbs and gates.

Highlights of Volume 1 include a powerful and fat 7" x 14" custom-made snare drum, an 8" x 14" Sonor snare and a 5" x 14" Black Beauty. The huge variety of DW and Gretsch toms have

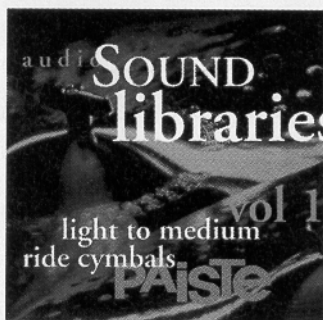
such pure tuning that their pitches are noted in the booklet. Tom samples have two loud and two soft strokes each of dry, room and large-room processing. The 14" x 16" DW drum is very fat and full-bodied and the Gretsch 11" x 13" tom has a cool falling overtone during the sustain. It could be that many drummers will use the 16" x 18" tom as a punchy bass drum.

Percussion samples include congas, bongos, timbales, shakers, tambourines (with and without heads), pandeiro, cowbells, claves, guiros, caxixi, Snapple lids and even the percussion sounds from the Roland 808 drum machine.

Volume 2 has more great bass drum samples including Gretsch 18" x 22", 16" x 20" and 16" x 18" drums and an orchestral bass drum. Snares include 3" x 13" and 5" x 14" Black Beauty drums, Garfield Custom 4" x 14" and 7" x 14" drums, a 4 x 14" Ludwig from 1920, a 4" x 15" Ludwig from 1925, a Noble & Cooley 5" x 13" and a 5" x 14" Ludwig orchestral snare drum. The snare drums are sampled with sticks and brushes and include single strokes, flams, short rolls, and double, triple and quadruple strokes. Cymbals include Zildjian 13" and 14" hi-hats, 16" and 17" crashes, 14" and 18" Chinas and three different ride cymbals.

There is only one set of tom toms on this CD — a group of four Yamaha drums played with sticks at five dynamic levels and brushes at four levels (the 14" x 14" drum is a real winner). Rounding off the CD are several percussion samples of sleigh bells, tambourines, shakers, temple blocks, cowbells, agogos, claves, woodblocks and guiros.

Most of the samples in Volume 1 are recorded at three different dynamic levels while the samples on Volume 2 mostly have five dynamic levels. Volume 2 also includes more information about the recording process by specifying close, overhead or room miking.



PAISTE AUDIO SOUND LIBRARIES, VOLUMES 1-3. Paiste America, Inc., 460 Atlas Street, Brea, CA 92621. Percussionist Ed Mann and Paiste have put together three sampling CDs that may be the last word in cymbal sounds. Each cymbal is presented within a system of "stroke points, striking implements, arranged and designed to provide the fullest possible range of pitch, harmonics and dynamics."

The samples on all three discs are absolutely exceptional! Most have full decays, and the few

that do have gradual fade-outs are still very realistic. Most impressive is the lack of noise in these samples. A few of the other discs have minor residual air (a slight hissing sound) that can be heard during a soft decay, but not these. There are tapers on the end of these samples that fade into absolute silence.

The longest samples are 16 seconds, with most ranging from ten to 14 seconds. This is a lot of memory to devote to cymbals, but if you're looking for the most realistic sound possible, you'll want to use the entire sample. If you need to shorten them, use the envelopes of your sampler to make the sound fade sooner.

The first two volumes have sampled strokes divided into seven positions/strokes: center tip (soft to medium), center tip (loud), mid-bell tip, edge tip, center shoulder, bell tip and bell shoulder. Beaters include a brush, a bundle, two small sticks, two medium sticks, two medium-heavy sticks and two heavy sticks. Each individual cymbal has between 25 and 50 different strokes.

Favorites on Volume 1 include the 20" Silk with its focused tone, the Signature 21" for its great upper harmonics and the Signature 20" Dark Full ride for its tonal movement during the decay. On Volume 2, the Signature 20" Dry ride and 20" Dry Dark are fantastic cymbals with full body and bright stick response.

Volume 3 includes 19 crash cymbals ranging from 14" to 20" and 18 pairs of hi-hats from the 8" Visions Mini to 15" Power hi-hats. Crash cymbals have five different strokes: soft and loud in the center of the cymbal, sharp attacks, loud at the edge and very loud strokes at the edge. Hi-hats have 13 strokes with different striking positions, dynamics, degrees of openness and fast chokes. Also included with each pair of hi-hats are four different foot-closed strokes. Like the other volumes, the crash and hi-hat disc makes use of various brushes and sticks.

The 2000 Sound Reflections 16" Thin crash is an especially nice cymbal with a lot of attack and a smooth decay. If you're looking for a crash with tons of harmonic movement in the decay, check out the Sound Formula 18" Thin crash. And the Sound Formula Reflector 18" Full crash is one of the series' most complex cymbals, with a unique mix of high and low frequencies. The Signature 14" Medium hi-hat is a rich, dark pair of cymbals with a thick and heavy "chick."

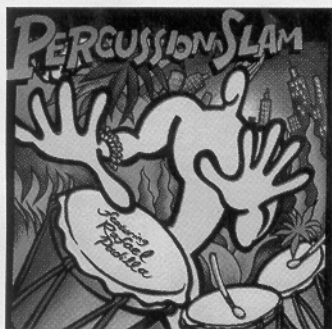
LOOPS AND SAMPLES

DRUMSCAPES, VOLUMES 1 & 2 (SON OF DRUMSCAPES), \$89.95 EACH. Northstar Productions, 13716 SE Ramona, Portland, OR 97236. The Drumscales collections are different from other loop and sampling CDs in that the loops are presented as complete tunes. They each follow one of two different song structures, so you can use the track in its entire form or cut smaller sections from various parts of the groove. Following the drum tracks are more than 400 individual samples taken from the drum kits. Using a combination of loops and single samples, you can create your own custom tracks.

Volume 1 contains both live drumming and sequenced percussion performances by Mark Schulman and Brian David Willis. The advantage of having a live drummer play a complete tune is obvious in the "Medium Rock" and "Medium Techno Rock" tracks of Volume 1. In the techno tune, you hear the hi-hat opening as the song's structure approaches a new section, which creates increased energy and motion toward a musical high point.

The two volumes feature a wide variety of feels that explore everything from rap and metal to funk and acid jazz. All tracks on Volume 2 were performed by Mark Schulman and have a stronger street sound with no percussion and less processing on the drums. Without exception, these tracks rock hard. The very first groove contains in-your-face attacks and an energy level that's stratospheric. There's a great snare drum sound on "Grunge Ballad," hip cymbal work on "House Funk" and a bright and cutting snare on "Slippery Funk."

In addition to the individual samples (more than 400), Volume 2 also includes a series of nine different fills for each track. These are great for live triggering from an electronic kit (as long as their tempo matches yours). On both CDs, the samples are laid out in the stereo field to match placement on the corresponding tracks, and the dynamic contrasts are fantastic. Several tom and bass-drum samples have sympathetic snare vibrations, which can enhance the realism of sequenced or live electronic performances.



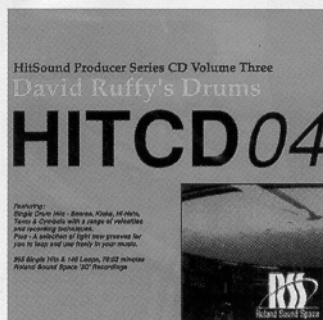
PERCUSSION SLAM, \$99.00. Invision Interactive Inc., 2445 Faber Place, Suite 102, Palo Alto, CA 94303. Percussion Slam is unique in many ways. The booklet contains numerous tips about making the best use of the patterns, including a tuning table to alter the tempo of your loops. For example, if you wished to change the speed of a loop from 105 bpm to 108 bpm, you would raise the tuning by 49 cents.

Rafael Padilla is the master percussionist on this disc, and he plays a wide assortment of instruments with clear tones and a focused sound. Grooves include the traditional congas, bongos, timbales, cowbells, claves, shekeres, tambourines and triangles, as well as more exotic instruments such as djembe, clay bongos, udu, dumbek, repique, nagara, cans and talking drums.

Percussion Slam contains 23 grooves of percus-

sion loops, samples and MIDI files. The MIDI files are included on a separate disc and are available for Macintosh, IBM or Atari computers. Each beat is performed at multiple tempos, and is presented first as a complete groove followed by a subtractive mix of the various instruments. Notes in the booklet explain the stereo panning of the instruments, and in which part of the measure to begin fills. And if that isn't enough, you're given a healthy dose of individual samples that can be used alone or with the MIDI files.

While the featured instruments give the disc a strong Afro-Cuban flavor, the loops could easily fit into many styles of music. There are shuffles, ballads, rock, pop and of course, traditional loops like salsa, bolero and danzon. Favorite loops include "Grun" with its full complement of highs (bongos, shakers, finger cymbals) and lows (dumbek, udu, and kick), the strongly Brazilian "Breeze," "Funkstation" for its melodic talking drum patterns and the Mid-East influenced "Oasis."



DAVID RUFFY'S DRUMS, \$49.95. The Advanced Media Group, Hurst Lane, Privett, Nr. Alton, Hants GU34 3P, United Kingdom. A collection of 140 loops along with 265 single hits makes this CD a cornucopia of sampling material. While all the looped beats are cool, Ruffy's shuffles and funk grooves are the highlight. They're bouncy, gritty and full of attitude. There are plenty of snare drum ghost strokes, grace notes, buzzes and other subtle variations that make these patterns come alive, and a big, full bass drum sound with tons of bottom.

Several loops (most of four or eight measures) make very good use of a large ambient room sound and the stereo field. In addition to the natural drum sounds, there are plenty of effects such as flanged sounds, gated sounds and realistic reverb. Of special mention are the various snare drum timbres and colors that Ruffy pulls from his instrument. While the overall balance remains solid and steady, slight tonal variations offer movement and direction within the track. A few of the loops have additional tambourine, congas and even bongos joining in for fun. As an added bonus, Ruffy includes three tracks of static and crackle — one each from the '60s, '70s and '80s.

The samples include a selection of 21 Zildjian crash cymbals, all including the full decay. Bass drum samples have four distinct dynamic levels from soft to loud and the hi-hat samples provide a nice assortment from totally closed to totally open.

The snare samples offer four different strokes on each instrument or performance technique (dry, room or rimshot), but all at a similar dynamic.



SUPREME BEATS: A PERCUSSION LIBRARY BY BASHIRI JOHNSON. Grand Street Records and Filmworks, 100 Grand Street, New York, NY. The four CDs that make up this collection are Contemporary, Dance/Hip-Hop, African and World. These loops are actually individual compositions by Johnson, recorded by him accompa-

nied by some of the most sought-after players in the industry. Don't let the labels fool you, however — loops from the African and World CDs could easily be used in a hip-hop situation, and vice versa.

Each CD is arranged so that the loops come first, and at eight or more bars they are long and luxurious. Most are recorded at three different speeds (often 93, 108 and 120 bpm), and there are some subtle and useful variations between the performances. After the full groove, loops of percussion mixes and various single instruments are provided. And at the end of each CD is a collection of single hits on some of the various instruments.

Loops on Disc 1 use talking drums, lion's roars, ank lungs and darabukas along with some very hip jaw harp playing. "Afro Triangle," "Knee Floor Bash," "Ben Brown Rock N Roll" and "Vacuum Groove" deserve special attention for their creative surprises.

Disc 2 has a light-hearted vibe, in the choice of both instruments and grooves. The "German Rabbit" is a small stuffed toy that makes a hilarious rhythmical racket. If you need a bass-drum sound that will blow out your car's speakers, check out "Elevator Boom" from the "Elevator Body" groove. The vocalizations for "You Got Ta Get Beats," "Scratch Groove" and "Tribal Vocal" are just too much (The bamboo brush loop from "Tribal Vocal" is one of the most unique sounds in any of these collections.)

From the very first loop of Disc 3, "E Toi E Toi," you can feel the power and authenticity of these compositions. This African disc is full of vocals, foot stomps, shakers, bottle blows, stamping tubes and hip-sounding drums with deep and rich lows. "Ju Ju," "Gyana High Life," "Lamba" and "Kaki Lamba" are full of life and spirit, and the djembe samples at the end of the disk are outstanding.

Disc 4 has the longest loops and features conga, berimbau, udu, cajon and tabla as the primary instruments. The long berimbau loops (nearly 25 seconds) can be broken up into smaller patterns if you prefer. The loop called "Just Udu" is remarkable and the interplay between the tones is highlighted by wide, discrete stereo placement. The three tabla loops could easily be used for a wide variety of music.