



## Loopmasters Instruments – Bass Master £70

Like many other audio sample purveyors, Loopmasters have gone beyond their original remit and embraced self-contained virtual instruments. One such example is

their new Bass Master instrument dedicated to – you’ve guessed it – bass. This is a pretty straightforward sample-based plugin available for both Mac (AU/VST) and Windows

(VST) systems. At its core, sounds are created from two layers, which can each make use of the included 217 factory samples. Sadly, there is currently no way to add your own

samples to the mix, though this perhaps goes against the ‘keep it simple’ philosophy.

The layers are labelled as ‘Top’ and ‘Sub’, with some subtle differences between the two when it comes to further shaping. The Top layer includes a four-stage amp envelope, whilst the Sub only has control over Attack and Release stage (with fixed Sustain) – though unlooped short samples will obviously not extend beyond their original length. The Sub also has the ability to bypass any further processing by engaging the ‘Direct Out’ button. With this enabled, only the Top layer will route through the Filter section and (three part) Layer FX, or come under control of the Modulation Section. Whatever the setting, the Master FX (comprising of the three-band, compression-based ‘Frequency Booster’) works on the two combined layers.

With 350 factory presets covering a range of styles, Bass Master is a decent sounding and easy-to-use source of very usable bass tones. **Bruce Aisher**  
[www.pluginboutique.com](http://www.pluginboutique.com)

**VERDICT 8.0**

## EastWest – Voices Of The Empire \$399

EastWest’s latest addition to the impressive Composer Cloud subscription service is Voices Of The Empire, based on the singing of, LA-based Mongolian, Úyanga Bold. This collection consists of 84 ‘instruments’ across various categories familiar to any regular EastWest user. The Sustains are a good starting point, with various forms of vibrato and non-vibrato melismas, slurs and held notes. The Legato section attempts to connect notes realistically, for more fluid phrasing, and comes in ‘traditional’ and Mongolian styles. While these largely work well, they do reveal one of the problems with this kind of library: it’s hard to distil the unique sound of a singer like this and make a fully realistic, playable, entity without removing some soul. Within a full music mix the ‘joins’ can be made almost invisible. However, a more elaborate host engine, customised to the specific nature of the audio content, might make the task simpler. The Combo and Keyswitch instruments, employing multiple articulations (under velocity, mod wheel or key control) make this easier, and the Phrases are great standalone improvised elements.

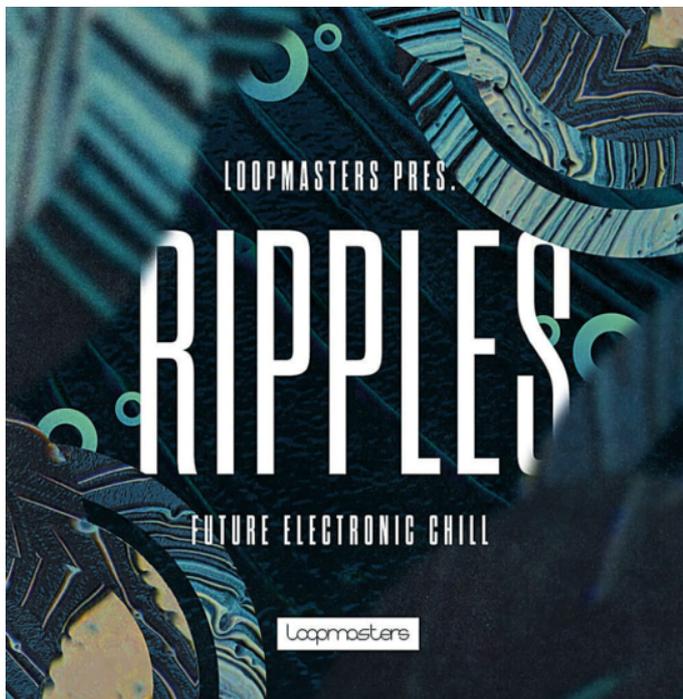


Overall, this 15GB collection should appeal to anyone writing for film and TV, as the starting point for some experimental electronica or dance. Although pricey as a standalone, for those already signed-up to Composer Cloud this is a great (free) addition to complement the more formal Hollywood Choirs. **Bruce Aisher**

[www.soundsonline.com](http://www.soundsonline.com)

**VERDICT 7.8**

# Loopmasters – Ripples: Future Electronic Chill £35



As the giant ball of fire in the sky takes his hat off for another year, and cooler climes begin to take hold, the time to chill the flip out is upon us. And thanks to the inspiring sounds in Ripples, you can also turn the gosh darn heat down on your beats as well.

Over the course of 1.65GB of downtempo and ambient loops, licks, pads, hits, and patches, the sound design team at Loopmasters have whipped up a quiet storm of forward thinking melodies and cutting edge beats to calm the most jangling of nerves.

Dreamy bass riffs join switched-on synths and groovy percussion, with an intelligent tone throughout that should suit the more cerebral electronic producers out there. Cool.

**Roy Spencer**

[www.loopmasters.com](http://www.loopmasters.com)

**VERDICT 8.0**



## Loopmasters – Psychedelic Dub & Glitch £45

For this monster 6GB+ sample pack of dark, trippy, proggy grooves, the fiends at Loopmasters have scored the help of Mindspring Music – a stable known for its love of all things psychedelic and dubby.

They've convinced the Dallas-based label to grant you access to the personal sample vaults of four of its heavy hitting producers – Shape, Taotempo, Alterra and Spiral Minded Project.

Among the potent personal stash you get to gobble up, you'll find plenty of hardware and field recordings, as well as pads, patches, and presets for the likes of Serum. Add some well enlightened leads, twitchy loops, and wave after wave of welcoming bass, and you have quite the trip in front of you. Best to take it half at a time, though. **Roy Spencer**  
[www.loopmasters.com](http://www.loopmasters.com)

**VERDICT 9.1**



## Sample Magic – Jazz Hop Melodies £13

The fusion of jazz and hip-hop has always been fresh – the horns and bass of the former just sound crisp with the boom bap of the latter, and producers always cut their teeth mining Blue Note-style grooves for inspiration. If the thought of scanning a ton of wax isn't for you, then fire up Sample Magic's latest pack, and get plucking out dope sounds in seconds.

For your money you get 101 finger-snapping loops, taking in Latin influences, Hammond workouts, deep Rhodes grooves, and plenty of stabs and hits to arm your sampler with.

Elsewhere there's another 101 one-shots tucked into super playable Ableton rack instruments, further aiding spontaneous beat making. Dig it.

**Roy Spencer**  
[www.samplemagic.com](http://www.samplemagic.com)

**VERDICT 8.3**



## Skeleton Samples – Subterranean Techno £20

The best techno has always thrived deep beneath the surface, away from the light of day. The bods at Skeleton Samples know this all too well, and are on hand to provide you with all the bare bones you'll need to flesh out your next underground anthem with.

A quick dig through the 214 files on offer and you'll start to notice a common thread of dark, twisted, sound design running through these loops. The polished sheen of the synth sounds cut through the murky bass like a knife, and the marching percussion of hats and claps ride the pulsing drum programming as it marches you deeper and deeper down. Our advice for those looking to explore: bring a torch, it's gonna get dark.

**Roy Spencer**  
<http://sounds.beatport.com>

**VERDICT 8.0**



## Samplesound – Artist Series: Duke £18

Following on from last month's sweet Candi Staton vocal pack, the Samplesound team line up another artist for you loop-choppers to get your mitts on. This time it's Duke – the Greek tech and minimal house producer who has been getting heat with his releases and remixes on labels like Mut, Whoyostro, and Southpoint of late.

On his debut 500MB pack he gets to showcase some of his lively, stripped back, grooves. There are 20 bouncy bass loops, 35 tough drum workouts, 20 well engineered textures, 20 playful FX, and 20 striking one-shot claps/snare to round it off. All in all, it's a great insight into this next waver's arsenal, with plenty of solid samples to pick out and prop up your next club production with. **Roy Spencer**  
<http://sounds.beatport.com>

**VERDICT 8.0**