



NI – Electric Sunburst Deluxe £129

> Native instruments have been in the synthesis and soundware game right from the start of the plugin revolution, and have managed to combine authentic innovation with

the provision of products that also work well in a day-to-day production context. Kontakt has come to dominate the sample playback instrument market (and with a host of great third-party content), but NI

themselves continue to put out libraries that show off its capabilities.

Electric Sunburst Deluxe isn't the first of their instruments to attempt a convincing emulation of an excellent musician playing a classic instrument

– and it does embrace some of the functionality found in earlier outings – but it claims to go one step further (and builds on the earlier 'standard' Electric Sunburst' instrument).

For those new to NI's Session Guitarist range, the intention is that you can achieve authentic-sounding guitar parts using only a MIDI keyboard. A wide range of patterns are included with each instrument (running from classic rock and funk riffs, to niche styles and weirder reversed patterns), which plays back samples based on pre-programmed pattern styles and chords detected from incoming notes. Generally speaking the results have always been very good. ES Deluxe combines an expanded pattern library with a more advanced picking engine alongside an entirely new melody-based instrument and expanded effects selection. Before you even get to the sound of the instrument itself, the attention to detail and usability is clear. The ability to search on patterns by tapping a rough rhythm and finding those similar, for example, is a godsend. The additional playing styles on offer in the new melody-focussed instrument include open, closed, flageolet and tremolo options, with hammer-on or pull-off samples added automatically where appropriate. Convincing vibrato and single-note bends are also easily achieved.

An excellent addition to the Session Guitarist stable, and one which every keyboard-playing non-guitarist should try. **Bruce Aisher**
native-instruments.com

VERDICT 9.2

Roland – TR-606 Software Rhythm Composer from \$19.99/month

> The analogue revival sees no sign of abating, with classic Roland XOX drum machines changing hands for ever increasing amounts. However, Roland's response has been to introduce an expanding range of synth and rhythm boxes based around digital emulations of some of their earlier successes (and some that were only hailed as such many years after they went out of production!).

The TR-606 has never achieved the heady heights of fame achieved

by the 808 and 909, but nonetheless it has its own charm and immediacy. Here Roland employ the ACB

(Analogue Circuit Behaviour) technology found in their recent hardware boxes to recreate the 606,



and add some features missing from the original – the most obvious of which was the lack of any sound-editing controls (you could adjust relative levels and programs different patterns, but that was about it). Multiple outputs, adjustable swing and MIDI CC control are also added, but that's about it.

For those seeking a more lo-fi, alternative to the 808 or another analogue drum flavour, and don't want to go down the hardware clone route, then the new TR-606 Software Rhythm Composer may be just what you are looking for. **Bruce Aisher**
rolandcloud.com

VERDICT 8.0

Audiotent – Discovery £37



A top-rank indie-dance sample library, with more than 700 sounds for the discerning beatmaker.

Dented techno bells and lofty chord stabs join pounding kicks and trippy percussion layers, as baggy bass grooves and taught synth lines flap your trouser creases.

The drums race along at a fair clip, too, with choice claps and snare sounds ringing out proudly from within the loops. Chemical pad swathes and retro analogue atmospheres are a sweet topper, delighting the senses with their throwback charm and pin-point execution.

It's top-to-tail goodness, throughout. Everything has been recorded at 110 and 118BPM, and you can tell that each of the crates has been crafted with knowledge, care, and a fair amount of joy.

Well worth your time. **Roy Spencer**

audiotent.com

VERDICT 9.0



Loopmasters – Vibes 14 Bluegrass £25

Grab your DAW, partner. And do-si-do up your dance tracks with a dash of American roots music. This updated take on fiddle stick pickin', and banjo twangin', is as infectious as a tick bite, and it's sure to get under your skin just as much.

The six country and western full song kits here are broken down and ready to be pulled apart. From sweet strummed gee-tars, through skippy live drums, and tinkled ivories, everything is tight, punchy, and hoedown ready.

Another cool kit from the Vibes series, which always deep dives into some wacky and wonderful sub-genres. So, if you want to mess around with some hayseed flavours, this set of square dance samples might be right up your street. **Roy Spencer**
loopmasters.com

VERDICT 8.0



Field & Foley – Barn Percussion \$7.99/mo

On this quirky release, two virtuoso drummers stroll the great outdoors of the Catskill Mountains, capturing any fun and funky rhythms they can find in nature and farmland.

Armed only with mics and a sense of adventure, they record everything from the crunching of leaves underfoot and the rushing of rivers, to tree bark drum kits and the splash of rocks in ponds.

It sounds like a hoot (or perhaps an actual owl) as they uncover some real rustic tones for you to play with. Great stuff, if you're tired of the same old electronic samples.

So, why not swap the sounds of Traktor for the sound of a tractor? And get out of the studio and into the countryside with this weird and wild crop of barnstormin' samples. **Roy Spencer**
splice.com

VERDICT 8.0



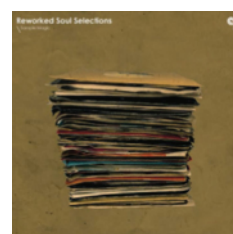
Element One – '96 Jungle £15

Pull up and come and come again, my selector. It's time to go back to the dawn of DnB. Props, too. While most packs cover this style in the broadest way ["Old Skool Jungle" etc] the Element One posse gives you the sound of a single year. And what a year!

The Ganja Crew was cranking the bass while Photek was chopping the drums. And Bukem's Good Looking sound warmed the soul, as Goldie and Dillinja experimented across many a white label. This retro sample bank is an ode to that era, and the producers that pushed forward those new steps of change. It's full of the kind of strings, breaks, loops and bass, that sounded like a bright future over two decades ago, and even better today. Rewind accepted.

Roy Spencer
loopmasters.com

VERDICT 8.0



Sample Magic – Reworked Soul Selections \$7.99/mo

We're taking sampling back to its foundations, when beatmakers would mine dusty wax for dope grooves and breaks. The SM crew's fierce stock of crackly soul riffs, jazzy bass notes, and funky drums are exactly the kind of solid gold bits and hits you'd have loved to have found, digging, back in the day.

The production process at the heart of this pack captures that 'ripped right from the record' tone and vibe of old school sampling. Some percussion loops feel like they've been panned out of a full track and EQ'd to give you that phat authentic vinyl-sampled sound.

A great library, then, for locked down boom bappers who can't quite make it out the door to the local record store.

Roy Spencer
splice.com

VERDICT 8.0