



FOR PC & MAC



# Zero-G NOSTALGIA

Nostalgia resurrects four decades of electronic instruments – and takes Mike Hillier for a stroll down memory lane...

### KEY FEATURES

- Kompakt-based ROMpler
- 1.3GB sound library
- Built-in effects and modulation
- Load up to eight instruments simultaneously
- Direct-from-disk sampling

**MEASURING UP** SampleLab's Analog Archive (£60) is a standard sample collection comprising three CDs of vintage synth sounds, including a double Moog Modular 3C and Roland System 700. This library doesn't come with its own sampler, but it can be loaded into any sampler you choose. Reason Banks' Analog Monsters ReFill (£120) has 4GB of multi-sampled retro synth sounds; check out the royalty-free special-edition versions on the Issue 22 and 27 coverdiscs.

### NOSTALGIA

Manufacturer **Zero-G**  
 Price **£115**  
 Contact **Time+Space 01837 55200**  
 Web **www.timespace.com**  
 Minimum system requirements  
**PC 500MHz processor, Windows 98/ME/XP, 256MB RAM**  
**Mac G3 500MHz, Mac OSX 10.2.6, 256MB RAM**

The advance of digital audio has brought many new technologies to the modern project studio, including a world of new synthesis techniques such as granular synthesis and physical modelling. However, each new evolution in audio technology brings out a stronger desire in musicians to re-create sounds from days gone by.

Analogue synths such as Sequential Circuits' Prophet 5 and the Roland SH-101 fetch huge sums on the rare occasions that they appear on eBay, while early digital synths and samplers such as the PPG Wave and Linn Electronics LM-1 remain highly sought-after pieces of kit.

Recognising this insatiable desire for retro sounds, Zero-G and synth enthusiast Steve Howell gathered together instruments from the last four decades to develop Nostalgia, a 1.3GB sound library containing more than 1,300 patches.

### Familiar beginnings

Nostalgia is a Kompakt-based ROMpler, so anyone who already has a copy of Kompakt or Kontakt can load the patches into their existing sampler without having to use the bundled ROMpler version of Kompakt. Similarly, anyone who owns any of the other Kompakt-based ROMplers will be familiar with the sample engine Zero-G has used.

Kompakt provides a simple yet powerful sampling engine that is perfect for use with these synth patches. The built-in effects and modulation parameters provide the user with the right balance of features and ease of use, although we would recommend using the built-in reverb, chorus and delay only for getting an idea of the sound required.

The patches are categorised into 17 folders and – unusually for synth patches – have been given names that accurately describe their sound. Scrolling

through the patch list gives an idea of the depth that Nostalgia provides: there are sounds for nearly every commonly used synth, as well as a number of obscure synths and beatboxes, including a Casio SK1 and a Texas Instruments Speak And Spell.

### Memory lane

Although physical modelling emulations can bring you closer to re-creating individual synths – and virtual instruments can produce a wider range of sounds – we were nonetheless impressed with the sound quality of Nostalgia's sample library. Many of the sounds are instantly recognisable and have been used on countless tracks across the decades covered by this library.

We managed to get thoroughly involved in making our way through the patches; the sound-design possibilities of the Speak And Spell alone had us entranced while reminiscing about childhood.

All of the synth sounds breathe character and it truly is a delight to play each of the classic synths, many of which you will recognise only by sound and not necessarily by name.

While vintage synths and retro beatboxes make up the majority of the sounds in this sample library, Zero-G has chosen to sample a selection of organs and electric pianos as well, such as the Hammond B3 and Fender Rhodes. While it is easy to feel a certain nostalgia for these instruments, they don't seem to sit comfortably alongside the rest of the library. The other problem we have with the electric pianos and organs is that unlike the synth and drum samples, the patches don't play well. They lack the dynamics and detail of more dedicated libraries, such as the Scarbee Vintage Keyboard Collection or Native Instruments B4. These gripes aside, though, this is a commendable package. **MTM**

### SUMMARY

#### WHY BUY

- Simple Kompakt sample engine
- 1,300 instrument patches
- Sampled Speak And Spell

#### WALK ON BY

- Electric pianos and organs lack dynamic depth
- Physically modelled synths bring you closer to the real thing

### VERDICT

The perfect sample library for the synth enthusiast on a budget. Nostalgia gives musicians, sound designers and producers access to a wealth of instruments, many of which haven't yet been emulated effectively as virtual instruments.



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