Sound designer Oliver Schmitt reveals his sampling secrets!

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"*Oliver clearly understands exactly what kinds of sounds make up a complete dance track and has covered every single base with staggering variety.*" **- Music Tech**

"*Oliver Schmitt delivers a great sample cd: "Club Revolution Vol.1" ! Not just loops with kicks filtered off, full spectrum! Big sounds, revolutionary and unique in it´s kind. He is one of the best sound producers we know! We´ve used several of his synthie sounds on our latest and future tracks, too.*" – **DJ Tiësto**

Oliver Schmitt, the mastermind behind the renowned sound forge Sounds of Revolution, has already made a well accomplished name for himself as a designer for sound patches for synthesizers including JP-8000, Virus, Vanguard, Nordlead and many others. The brand new DVD sample series which is brought to Time+Space. has received critically acclaimed reviews from both national and international music magazines and press. His work is backed up by a long list of testimonials from cutting edge artists including Tiesto, Adam Beyer, Cosmic Gate, Blank & Jones, Martin Buttrich, Jason Nevins or Markus Schulz to name but a few. Time+Space caught up with Olli to have a chat about what has been an incredibly successful year for the German-based sound designer…

What inspired you to start creating sample libraries?I
I´ve been interested for many years how the sounds in electronic music come about. Eventually I started to program synthesizer patches (for example sounds for Virus, JP8000, Vanguard etc.). Currently I am more specialised in sample DVDs, as this offers more possibilities in being creative due to the contemporaneous use of diverse VST tools and synthesis. In addition, I am a passionate drum loop programmer, which I think is quite obvious to hear on my DVDs.

What software do you use?
Cubase 5 and Ableton Suite 8 are my sequencers. When it comes to effects, I like to use 'Space', 'Phat' and 'Alchemy' from Camel Audio because of their inimitable possibilities to manipulate sounds. 'Artillery 2', 'Consequence' and 'Thesys' from Sugar Bytes are excellent for loops and sequences of all kinds. The control is very simple and intuitive. For brute effects I rely on Ohmforce tools. I am consistently surprised what these tools manage to create. 'Timeless 2' from FabFilter and the 'PSP608' I use for delay, as both are very eclectic and able to create complex patterns. Waves tools are also not to be missed of course. Next to the diamond bundle I am also using the JJP and studio classic collection. For more experimental filter works I like to use Volcano 2 - the 'drag-and-drop modulation matrix' is groundbreaking here.

Among soft synths I like using 'Sylenth' from Lennar Digital and 'Twin2' from FabFilter. Both are very versatile synths. I can also highly recommend the tools from the D16 Group, their drum machine emulations are simply state-of-the-art and their new synth 'Shioitor' is just massive and powerful. Synths from Audiorealism I also enjoy to use - nice sound and intuitive control.

And when it comes to fat analog sounds, synths from Arturia are unbeatable for me. Many of my effect, lead and bass sounds come out of these magic machines. Arturia simply offers the most perfect emulation of the classics.

And hardware?
I work mainly on software basis. There´s just a few hardware left in my set-up. The 'Virus TI' is highly recommendable due to its real time connection via USB. But also cult synths like Roland JD800, JD990, JP8080, Vermona DRM1 mkII or Nordlead 3 are being used.

What's at the top of your studio wish list in terms of both software and hardware?
When it comes to software I´m actually equipped more than well. Talking hardware, there is one synth currently that really gains my attention: 'Origin' from Arturia. I had the chance lately to research it a little closer. The concept convinces me – a hardware synth with such a terrific sound and with a modular buildup and such an intuitive operation never existed before. You can create your own synthesis patch by by connecting totally independent modules of different legendary synths such as modules from Moog Modular, Roland Jupiter 8 or ARP 2600 etc. The superb audio quality and endless possibilities are simply amazing!

How do you begin the process of creating a sample library?
There are 3 different approaches:

1) I program sounds directly at the hardware synth. The result is getting sampled and further processed in the computer. Due to the "real controllers" this surely is the method with the biggest fun factor for me.

2) I use internal sound generators / tools right from the start.

3) Or I record sounds per field recording and afterwards process them in the computer. This way first delivers the sound and then the sound bending and adjustment follows, which makes the difference compared to the first two approaches.

I often divert plug-ins from their intended use in my sound programming. Just an example: I don't remove the noise from crackling old vinyl with a declicker to achieve a better sound, but use the noise as a fundament for certain beats. Or sometimes I connect 8-10 plug-ins at once in series to come to a desired result. It´s just fun to experiment in all imaginable
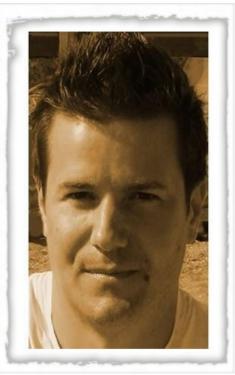
directions. That´s hopefully remarkable in all my productions and defines SOR.

Do you stick to regular pattern of working hours? Is there a particular time of day when you feel you work better?

I am a real night person. It´s not happening rarely that I go to bed when the sun is already rising. There´s no regular daily routine. Especially when it comes to sound programming, creativity is needed. There are days I sit and work in the studio for 12 hours and don´t bring up more than I usually do in 2 hours. Creativity just can´t be released at the push of a button.

Do you ever feel stuck for inspiration and, if so, is there anything in particular you do to revive your inspiration and ideas?

Everyone experiences creative downs from time to time I think, but they never last longer than a day for me. I accustomed myself to take a field recorder with me wherever I go. That thing can be a useful provider of ideas.

Why do you believe your libraries have received such success compared to other products of the same genres?

I assume that users value fresh and unheard sounds and loops. As the feedback shows, my experimentation and attention to detail is highly appreciated.

As my kick-free loops are painstakingly built from scratch, they cover the whole spectrum of frequencies, which is the basis premise for every serious producer. You won´t find any loveless low-cutting among my loops. In many cases I even deliberately leave out characteristic snare drums, so the loops remain versatile and applicable almost every genre of electronic music. Also loop variations for crescendos are quite important for me.

The EXS/Kontakt instruments also differ from various competitors. Club- and Electro House Revolution offer playable programs for each tonal sound (bass, lead etc...), so they can be instantly played over the keyboard and don´t need to get mapped. Ready to play!

What's been your top highlights of your career?

The last real highlight that comes to my mind was 'Alchemy'. Just after a short period of time Alchemy jumped to the top of my small list of stunning, next-generation VST tools. It´s a great modulation system, has an easy to use interface and a breathtaking synthesis/sampling engine – especially it's incredible granular and additive synthesis. There´s more flexibility than in any other soft synth, I like it for the great realtime manipulations of sampled waveforms.

Also as mentioned I've been very impressed with 'Origin' from Arturia which I´ve been able to test extensively already.

Aside from dance music, what other genres of music/band do you enjoy listening to?
I really love the mystic sound of the group 'Dead can dance'.

What other interests or hobbies do you have outside of creating sample libraries?
My family, web design, festivals (trance energy), partying, Facebook.

Has your 2 ½ year old son started to take an interest in what you do?
When I watch him moving while electronic music is playing in the background, he already seems to have the groove :-)

A few months ago something, with hindsight, funny happened: During a drum loop programming I was moving my head rhythmically to the beat. My son wanted to join in, but overacted so heavy, that for the first time in his life he had to experience how hard a table board can be. That was truly a mad and shocking moment! :-)

And finally, what SOR plans do you have for the next few months?
To continue the story of success of the 'Revolution series' and concentrate on a new project, which for now remains a secret.

Thanks Olli!