

# Sample CDs

## Killer Horns 2

The first two sample CDs reviewed here are from Bestservice. These guys distribute a plethora of titles covering a wide range of styles and genre. The first CD off the rank is Killer Horns 2 by Albie Donnelly. For those who don't know, Albie Donnelly was the sax player and bandleader for the English '70s group, Supercharge. Supercharge toured Europe and Australia over the years as a support act for Queen, (viva la Freddie Mercury! [can you say that about a dead bloke? – CH]). Albie has also worked with the likes of Bob Geldof, The Boomtown Rats and Graham Parker. Albie has recorded this CD for anyone who's tried to capture a bold and brassy feeling, given up and called for session musicians.

The CD opens with sax section chords: major and minor 7ths, 9ths, etc. Then it goes into full brass section chords and harmony riffs in the four predetermined keys of B flat, C#, E and G. Then there's a tenor sax playing diminished scale riffs, solo trumpet, trombone effects, soprano sax riffs at 174bpm (these are quite cool), another bunch of full section riffs, trumpet falls, rises and riffs, another batch of solos by various horns, and then all the instruments in a multisample format.

Albie points out in the sleeve notes that the instruments were recorded at Parr Studios in Liverpool using a Neumann U87 on trombone, a Neumann U87 for trumpet and a U47 for the saxophones. He also outlines the method used to record these ensembles. Directly from the mics to a 20-bit A/D converter into a Soundscape editing system, so the recordings have never seen tape. He's also left the recordings unprocessed or EQ'd, so you know you're dealing with the original performances. The recorded sections are also positioned from left to right as trombone, trumpet, trumpet, sax so you can get the vibe of a true brass section pumping away up the back of stage.

It's really quite a good collection – well recorded and edited – and guaranteed to give your horn stabs and wails the sort of spice and authenticity required. *Brad Watts*

*East West Sounds: (02) 9698 8466*

*Formats: Audio, all others*

*Price: \$149.95 (Audio); \$299.95 (CD-Rom)*

## Orient Odyssey

The second CD from Bestservice here is again in the audio format and is dubbed (and doubtfully spelt) Orient Odyssey. This is a collection of riffs, grooves, vocals and atmospheres with a Turkish flavour. The instruments used in the recording are listed on the sleeve but, quite frankly, are of not much use in their identification – I haven't heard of any of them. Tell a lie, there are bongos, but the rest of the sounds are delivered by the likes of darbukas, emrekanunds and curas, for those who have any idea



what I'm talking about.

The CD is sensibly laid out, starting with percussion grooves at tempos ranging from 83bpm through to 140bpm. If you've ever tried to use traditional middle eastern rhythms in contemporary anglo music (i.e. 4/4 time signatures), you'll be glad to hear these loops all have that eastern feel but in 'four on the floor' time signatures. Very useful indeed.

The CD then moves into plucked instruments like tanburs and sazes [now you're just making it up – CH] then into string licks and phrases, oriental woodwinds and flutes, and then a succession of voices and choirs in both male and female persuasions. The disc finishes with a collection of Turkish and Byzantine ambience recordings – marketplaces, baths, of course, and a teahouse. Fabulous! I found Orient Odyssey to be a very useful CD, and you will too, if indeed these are the sorts of sounds you're after (and probably even if you're not). In fact, I lent this disc to an older musician friend of mine. This chap played throughout the '50s and '60s with the cream [should that be the tzaziki? – CH] of Egypt's Arabic musicians and I can't get it back off him. It must be authentic!

*Brad Watts*

*East West Sounds: (02) 9698 8466*

*Format: Audio*

*Price: \$149.95*

## Performance Loops Drums

The concept behind this two CD set from Big Fish Audio is the creation of loops from a series of performances by session drummers recorded at studios in Seattle and LA. There are over 1000 loops and fills arranged by tempo, and consecutive loops are pulled from a single performance, giving several variations and fills for each groove. The CD is further divided into three sections named Artist One, Artist Two and Artist Three representing different recording processes. Artist One is a collection of different drummers on different kits and provides the most variety of style and tone in this collection. Artists Two and Three are each a single drummer on one kit playing many variations of fairly similar beats, with neither separation of parts nor single drum hits – which is a strange omission. The result is a clean and consistent sound, ready for treatment with filters and effects, however, if the raw kick or snare sound isn't suitable for your production your only option would be triggering another sound or some time-consuming editing. I can see Performance Loops Drums' sounds and the grooves would suit those looking for clean, consistent beats for pop, jazz and latin styles.

*Brad Watts*

*Sample Soundhouse: (02) 9973 2832*

*Formats: Audio, Akai, Roland and Samplecell*

*\$169.95 (Audio); \$249.95 (CD-Rom)*

