
Subject: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Glenn Bucci](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 12:22:34 GMT
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Not being able to get good drum sounds of out home studios was one reason that would lure people into a pro studio. Now with things like BFD software, you get real drummer grooves, and fills that were recorded with API's, Nuemann and AKG mic's that sound incredible. If you want to use a real drummer, you can buy Roland V Drums and hook it up to the BDF. People with real drums in their home studios can also replace the poor sounds they get with Drumagog which allows you to use BFD samples and get the pro drum sounds in their studios as well.

To me this is another blow to pro studios. Many home studio then will buy a Great River, and Mytek converters and get a little closer to that pro studio sound with their DAWs. I am not saying that will get the sound you get in a pro studio with an bright engineer, but this drum technology will un-interest more people in going to a pro studio.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Bob Olhsson](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 15:29:54 GMT
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There are pretty serious limits to loops not to mention the fact that they can't respond to what's being recorded on top of them the way a real drummer does.

Studios and consoles aren't nearly as close to obsolete as folks seem to think.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [djui5](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 16:44:45 GMT
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BFD is far from a "big studio drum room" killer.

Do you really think a high profile drummer would rather play on that thing than his real kit? Not gonna happen.

Not to mention that although BFD sounds decent for getting patterns and ideas down, it is by no means a replacement for a properly recorded drum kit. Not even close.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Bob Thing](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 18:15:32 GMT
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Speaking as a drummer, I have to say that I'd much rather PLAY drums than PROGRAM drums, no matter how good they sound.

However, for an example of amazing programmed drums, check out the new Meshuggah album, Catch 33. It's entirely programmed using the Drumkit From Hell samples. If someone didn't tell me they were programmed, I wouldn't have known.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Glenn Bucci](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 18:26:36 GMT
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I agree that nothing beats a real drummer on drums. My point is home studios with software like BFD and drumagog will find the sounds they get are good enough that they won't be too tempted to go track drums at a real studio. What they can get out of their house is very acceptable compared to just a couple years ago.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [dsuycott](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 18:30:53 GMT
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dju5 wrote on Thu, 02 June 2005 11:44 BFD is far from a "big studio drum room" killer.

Do you really think a high profile drummer would rather play on that thing than his real kit? Not gonna happen.

Not to mention that although BFD sounds decent for getting patterns and ideas down, it is by no means a replacement for a properly recorded drum kit. Not even close.

yes yes, i had the v-drum at an old job and playing those things sucks to say the least. there are so many things as a drummer that i can't do with pads and electronics not to mention as a recording engineer. the idea that BFD and what not will kill live drum rooms is not very believable. besides the guys doing bedroom records probably don't have the budget to go to pro studios

anyway. i don't believe anyone who has ever gotten some good drum tracks at a studio will ever stop going.

d

ps. kind of reminds of the 80's when drummers bitched about drum machines killing live drummers, now us drummers have rex files of all you other guys, now i can play my drums with ron carter on bass, ha ha ha.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Vertigo](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 19:18:54 GMT
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I try to eschew samples whenever possible, but I DO find a need to use them here and there for augmentation purposes. I recently had a snare that I wasn't liking the sound of so I added a sampled snare behind it to augment the original and damn... The difference in the whole mix is like night and day.

So I find that samples are great for augmenting kicks, snares, and toms, but they'll never cut it for rooms and overheads ;)

I just did an interview with Jens from Meshuggah a few days ago and we talked a little about the "Drum kit from Hell". They're a pretty "trigger-happy" band - the guitarists don't use amps (they use PODs through a console or PA) and the music is all written on computers before it's ever played live.

Oh, and he says that Catch is best listened to alone in your room with the lights out, upside down in a bathtub full of ice...

-Lance

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [bigbone](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 19:46:00 GMT
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Bob Olhsson wrote on Thu, 02 June 2005 16:29 There are pretty serious limits to loops not to mention the fact that they can't respond to what's being recorded on top of them the way a real drummer does.

Studios and consoles aren't nearly as close to obsolete as folks seem to think.

Mani'm doing studio as a drummers in my home town,and fuck do bob is RIGHT on this one.....

sorry, NOTHING will beat a real drummers who plays with the feel of the track. not a dam sampler , and not a roland V drums, who's the drums heads feel like "tennis racket" can beat that....

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [jfrigo](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 21:35:27 GMT
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Keef wrote on Thu, 02 June 2005 05:22 Not being able to get good drum...
(snip)

To me this is another blow to pro studios. Many home studio then will buy a Great River, and Mytek converters and get a little closer to that pro studio sound with their DAWs. I am not saying that will get the sound you get in a pro studio with an bright engineer, but this drum technology will un-interest more people in going to a pro studio.

I can't say I agree with you. Drum samples and loops and replacement have been around a long time, and any damage was probably done years ago. I doubt a drummer in a rock band is going to be happy being the only guy in the band to not be on the record. Real drums played by real drummers to a unique song are not relpaced by samples and software.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [vernier](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 22:56:27 GMT
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Drum software doesn't hurt anything (except the sound of the last few CDs I bought)..which is too

bad.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [J.J. Blair](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 23:01:11 GMT
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Keef, that is nonsense. People who know the difference are going to use real studios. Just because you can record certain things at home doesn't mean that people are going to. You can make cool records with a gonzo rig, but there are somethings that you want real equipment and real musicians for. Same thing with somebody who mixes in the box in their bedroom. I'm sure they can make a cool sounding mix. But why bother fighting with an improperly designed room?

Plug-in emulations of gear and instruments is nothing but snake oil. Sure it works OK, but it ain't even close to the real thing. And more importantly, you are stuck with the sounds they give you. Same goes for convolution reverbs. As great as they sound, you are stuck within the parameters they sample.

Basically, I want everybody who thinks they can make the same quality record at home that they can make in a real studio with a real engineer to go ahead and do it. Please. Get it over with. Unless you are trying to make an Elliot Smith, lo-fi record, put your work up against ours and tell me it sounds as good.

In fact, I challenge anybody to make a purely software drum track that is trying to sound like real drums and then let me find a drum track that I've recorded at one time or another in that same style that doesn't sound better.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [bigbone](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 00:09:47 GMT
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J.J. Blair wrote on Fri, 03 June 2005 00:01Keef, that is nonsense. People who know the difference are going to use real studios. Just because you can record certain things at home doesn't mean that people are going to. You can make cool records with a gonzo rig, but there are somethings that you want real equipment and real musicians for. Same thing with somebody who mixes in the box in their bedroom. I'm sure they can make a cool sounding mix. But why bother

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In fact, I challenge anybody to make a purely software drum track that is trying to sound like real drums and then let me find a drum track that I've recorded at one time or another in that same style that doesn't sound better.

End of the story.....J.J. explaine everything.....bravo.

And in my oppinion, a not so good drums sound with a great grooving drummers a la (Laboriel jr, chamberlain, keltner,JR.) will sound 100% better than the best so call drums software

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Bob Olhsson](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 03:38:56 GMT
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Keef wrote on Thu, 02 June 2005 13:26...My point is home studios with software like BFD and drumagog will find the sounds they get are good enough that they won't be too tempted to go track drums at a real studio...Good enough for exactly what purpose?

I honestly think the proliferation of this cheap technology only raises the bar between the mundane and the extraordinary. Who wants to buy records as good as what every kid on the block can make in their bedroom when something truly extraordinary is available for exactly the same price?

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [blairl](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 04:22:03 GMT
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Bob Olhsson wrote on Thu, 02 June 2005 21:38 Who wants to buy records as good as what every kid on the block can make in their bedroom when something truly extraordinary is available for exactly the same price?

Unfortunately, kids who watch the Disney Channel for example are bombarded with short music videos, interviews with artists, and all the other clever marketing provided by that source. They grow up thinking what they see and hear on the Disney Channel is what it's all about when in reality much of it is truly mediocre at best. Will they grow out of it, or will they grow up with that kind of sound as the paradigm of acceptable quality?

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [electrical](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 04:30:41 GMT
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We just hosted a BFD session here at Electrical, and after hearing demonstrations of the product, I have come to a couple of realizations:

- 1) "Drum Sound," as the term is commonly used, is nearly meaningless, both as a descriptive category and as something apart from the playing of the drums.
- 2) Sequences, however artfully deployed and however flexible the program (and BFD is very impressive in this regard), simply don't stand up to scrutiny next to a real drummer.

Regarding 1: Listening to a bass drum by itself and trying to decide if it sounds good or not is a pointless exercise, as that is rarely its function. Many of my favorite drum recordings, if examined piecemeal, would not pass the first listen if the individual drums were evaluated in a vacuum, out of context.

The bass drum on Led Zeppelin's "The Song Remains the Same," for example; If I put that up for a band as a suggested bass drum for their record, I would get fired on the spot. The band would certainly insist that it wasn't "Bonhammy" enough. That drum track, however, is amazing. The sound -- as seperated from the playing -- doesn't really even exist.

Listening to any drum in isolation is so confusing, I don't even know how people get on with records where they have to assemble "virtual kits" like that. Really it baffles me.

I have long considered the trapset to be a sort of bully's piano, and in that regard, no one would listen to middle C, tweak it, record it separately, then move on to C#, etc.

Regarding 2: In the context of a grid-edited generic protocols nightmare (cf the Meshugga album mentioned earlier), okay, I guess they're about the same, but that's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about the potential for excellence rather than unobtrusive competence, which is simply impossible to program or manipulate into being, because it exists in a network of intangibles -- many requiring the interaction of all the drummer's limbs and the rest of the band.

You can fool a casual listener in a non-critical situation, but in those instances where excellence on the drums is showcased or required, then a sequence really shows its ass.

For jingles, demos and what-have-you, okay, I see nothing wrong with using them as a kind of metronome. But if the drums are going to be heard as an important part of the group sound, there really is no contest.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Level](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 04:37:51 GMT
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A single kick drum can exhibit several hundred different timbres, depending on how it is played, attacked, muting and the art behind how the musician controls the batter to resonant head relationship..in speed and impact. Head tension by pressing the kick pedal during other riffs are recorded from the kick mic as well.

No machine can immulate that.

Same goes with EACH of the instruments of a kit.

nuff said.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [J.J. Blair](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 15:00:16 GMT
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Steve, I've missed your posts. Glad to have you chiming in.

Personally, I think that this type of software is perfect for porno soundtracks. Ever since the drum machine began to dominate porno music and usurped the funk rhythm section with the wakajawaka guitars, I've had a really hard time watching porn and not thinking about how much I hate the drum machine's kick sound and lame hi hat clicks. I mean, even with the best "swing quotient" algorithm, it sound too rigid. How can people fuck to that? Clearly, this is why people fucked better in '70s porn: They had real drummers to get their freak on to. Long live Saturday Night Beaver.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ammitsboel](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 15:34:32 GMT
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Maybe it was actually developed by the porn industry or in alliance with it?

"now you can have the un involving fuckingness from porn applied to your drum grove making it more industrial than ever!"

"When ever you seek just a little bit of pointlessness then just apply a grove from this piece of software"

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [compasspnt](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 15:43:06 GMT
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I agree with everything Steve said above. But I ask a rhetorical question:

How much of the record buying public knows or cares about the difference? Look at the singles chart...

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ammitsboel](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 16:02:59 GMT
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compassnt wrote on Fri, 03 June 2005 16:43I agree with everything Steve said above. But I ask a rhetorical question:

How much of the record buying public knows or cares about the difference? Look at the singles chart...

I think there are more that cares than you think.

I also think that the "way the wind blows" is controlled by a group of people that determines what people want, because people may not exactly know what they want or what's best for them, but they are easily affected by guidance.

I don't believe in the saying "this is what the people want", it's a line that got invented by somebody that couldn't decide for him/herself, didn't dare to do anything about it or simply didn't care.

The whole music business is one big child that has been fed candy and coke for too many years, so naturally it's not easy to turn it straight but something has to happen or the industry will go serious downhill and destruct itself.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Glenn Bucci](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 16:33:48 GMT
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This may alter your view a little. <http://www.sonicstate.com/articles/article.cfm?id=94#>

Don't slam me now, I think all of us prefer real drums. The point was only that if you can get this type of sound that they have in this video, many local bands by not opt to go to a pro studio due to the quality of the drums that they can get at home with good pre's, mic's and converters.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Vertigo](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 17:00:01 GMT

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Wow, great clip! And very informative. The TD-20 and BFD are quite impressive and realistic. But at the end of the clip where they flip between the TD-20, BFD, and the real kit I have to say that the real kit stood out every time. I didn't like the sound of the TD-20 in the full mix - I thought the ride and hat sounded especially tinny and artificial, I thought the BFD was more convincing. But the real kit smoked them hands down in terms of tone and dynamics. And neither the TD-20 nor the BFD could pull off the sound of the toms as convincingly as the real kit.

Thanks for the link!

-Lance

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [electrical](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 17:28:56 GMT
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compassnt wrote on Fri, 03 June 2005 11:43I agree with everything Steve said above. But I ask a rhetorical question:

How much of the record buying public knows or cares about the difference? Look at the singles chart...

I will reply with a rhetorical question:

Who gives a shit what the record buying public (if there is such a coherent body) thinks?

I don't work for "the record buying public." I work for the band in the studio at the moment, and if members of the record buying public really cared, they would be here with us helping to make the record. Since they're not that interested in the project, they are welcome to go fuck themselves.

The record buying public doesn't care about the quality of the recording or the nature of the art, so we have to.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios

Posted by [jimmyjazz](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 17:46:21 GMT

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All I could discern from that video, besides the fact that I liked the actual drummer, was the high likelihood that I didn't like V-Drums, BFD, or the mic'ed up drum kit. Jesus, could you use a few more microphones?

Near as I could tell, the V-Drums were a distant third to the other two setups, but none of 'em set my hair on fire.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios

Posted by [Glenn Bucci](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 18:04:27 GMT

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I never liked the Roland V Drum sounds, especially the cymbals. Many churches use them due to volume issues on stage. The BFD sounded pretty good, but again the real drums did sound the best.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios

Posted by [redfro](#) on Fri, 03 Jun 2005 22:38:10 GMT

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electrical wrote on Fri, 03 June 2005 18:28

Who gives a shit what the record buying public (if there is such a coherent body) thinks?

I don't work for "the record buying public." I work for the band in the studio at the moment, and if members of the record buying public really cared, they would be here with us helping to make the record. Since they're not that interested in the project, they are welcome to go fuck themselves.

The record buying public doesn't care about the quality of the recording or the nature of the art, so we have to.

Steve, glad to see you're back...and in great form!

Love it!!!

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [captain54](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 02:24:01 GMT
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electrical wrote on Thu, 02 June 2005 23:30 You can fool a casual listener in a non-critical situation, but in those instances where excellence on the drums is showcased or required, then a sequence really shows its ass.

For jingles, demos and what-have-you, okay, I see nothing wrong with using them as a kind of metronome. But if the drums are going to be heard as an important part of the group sound, there really is no contest.

the thing that's being missed here is that if you are triggering those samples in real time on good set up triggers and the right computer, it's not really sequencing...granted, you are dealing with 127 levels of velocity as opposed to infinite numbers of velocities on a real kit, but a BFD or DKFH rig on a good set of triggers and the right computer is no small potatoes..

BTW, a good virtual drum rig is not a "cheap" rig by any means....

the other key to it is the processing....don't forget, once you render a BFD or DFHS performance to audio, you are basically now working with raw, unprocessed audio...what you do with the audio in the mix is really the key to it all, and where it begins to take on a life of it's own in the context of the mix..

I've been playing drums since 1968, and I'd be a fool to suggest that BFD or DFHS can replace real drums...the new Custom and Vintage collection of DFHS is a real eye opener though....I just like to look at it as another tool....you can't totally discount it, though, or say that it can't work in an organic mix unless you see someone who really knows what they are doing work with it...

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [jfrigo](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 03:07:33 GMT
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jimmyjazz wrote on Fri, 03 June 2005 10:46 All I could discern from that video, besides the fact that I liked the actual drummer, was the high likelihood that I didn't like V-Drums, BFD, or the

mic'ed up drum kit. Jesus, could you use a few more microphones?

Near as I could tell, the V-Drums were a distant third to the other two setups, but none of 'em set my hair on fire.

The video was nicely done. For me it highlighted the value of a good drummer, a real kit, and how important a good engineer is also. Engineering-wise, the real drum recording was just average - not bad, but not remarkable. The real kit definitely sounds best, and with a better recording and mix balancing, it would really knock the socks off the others even more. The others are great for what they are, and light years ahead of the old TR-505 of decades past, but they don't replace the real thing yet. The BFD reminds me that the Roland SRX expansion board has very good keyboard playable natural drums as well. Still not the real thing, but like the other two imitations, great if it's all you've got available.

In the end, the video reinforced my feelings on the value of real engineering and real instruments.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Greg Dixon](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 11:24:53 GMT
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In my experience, studios that insist that samples sound as good as a real kit, end up just looking foolish. I did an album recently with some guys who had checked out another studio, where the guy told them that you didn't need real drums anymore. On top of that, the only mics he had, were a couple of Behringer condensers, that he insisted could sound as good as anything, with Mic Modeler. These guys hadn't had a lot of recording experience, but knew that wasn't going to be good enough.

Years ago, a band I was in, did a demo at a studio, that I latter found out encouraged clients to use drum machines on album projects. They had finished an album the day before we recorded and the studio manager was keen to play us some. Within about 8 bars of the first song, 3 out of 4 of us, went 'oh they used a drum machine' to which the guy said, 'yea, sounds great and you can't tell'.....

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios

Posted by [stevieeastend](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 13:18:16 GMT
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Isn't it a question of style? fe "The last to know" by Pink is a programmed drum kit, which is supposed to be heard as a real drum kit, which is actually supposed to be a programmed drum kit....

Nowadays everything is possible if it's done with the right portion of stylistic knowledge and taste. Cool thing if you got real big drums on a rap record and isolated programmed drums on a rock thing if it's done the right way...

But I agree with Keef when it comes to Pop. You don't really need real drums for a pop song, do you? And I don't think one is cheating on the consumer by doing so...

cheers
stevieeastend

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [compasspnt](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 13:39:11 GMT
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It is surely obvious that my original "rhetorical question" was not meant as an endorsement of using drum machines or loops or samples, but rather as a lamentation upon the state of production quality on the "popular" charts.

Of course we (almost) all make records for OURSELVES and/or our artists. Those who do not, that is, those who purposely are trying to "sell to the great unwashed" as their sole intent, although sometimes successful in the short run ("flavour of the month club"), are very, very rarely successful over any extended period. (Not that success is the sole measure of quality of a recording.) This merely means that those purveyors of tripe will not be allowed to pursue their "goals" for very long, and risk the odium of their fellow denizens of muzikland, while those who pursue the noble goals of pleasing themselves and the muses will more likely be able to extend their creative lives.

However, steveeastend has a good point in that machines may indeed be the proper instrument in the proper application.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [stevieeastend](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 14:19:19 GMT
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Like not noticing the referee in terms of producing (the drums)? ;)

But this is maybe THE challenge in producing. Creating sounds/making records that give the artist the chance to succeed within the rules of the "sound du jour" and which can still be heard in about ten years without causing reactions like "oh my good, this is sooo 70ies" fe. (For todays productions it would be something like ".....this is sooooo 00ies", right? ;))

on topic....actually I think that there is a certain kind of "timeless" machine sound already there...

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Bob Olhsson](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 14:36:13 GMT
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blairl wrote on Thu, 02 June 2005 23:22... Will they grow out of it, or will they grow up with that kind of sound as the paradigm of acceptable quality?
It seems to me the fact that they aren't all THAT interested in music relative to other entertainment speaks volumes about it NOT being acceptable quality!

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [fnirvana](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 15:47:50 GMT
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One thing that hasn't been mentioned yet... and it may only be a problem in certain geographic areas... is that there are not a lot of people coming up who can play the drums and have a good sounding, well-maintained kit.

When the only way to get a drum sound to tape was to have someone hit a drum in a studio in front of a mic... it seems to me that there were many sessions that required drummers and many options in regard to qualified skin beaters...

Now, it seems like some sort of occasion when a recording is going to take the time to record an actual kit in a room... And, it seems to me, fewer people available to do the job well.

Could just be that I'm not hooked-in to the drummer hot line in my area. We got a small handfull in my area who can play to tape. (Ooops, I said tape. I date myself... Sorry!)

May not be an issue in LA/NY....

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [stevieeastend](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 17:25:17 GMT
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100% agreed... where are all the session drummers gone..

cheers
stevieeastend

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [labeek](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 17:42:03 GMT
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I think sampled sounds are great for trying to emulate your own mic'd drums after. It's a great reference point to try to cop these big studio sounds at home in your own room. AAHHH the art of tuning of one's drums at home in your room and dealing with all the reflections, frequencies, tone, etc of one's room. That's what sets all of us apart is the personality of our home studios and how it sounds! And if it doesn't sound good the strive to make it sound good is part of being an engineer/studio owner! I mean basically your paying big money to get the reflections of a great sounding room. At home were trying to control them due to the sizes of our small rooms. That's the challenge! I'm not dead against these platforms they do have some use in certain situations, but I say try not to take the easy way out by using these platforms, it's kinda of cheating! I think it's ok to strive to get sounds like the big studios at home. And in that process we become true engineers! If we all used them then we become corporate and steril. Technology has made it easy for us to have our own studios, but where does it cross the line!-- when we don't have to work hard to get our own sounds and every thing we use is simulated and handed to us. OK I'll shut up! Oh ya! nothing beats a---in the pocket-white heads-bucket-of-fish-human

drummer!Never will!

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [JPérez](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2005 19:01:02 GMT
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Two ideas can coexist.

I have been programing drum seq with a sound with no replacement, a real drummer never could make the same feeling.

But, quite the opposite, i recorded a drummer session that, one man, with drum kit from hell, never could play.

To fantastic options for us .

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [maxim](#) on Sun, 05 Jun 2005 08:19:37 GMT
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i think there are 2 very different issues with virtual drums

1. loops and other metronomic devices which are/have been used in many a platinum production over the years

impo, as expressed on another thread, this practice kills the possibility of drummers to interact with the melody and the lyrics as the song is being born

however, it's been around for longer than computers, and will stay around longer still

2. using samples of drums, played off triggers

that's a viable option if you don't have a chance to record a great set in a great room, but a great drummer should still be able to work with it

what you'll miss, though, is the thump in chest from the kick drum and the shaking foundations of

the building, and the vibrating air molecules in your microphones, and the gtr amp's microphone etc

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [halljams](#) on Sun, 05 Jun 2005 09:00:31 GMT
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I think the use of the rigidity and sameness of loops and or sequenced drums is the sonic reflection of what a somewhat sick society wants in terms of creating a sterile, safe, danger free zone for themselves to live out the rest of their terrified, false realities.

And furthermore, given we are artists, and one approach to art is to document our own times, the use of such colors and tensions or non tensions in our art, or at least the understanding of where they may fit, is not something to totally neglect. Even though we know higher art.

But do we sink with society? Or better yet, do we make the choice to.
If only it all worked so perfectly.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [TomW](#) on Sun, 05 Jun 2005 12:00:10 GMT
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Agree with everything that has been said concerning the real thing....cannot be replaced. I agree with Jay, the real drums in the clip sounded average.

IF you try hard it will take hours to program the kind of dynamics its take a good drummer five minutes to lay down.

Best clip in the video was when the drummer whacked out a random groove on the TD20 with the processed sounds...highlighting that the human groove is THE most important element. I'd like to have seen how long it would have taken the guy to program that...it took all of 30s to play.

Maxim brings up a good point though, I tracked some jazz a while ago and the kick drum wasn't

great due to the horrid boxy room and less than perfect tuning. I ended up recreating the kick track in MIDI with a DFHS ludwig and tuned it to match the original, blended together I got a much better result but it took hours to go through and match the samples dynamically. I think its pretty seamless and much better than sample replacing with a couple of hits.

It was just a band aid though. Nothing could have competed with the same drums in a good room.

-Tom

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Bob Olhsson](#) on Sun, 05 Jun 2005 13:32:49 GMT
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Its never been so cheap to convert an unacceptable train wreck into acceptable mediocrity. Something a lot of people miss is that the quality of the backing track often has a huge influence on the quality of the performance. There is no commercial value to mediocrity unless you are already a star or have an unlimited promotion budget and no need to earn a living from your music.

If we indeed see a return to singles, we'll also see a return to competitive covers where established artists spend a lot of money turning a great song into an extraordinary, wildly more successful recording that leaves the original artist with nothing unless they wrote the song. If they did write it, you can bet no label will allow them to keep the publishing because of the label's enormous financial risk of competing with a cover.

In my opinion making truly extraordinary recordings hasn't been nearly as important to an artist's career since the days of the Beatles. Certainly one can make an extraordinary recording using a loop but the batting average of pulling it off has not exactly been great. This is why I can't imagine big consoles or the use of real drums going away anytime soon. They are becoming more important and not less.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [tomhartman](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 04:03:53 GMT
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I'm a composer and musician who uses Pro Tools. I play as many things in as I can.....guitar, bass, keyboards. But unfortunately I have no drum room at home, nor do I play drums. On a big ticket job I have often hired real drummers, just like I hire real string players and ALWAYS real brass players. Hey, even real singers. That said....

I have to say the with drum libraries like Toontrack Superior, many of these posts which flatly state that there is no comparison are being made by folks who simply haven't any experience with the software. I think they were right, until this product came out. It's the first one that really got my attention.

I have very little experience with BFD, what experience I had left me with the impression that it was a nice product and fairly typical drum sample library. Recorded well, nice interface.

Toontrack Superior is in a whole other ballpark. If you have a real drummer, playing Superior samples against a track, I'll bet you there is no one on this forum or anywhere else that would be able to tell whether it was being done with samples or a live kit. Of course, you are limited to the kits provided, and that's a big limitation, but if they work in what you are doing, watch out. And new kits are being added all the time. And yes, you can get your room to shake with the kick drums (if you have big monitors;) Besides, how many kits does a real drummer bring to a session? (NOT HOW MANY SNARES... HOW MANY KITS?)

Would I rather not mess with it and just use a real drummer, with the best kit, playing on his best day, in a top studio? You bet. It would be faster, actually. Unfortunately I live on planet earth, and sometimes it just isn't possible for budget, time, or other reasons (like, many of us don't live in Nashville, LA, or NY and neither the talent or the studio is available easily or within budget).

I welcome any technology that opens doors that used to be irrevocably closed.

JMHO.
TH

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [maxim](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 07:39:25 GMT
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it's a bit like trying to create a virtual piano, though

the sympathetic vibrations are an essential part of the tone and notoriously difficult to simulate and calculate

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [George_](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 07:54:22 GMT
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Quote:Speaking as a drummer, I have to say that I'd much rather PLAY drums than PROGRAM drums, no matter how good they sound.

However, for an example of amazing programmed drums, check out the new Meshuggah album, Catch 33. It's entirely programmed using the Drumkit From Hell samples. If someone didn't tell me they were programmed, I wouldn't have known.

no!! for shure?? I cant believe that!!

I know, that the meshuggah drummer was the drummerplayer for DFH.. I talked to him 2 weeks ago on a lokal gig (gaswerk, switzerland). Shit.. if I knew that before I asked him!!

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [bobkatz](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 09:42:26 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

tomhartman wrote on Mon, 06 June 2005 00:03

I welcome any technology that opens doors that used to be irrevocably closed.

JMHO.
TH

From a composer's point of view I really can understand the attractions of all this midi stuff and drum libraries and such. It's an extraordinary compositional tool, and of course sampling and synthesis has turned into a medium of its own and created a music of its own (witness hip hop).

But from a critical listener's point of view the artificial stuff usually doesn't hack it compared to the real thing, with most music that is derived from forms that were originally all-acoustic. I experience this dissatisfaction all the time when I listen to mixes sent to me by project studio owners working totally "in the box". They're often so proud of their work, even when it sounds like a "Casio band in the box".

All you need to do to be convinced of this argument is to buy the movie on DVD of "Standing in the Shadows of Motown". Try the Joan Osborne cuts. Listen to that tambourine playing and drumming and bass playing and the interaction between the singer and the musicians... "There is Nothing Like The Real Thing Baby."

"I can't afford it" should never be the excuse for releasing inferior-sounding music. If you want the excitement of musicians playing together making music, then record musicians who are making music together.

Yeah, I live with the alternative every day---we all do. And as a mastering engineer I devote myself to using every trick and technique I can come up with to help make the project sound more "organic", "alive" even "real", but I almost never am fooled into thinking a sampled drum set is the real thing.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ted nightshade](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 12:13:34 GMT
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Nice post, Bob.

It's when we make the real kits sound as much like samples as possible that the samples start sounding like a real kit.

Although, I'd take some of these ultra-deep bass drum samples over most of the actual drumkit bass drums. We basically rely on the fact that somebody is going to put an EQ and probably a

compressor in between the drummer and the listener and save these little plastic bass drums. It's too rare to hear a drummer who actually creates in the room a bass drum sound that isn't begging for 6dB at 50hz or some similar technological mercies.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [eightyeightkeys](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 13:32:10 GMT
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As a keyboard player I've been using samples for a long, long tme. Since the S900 way back when.

Initially, samples were not that close to the real thing and as such you had to be careful about how you used them as they could stick out like a pale imitation.

As virtual samplers and VSTi's came along, things got really exciting because realism improved in leaps and bounds.

But, for me, a funny thing has happened in that the closer these samples have come to the real thing, the more I craved the real thing instead.

And this is especially true for drums. Some of the Wizoo Kits are an example. These kits are so outstanding, so well thought out for the programmer, complete with overhead, and room samples. Amazing. They can be programmed to be ultra realistic. But, it's not real. It doesn't feel real and as Bob mentioned above it's not an "organic" mix of people playing music on real instruments. So close, yet so far.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [captain54](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 14:48:35 GMT
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bobkatz wrote on Mon, 06 June 2005 04:42tomhartman wrote on Mon, 06 June 2005 00:03

I welcome any technology that opens doors that used to be irrevocably closed.

JMHO.
TH

But from a critical listener's point of view the artificial stuff usually doesn't hack it compared to the real thing, with most music that is derived from forms that were originally all-acoustic.

with all due respect, Bob, I think you and a few of the other astute contributors to this thread are being a little unfair with your assessment of some of the current sampling technology that is in use today...

the Mellotron, the Arp, the Fender Rhodes, the Moog, etc..were all derived from forms that were all-acoustic...yet in the right hands, these instruments have contributed to some incredibly memorable music....hell, if you want to take it even further, the grand piano as we know it today, was derived, and is a hybrid of small chamber room 15th and 16th century keyboards, that themselves were hybrids of, and tried to emulate stringed, plucked instruments...so it goes on and on...

I am all for making things sound "organic", "alive" and "real"....I grew up in that era....but who really decides what is "inferior" sounding, as you so stated?...."organic", "alive", and "real" is all relative...

the organic/alive/real thing is more derived from the creativeness of the composer and their ability to take the listener to another place...in the right hands, a piece done with a DFHS or a BFD drum library can achieve that....

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ted nightshade](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 15:21:33 GMT
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captain54 wrote on Mon, 06 June 2005 07:48

the organic/alive/real thing is more derived from the creativeness of the composer and their ability to take the listener to another place...in the right hands, a piece done with a DFHS or a BFD drum library can achieve that....

Well, there's that little matter known as the performance.

Without which, the composition can see the light of day.

And a genuine real-time performance has a certain direct efficiency of means. A "performance" that is the result of an infinitely repeatable playback of an assembly of fragments just don't have that.

If the composer can get the music across with one hand tied behind their back, more power to them. But it must be reckoned a disadvantage to have to go through such circuitous means, with none of the advantages of a lucky moment from an inspired performer.

Whatever the playback system is, it is NOT inspired.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [captain54](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 17:18:10 GMT
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Ted wrote:

"And a genuine real-time performance has a certain direct efficiency of means. A "performance" that is the result of an infinitely repeatable playback of an assembly of fragments just don't have that."

I guess if I was trying to re-create the Who's "Quadrapheonia" with a BFD or DFHS library, Ted, that would be true, but I'm not...

Trent Reznor from NIN assembled a tune recently with an infinitely repeatable playback of an assembly of fragments on the web recently ("the hand that feeds") that sounded pretty damn good, at least to my ears...

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ted nightshade](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 17:35:32 GMT
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Hey Captain,

I don't have any real idea what you're trying to do, or what's easiest for you. People have done fine things in ways that make me marvel that the things were ever done at all. Wouldn't surprise me in the least!

But for me it seems like the long way around, and it makes me wonder what breakdown we have suffered to be going such a long way around it.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [dsuycott](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 19:14:52 GMT
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i like these threads about drummers...

i liked steve a's earlier post about listening to the individual drums and making your judgements about the kit and agree 100%. it's a kit and i think i should be thought of as a kit not a number of single points of sound. to reference his bohnham statement i can think of a number of amazing drum passages that if you singled out every drum[which if i am not mistaken in jb's case or any of the great classic drummers who didn't re-trigger or sound replace there kit in the mix] might be a hard thing to but on the whole who gives a shit that kik might not be the greatest kik sound, he killed the fricken track and as whole it rips.

and another thing on negative speak on the use of loops and it's down fall of our culture or whatever BS someone posted earlier give me a break. not that i am a loop historian but they have been around for decades and have been a major part of some of the greatest records made, bitch's brew to start with, maybe some funkadelics, the list goes on and on.

and another thing since i record myself on drums and then cut my own loops to acidize or recycle for .rex files this means that my drum sounds and feel isn't good enough, i think that's a bunch of bullshit, there are so many great records constructed from live player loop disc's that if you can't get a track to feel good you should go out to the woodshed and do a little work on your editing skills and stop using them as is, although sometimes why fix it if it ain't broke.

the only thing wrong with loops and samples is the lack of skills on the part of the user or creator not the practice that outdates [i would venture to guess] most people reading this.

long live the live player.....or players of the live players....

d

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [trevord](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2005 21:49:40 GMT
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interesting replies.
to me both live and not so live drumming have their place.

live drummers are great for existing genres of music where you can hire someone who is fluent in that genre.
then it is very cost effective (considering the quality of the sound) to have a one-take wonder slam out song after song.

the advantages of loops/samples etc. comes out you are experimenting with different rhythms, timing, swing etc.
Not just a matter of getting the drummer to play what you want, but the whole band has to do it "tight". If any of you have done this you know how quickly each and every experiment degenerates into a groove the whole band is comfortable with.

of course, once the experiment is done - then good drummers can hear it and duplicate it, but the experimenting is what loop/samples are good for.

there are many genres of music which were created by distortion of loops of existing genres.

the most extreme example i can think of now is "garage"
nowadays you can find drummers who can swing to the extreme this genre requires - but this genre was invented by cranking the swing on "groove boxes" to the max.
who knows how many genres were done by cranking the swing on the akai mpc.

There was a time drummers considered the swing in "new jack swing" to be too extreme - now they all have to learn it.

dont get me wrong

great drummers can do the same experimenting on their own time, but how many takes would it have taken to do a track like

Brandi's "what about us". I know drummers like to boast - but that beat came out of a sample loop swung to the max, along with reverse hats.

It might not be your cup of tea.. but like i said "experiments"

come on --

no one wants to replace drummers (or emulate "good" drum sounds) the point of loops is to put the ability be creative in everyone 's hands.

How can you bash that?

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [tomhartman](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 02:28:26 GMT
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So....

All of the doubters out there are 100 per cent positive that if I play you several tracks, some of which are real, and some of which are performed by a real drummer using the Toontrack samples, you will always be able to spot the sampled part?

Just curious. Frankly, I really don't think anyone would bet their home on that one.

Don't forget that inspiration happens during programming parts too. It's not reserved for live bands playing. And many studio charts, depending on the producer, are so planned out that they are, in fact, programmed. There are songs that I know exactly what I want the drums to do. Exactly. Every fill, every cymbal hit, etc. Other times, depending on the song, it isn't as important, and you let the drummer do what feels right.

There are no black and white answers.

And regarding the poster about the piano samples, yeah it's a bit like that. And now there are piano samples out there that I sure wouldn't want to bet my home on that I could spot as a sample vs. the real thing, and I've been playing piano a long time;)

This shouldn't turn into a debate on which is better...real or sampled. Because that answer is obvious. The answer is always real. But the poster who said one shouldn't put out bad product over budget limitations is living in a dream world. The composition itself is more important than whether the song has a sampled drum or a real drum on it. And the truth is, not everyone is wealthy, nor is everyone working on unlimited budgets. I'm sure not....

TH

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Bob Olhsson](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 03:16:22 GMT
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Sampled parts can be way better than lame drumming but they can't touch the feel of truly great drumming.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [maxim](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 06:54:27 GMT
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likewise with the grand, and, i think, a lot of it has to do with the sympathetic vibrations the artist himself feels when playing the instrument

it's an inspirational feedback loop

having said that, whatever works, as long as you're feeling it

i find loops too monotonous, even on bitches' brew and stuff like the pop hits from the last 30 years

it's fine for disco dancing, 'coz that's what u want, but too limiting, for my tastes, for music appreciation/creation

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Eric Bridenbaker](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 07:04:19 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Bob Olhsson wrote on Mon, 06 June 2005 23:16 Sampled parts can be way better than lame drumming but they can't touch the feel of truly great drumming.
Yep, that's pretty much it, all that sound replacer, DKFH, BFD even D4 trigger stuff can make a weak player sound stronger, throwing a few timing corrections to boot.... They can make a MIDI file sound alright too.

But the question remains, when is the drummer coming in to cut the track for real?

I've worked on tracks using the BFD, DFHS, Artist Drums, Double Platinum... The programming has impressed a few drummers, who then came in to do the actual track.

As someone who has experience with this stuff, I have to say that this is the BEST YET, and quite remarkable in it's own right, but still ends up being a slightly more advanced Nintendo Nuendo in the end. I'll take it over Doctor Rhythm anyway.

Also used the groove sample libraries on occasion...The "ESSENCE" of Joey Kramer, Mick Fleetwood, Steve Gadd Library...etc. etc. , but you know what? I don't even know these guys.

Probably might recognize them in a lineup though...

How can that be the same?

Cheers,
E

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Eric Bridenbaker](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 07:07:28 GMT
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DBL Post :)

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [J.J. Blair](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 10:25:16 GMT
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Tom, I'm not saying I can spot the fake. I'm saying that as a real engineer in a real studio, I can do a better drum sound than any emulation software can in somebody's bedroom. I'm not saying that the software sucks. I'm saying it's not as good.

And I've never heard a solo'd piano that I couldn't tell was midi. They have yet to duplicate the sound of the soundboard and the undampened sympathetic strings responding to what's being played.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ryst](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 11:19:10 GMT
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I have BFD and I plan on getting DKFH. But I only use them for writing purposes. When I can afford to cut real drums in a studio, I will. But I am not gonna quit writing because I don't have access to a great drum room to record in. I agree, nothing beats the real thing. Although, I have heard plenty of over-gated, over-compressed, over-processed real drums that have been edited to death in PT and sound fake. That almost bothers me more. If you are gonna time-correct everything, why even use a real drummer? It totally defeats the purpose of a real drummer does it not? Does the drummer suck? Or is the engineer trigger happy? Or both?

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Bob Olhsson](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 12:11:57 GMT
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It's important to understand that there have never been a lot of truly great, as opposed to famous, drummers. Part of the challenge is coming up with the money to pay exceptional musicians. The good news is that you'll save a bundle on studio time provided the studio is well enough equipped to not slow down the process.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios

Posted by [J.J. Blair](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 13:56:12 GMT
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ryst, I don't think anybody is suggesting that you don't use the software for that purpose.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ryst](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 16:15:47 GMT
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J.J. Blair wrote on Tue, 07 June 2005 14:56ryst, I don't think anybody is suggesting that you don't use the software for that purpose.

I know. I was just chiming in. Just providing another perspective on the discussion. :)

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [rankus](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 16:55:13 GMT
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ryst wrote on Tue, 07 June 2005 04:19 real drums that have been edited to death in PT and sound fake. That almost bothers me more. If you are gonna time-correct everything, why even use a real drummer? It totally defeats the purpose of a real drummer does it not? Does the drummer suck? Or is the engineer trigger happy? Or both?

This should become the topic for a whole new thread. I agree that "griding" drum tracks is getting out of hand in the same way that the "loudness war" is..... It is ruining music!

One producer I know uses the best damn drummer in Canada for his sessions (I mean this drummer is solid and has a ton of feel)....Plays an \$8000.00 DW kit , gold records , etc. ... But the instant the drummer has packed up, out comes the slice and dice tools and by the next time I hear the tracks it sounds EXACTLY like a drum machine with no swing or groove.... Then they do the same with the bass, gtrs, vox etc..... The end product is completely without feel and is slick as hell (as opposed to smooth).... When I mention my thoughts the reply is "this the way it has to be done if you want it on the radio"..... (Sounds like the same lame argument as loudness to me)...

Sorry for the hijack.... Rant over.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ryst](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 17:47:58 GMT
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rankus wrote on Tue, 07 June 2005 17:55ryst wrote on Tue, 07 June 2005 04:19 real drums that have been edited to death in PT and sound fake. That almost bothers me more. If you are gonna time-correct everything, why even use a real drummer? It totally defeats the purpose of a real drummer does it not? Does the drummer suck? Or is the engineer trigger happy? Or both?

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Sorry for the hijack.... Rant over.

This is what I am trying to understand. There are a lot of engineers who believe that samples (piano,drums,...everything) don't sound or feel the same as the real thing (and I totally agree). But then some engineers use autotune, edit/compress/and gate the audio to death until they sound like a machine. So it can really go both ways. Real drums are sound more fake and fake drums are sound more real. But the best will always be a great drummer, great kit, great room, and NO EDITING! :d

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [bobkatz](#) on Tue, 07 Jun 2005 21:20:23 GMT
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tomhartman wrote on Mon, 06 June 2005 22:28

This shouldn't turn into a debate on which is better...real or sampled. Because that answer is obvious. The answer is always real. But the poster who said one shouldn't put out bad product over budget limitations is living in a dream world.

TH

Out of context. That is not what I said. I made it clear that we all have to live in the real world. My soul point (pun intended) is that Joan Osborne performing with the Motown crew is a PERFORMANCE. The Performance takes the composition one step further.

Perhaps what we are talking about is "Performance" versus "Composition". In the post that I wrote which you did not quote in its entirety I began by describing how useful the use of samples are to the composer creating his composition. And I acknowledged the fact that few of us can afford to hire, say, Steve Gadd for a day. I also said that I work hard to put life into many sampled recordings I deal with many days of the week.

We all do, day in and day out; but as far as I'm concerned, the recordings which have live performers interacting with each other continue to stand out, time and time again.

I'm not a luddite, I know how hard it is to tell the difference at first glance with some of the current sample sets. But a PERFORMANCE, a real performance?

Quote:

The composition itself is more important than whether the song has a sampled drum or a real drum on it. And the truth is, not everyone is wealthy, nor is everyone working on unlimited budgets. I'm sure not....

You gotta do what you gotta do, we all do. That was not the point of my statement, but rather the point of "let's not confuse a live performance with the assembling of samples, even when the assembling of samples starts to sound to you and your friends and sometimes even to me

'amazingly real and hard to tell from the real thing.'

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [TunaSafeDolphin](#) on Wed, 08 Jun 2005 16:29:21 GMT
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How odd that I came across this thread this morning. For what it's worth, I was up until 2 am last night because a producer friend hired me to play drums over his scratch BFD tracks.

At the end of the session, the BFD stuff sounded like utter sh** compared to the stuff we did. Lifeless, dead, and bland...

-C

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ted nightshade](#) on Wed, 08 Jun 2005 16:39:54 GMT
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Performance vs. composition. When I was studying composition in college I found it very, very frustrating to separate it from performance. And I felt both inane and pretentious scoring the exact performance details, which gets really anal and precise with 20th century notation standards. I mean, if the player can make music, I'd like to give him the idea and see what comes out, not micro-manage his exact phrasing and microdynamics.

In the end what makes sense to me personally, is composing for a specific player. And leaving up to them all the stuff that you won't know until you get there, in the midst of the actual performance...

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [J.J. Blair](#) on Wed, 08 Jun 2005 20:10:02 GMT
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You know, nothing exemplifies performance vs. composition like classical music. I was looking for a version of Debussy's Bergamesque no. 3 (Claire de Lune) for my wedding and I listened to

about 12 different recordings before I decided on Van Cliburn's. The only other one I liked was the Philadelphia Orchestra. Talk about a piece that needs to breathe tempo wise. So many great performers just got it wrong, as far as I could hear.

Now that is an extreme example, but if you want to talk about drumming, it's a great example. Drummers need to be able to be either on top of the beat or behind it depending on the music. Different parts of a song might need different feels. Sequenced drums and too much PT editing can fuck that up for sure.

I have a former friend who worked on a record where the producer would have the band do about 15 takes, then send them away as he edited in PT. This was a band that could play great, too. This was the follow up to their multiplatinum breakthrough album, and of course this one went 'linoleum'. The fact that they got so PT'd and it didn't sound like them didn't help either, I don't think.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [maxdimario](#) on Wed, 08 Jun 2005 20:16:11 GMT
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If you listen to classical performances before 1969 there is more freedom in the performance and in the early part of the century classical musicians used to swing almost like jazz musicians did, as far as playing with the tempo and phrasing.

they must have been amazing live..

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [jfrigo](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 2005 03:45:51 GMT
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maxdimario wrote on Wed, 08 June 2005 13:16 If you listen to classical performances before 1969 there is more freedom in the performance and in the early part of the century classical musicians used to swing almost like jazz musicians did, as far as playing with the tempo and phrasing.

they must have been amazing live..

And early on, many concertos had improvised solos instead of written. Bach was an amazing improvisational musician and multi-instrumentalist. Classical music (as we call it, regardless of whether it is Baroque, Romantic etc.) has lost its improvisational element for the most part.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [kubapk](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 2005 09:27:57 GMT
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Hello there...

I can see something that I do not understand - the name of this discussion is "Drum software hurting pro studios", so it is not like that sampled drums are better or played drums are better or there is performance or there is composition...

The problem is somewhere else...

10 even 5 years ago composer or producer had to come to the studio if they wanted to have real - sounding drums - it does matter if it was film music, commercial music or the Cd...

Now people use such drum toys very very often, especially outside the labels' industry...

So the market is going to be smaller and smaller

This is the problem, not what is better - somebody would like sampled sequences from Trevor Horn, the other person wants to hear only the real great performance...

If composer use the drum toy, we are talking about, he will not come to the studio to record the drums, no job, no money...

This is not the problem for the big name engineers that are among us, of course, but for the rest it might be...

Sorry for this, but that's I see this thing

Best regards for everybody

Kuba Pietrzak

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Giovanni Speranza](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 2005 11:47:03 GMT
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It's incredible, from this topic it seems that the music is finish, no more evolution, no more research. In studios, and only there is the future of music, with real innovation and professional research. Sampled instruments can be helpful, but music is moving on (or SHOULD).

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [Glenn Bucci](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 2005 13:36:49 GMT
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I agree we should not leave mistakes in (usually) but we should for the most part keep in human sounding. Heck Jimmy Page does a solo, and keeps it in with mistakes and all; it still sounds great, as his leads have soul. Chester & Lester is one of my favorite guitar records and I love the live feel of it. Even when things were done that were not suppose to be there, Les Paul says strongly, "keep it in, keep it in".

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [J.J. Blair](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 2005 13:47:56 GMT
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You know, I don't think that it's a question of people thinking that they can get sounds that are as good as real drums, from software. I think it's a question of having too many people with computers and recording software who fancy themselves as engineers, who wouldn't know how to record a real drumkit well if their life depended on it. I don't think studios are losing business to these guys, because these are people who would never be given a budget to record in a studio in the first place.

"Oh, nice Digi 001 setup! Here's \$20k. You can either go to Conway and track drums or you can just pocket the money and give me fake drums."

Sorry, but that scenario never happens. Some young band will work with some clown who does that, ask themselves why their record doesn't sound as good as the other records they hear and then use a real engineer and a real studio next time. I see it over and over again, with people who call me up. Believe me, I'm not losing any sleep because of drum software.

Just because you can DIY doesn't mean you'll like the results.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [ted nightshade](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 2005 14:53:12 GMT
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From Paul Jacob's program notes to his most enjoyable Debussy piano recordings on Nonesuch, Debussy himself played very, very liberally with the rhythms. Apparently he didn't take a lot of time figuring out exactly how to notate the rhythms, he just figured a musician would make it into music.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [compassnt](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 2005 15:09:44 GMT
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J.J. Blair wrote on Thu, 09 June 2005 09:47

Just because you can DIY doesn't mean you'll like the results.

Or that, even if you like them, they are really any good.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [trevord](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 2005 15:47:45 GMT
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ok
i am glad we seperated "composition" from "performance"

now there is one more step
"sh*t composition" vs "good composition"

one
i know of no one, except the greenest noobie on the planet, who uses a grid for drum tracks and calls that the finished product.

two
composers also "perform" drum tracks, using keyboards, the pads of the mpc, v-drums etc. (i am partial to the drum kat for both hand and stick)

three

as far as composition goes, it is most pro to post process the tracks afterwards to add the groove. I am not talking about the "randomize" crap button you see on your MIDI software.

This relates mostly to song structure and goes along the lines of

"the snare should push then pull with the chord change cadence then switch to 7/8 on the last two bars before the turnaround" type of thing. Basically the same stuff you would tell your drummer.

Almost all "pro" MIDI software has the ability to do this now - but no one uses it.

the same way people compare analog to "bad digital"

don't compare live performance to bad composition

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios

Posted by [captain54](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 2005 17:22:32 GMT

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J.J. Blair wrote on Thu, 09 June 2005 08:47 I think it's a question of having too many people with computers and recording software who fancy themselves as engineers, who wouldn't know how to record a real drumkit well if their life depended on it.

I think you're really out of line with that statement, man...

I've seen some really creative cats with a laptop and a copy of Acid Pro and a drum loop collection like Discrete Drums or something run circles around your engineers and producers that sit there with state of the art recording gear, but have not an ounce of ingenuity or imagination because they are afraid of anything new or different...maybe they are threatened or whatever, but the result is the public just keeps getting the same tired thing jammed down their throats...

the more informed that have posted here are not suggesting that you use a drum sample library to replace a real drummer....

I know how to record a drum kit..well? who knows..

I have DFHS software

I have Discrete drums

I have Logic Pro 7

I have Vdrums

I have a well tuned Gretsch acoustic kit, and a modest collection of mics...

I like em' all...

with this rig I can come up with hundreds of ideas that I couldn't come up with if I had to wait to book studio time whenever time or funds allowed.....some cats that have spent thousands of \$1000's on mastering and studio time are pissed when they hear my mixes done with virtual drums and my modest home rig...for a fraction of the cost..YOU might hear my mixes and think they suck...it doesn't matter..

there's a thread on a forum somewhere on the net... folks are trying to do shootouts with drum software and the bootleg track of Bonzo doing "fool in the rain", trying to get it as close to the original as possible...that's a little insane...ain't gonna happen...

the trick is to take the best of both worlds and incorporate them as additional colors to your palette...

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios

Posted by [Glenn Bucci](#) on Fri, 10 Jun 2005 21:23:54 GMT

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captain54 wrote on Thu, 09 June 2005 13:22J.J. Blair wrote on Thu, 09 June 2005 08:47 I think it's a question of having too many people with computers and recording software who fancy themselves as engineers, who wouldn't know how to record a real drumkit well if their life depended on it.

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the trick is to take the best of both worlds and incorporate them as additional colors to your palette...

I agree with you on this. I was listening to a Larry Carlton CD (one of his more recent ones) and half the songs half a drum programming on it, while the other songs have real drums. You can tell the difference of course, but both have a place.

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios

Posted by [J.J. Blair](#) on Sat, 11 Jun 2005 01:16:47 GMT
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captain54 wrote on Thu, 09 June 2005 10:22J.J. Blair wrote on Thu, 09 June 2005 08:47 I think it's a question of having too many people with computers and recording software who fancy themselves as engineers, who wouldn't know how to record a real drumkit well if their life depended on it.

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Captain, at first I thought you were joking with that statement. "Out of line"? Whoa, I guess I touched a nerve. You don't agree that somebody who is a wiz with Acid Pro might not be a recording engineer? I never said that samples or loops suck. In fact, I'm incorporating them into a track I'm producing right now. However, as far as I'm concerned, there absolutely ARE too many guys with computers who call themselves engineers. If I can't drop someone's ass into the middle of Oceanway, and have them track a band or whatever, how can they call themselves an engineer? And we've relaxed the standards of that meaning so much from what it meant when Tom Dowd or even Bill Putnam were engineering.

Making sequences makes you a 'programmer'. It's always been called that. Just because someone is doing it as part of their recording program, and just because they make music in their computer that sounds good does not make them a recording engineer. But few beasts are as difficult to capture as a drum kit, and I'm sorry, but if you can't do that with a live kit, you are not an engineer in my book. I wouldn't hire you as an engineer. Maybe you can make great loops and I'll hire you as a programmer, but an engineer you ain't. (I don't mean 'you' specifically, Captain.)

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [captain54](#) on Sat, 11 Jun 2005 01:54:52 GMT
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J.J. Blair wrote on Fri, 10 June 2005 20:16captain54 wrote on Thu, 09 June 2005 10:22J.J. Blair wrote on Thu, 09 June 2005 08:47 I think it's a question of having too many people with computers and recording software who fancy themselves as engineers, who wouldn't know how to record a real drumkit well if their life depended on it.

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ok....I guess I just reacted to the first part of your statement "there are too many guys with computers and recording software..etc..."

my bad....I would say you are right on the money.....

Subject: Re: Drum software hurting pro studios
Posted by [PUPO](#) on Sat, 11 Jun 2005 03:42:13 GMT
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Quote:You planned to do the entire rhythm section of your recordings with loops. Now you don't like that it sounds canned? One of us is an idiot.

ENGINEER THIS!

That would be part of US that doesn't include me

This was written by SPENCE PEPPARD from Encore Studios as an addendum to February's EQ Guide to Getting It's 100 tips

IMHO, Performance is the ONE thing that'll never be replaced by any type of gear or functions encountered in any type of software, like humanize and stuff like that.

I see BFD software like a really nice PRODUCTION tool. I think pro studios can be hurt in different ways but drum recording is not one of them due to the need of good sounding rooms.

Maybe triggering BFD's will suite a demo with a budget where everyone will be happy...who knows...

PUPO

Hope u can understand my english.
:roll:
