Buchla Ziggy



The Buchla Ziggy is a new instrument formed around the famous Buchla “complex oscillator.” With a new, “unpatched” instrument experience, Ziggy offers quick, gestural means of assigning modulation and composing music. Ziggy incorporates many of the Buchla innovations that have long been taken for granted: digital control over the analog audio, additive synthesis, unique and musical interactions, and the focus on making an “instrument” rather than a “synthesizer.”

Ziggy modernizes and simplifies a familiar Buchla tradition: composing music in a style of synthesis often associated with the western coast of America. Like any musical instrument, it can be played on its own, crafting sequences and sounds from its unique arrangement of controls. It pairs very nicely with a portable keyboard like the Buchla LEM 218, but It also plays with a large range of third-party devices and DAWs through MIDI, USB, and 1v/octave CV. Electronically, Ziggy’s oscillators and low-pass gate are purely analog. Digital control over these elements gives Ziggy the ability to save programs at the touch of a button and modulate in creative ways. A digital effects unit gives shape to the final sound, with a selection of reverbs, delays, distortions, and more.

There are a number of unique ways to shape your sounds internally and externally. The Cycler is an original modulation source that acts like the combination of a clock, envelope generator, LFO and random generator. With it, you can modulate pitch and timbre and/or trigger the gate envelopes. Other modulation sources include an “extra” slow LFO and external MIDI control. Rather than using cumbersome patch

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cords, modulation is assigned with switch selection and dialed in with the encoder or its own associated sliders. The modulation oscillator acts as the primary modulation source at low frequency or audio rates to modulate the Complex Oscillator with AM or FM modulation, and is often blended as a second sound source. The Envelope for the Low Pass Gate (a combination amplifier/filter) can be shaped by selecting common envelopes and manipulated in time and amount, rather than attack, decay, sustain, release.

Creatively, it is easy to quickly make music and design sounds with Ziggy. Assigning modulation to different parameters is made with simple gestures of holding buttons and moving sliders. Surprise is certain, with a source of “uncertainty” available for the Cycler’s attributes. Sounds are easily saved with the simple preset system. Glowing LEDs indicate assignments and modulations. Its unique analog sounds are sure to delight and entertain. Special chaotic modulators can be accessed from the menus, driving the sounds in unusual ways. Scales and alternate tunings expand your musical universe while pitch sliders can be quantized to scales to make them melodically playable

Musically, Ziggy is versatile. With two analog oscillators, multiple modulators, a variety of tunings, envelopes, and wavefolding and shaping, there’s a variety of sounds to be made. While Buchla is often associated with the purely experimental, there’s strange strings, wonderful drums, exotic leads, plucky percussions, and deeply felt basses that can be synthesized from Ziggy. Practically, Ziggy fits well in a small studio. The patchcord-free design, simple USB-C power, and comprehensive MIDI control makes it easy to add to your kit; its handsome, durable enclosure of oak and steel with classic Buchla style makes it belong. Configure the device through its simple menus or using a web browser and the web app.

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