Spitfire Audio NOK CULTURAL ENSEMBLE - TAPE PERCUSSION



Spitfire Audio announces the availability of NOK CULTURAL ENSEMBLE - TAPE PERCUSSION as its latest release - realised in close collaboration with the Nok Cutural Ensemble (NCE) collective of percussion prodigies (rooted in traditional African and Caribbean musical concepts, aesthetics, and forms, inspired by the ancient civilisation of Nok dating back to 500 BC but drawing particularly on the legacy of cultural ensemble bands from Sixties-West Africa) as an intuitive toolkit that encapsulates explosive Afro-percussion articulated through free jazz sensibilities and glitching beats that unfold on African timelines to extend the futuristic pulse of dub technologies, recorded to tape at Ariwa Sounds, a renowned reggae studio setup in South London, and presented in the sound-specialising British music technology company’s award- winning AAX-, AU-, VST2-, and VST3-compatible, NKS (Native Kontrol Standard)-ready plug-in that loads into all major DAWs (Digital Audio Workstations) without the need for any additional software - as of July 7…

Spitfire Audio’s NOK CULTURAL ENSEMBLE - TAPE PERCUSSION obviously owes its intriguing-sounding name to NCE, a collective of percussion prodigies led by London- based drummer and producer Edward Wakili-Hick, himself an original member of the South London artist collective Steam Down and present-day player with MOBO (Music of Black Origin) Awards-winning British jazz group Son of Kemet.

Phoca PDF

All are leading lights playing across different genres underpinning London’s eclectic jazz and beat scenes. Together, they craft a visionary rhythmic continuum that tunes into living traditions stretching back through time to ancient civilisations, and calls in liberated futures through experimental frequencies and propulsive, frenzied textures. As a modern take on the drum/percussion ensemble, possibly the oldest instrumental formation in human history, the collective in question is rooted in traditional African and Caribbean musical concepts, aesthetics, and forms, inspired by the ancient civilisation of Nok dating back to 500 BC but drawing particularly on the legacy of cultural ensemble bands from Sixties-West Africa. “We’re looking to those groups and concerts for inspiration, but doing it from our time and experience,” explains Edward Wakili-Hick himself, before adding: “We’re interpreting that through electronics, drum machines, and more.”



Notably, NCE is on a musical mission to celebrate the diversity of global black percussive styles and the cultures from which they emerge, embodied in the five

Phoca PDF

FULL KITS - comprising detailed drum hits from five distinctive acoustic and electronic drum kits - pulled from the explosive epicentre of London's multi-faceted jazz scene that are at the beating heart of the NOK CULTURAL ENSEMBLE - TAPE PERCUSSION collection. All are deeply sampled with three dynamic layers and three round robins. Representing a selection of rarely-sampled African and Caribbean percussion, shakers, and bells - including the Kpanlogo, Ravann, Shekere, and Agogo - that have effectively journeyed several-thousand kilometres, are six one-shot PERCUSSION patches. Elsewhere, eight KIT LOOPS - tempo-synced drum loops fusing contemporary jazz with African percussion, Caribbean rhythms, and dub-inspired warps - stems out on the keyboard, so NOK CULTURAL ENSEMBLE - TAPE PERCUSSION users can play the full loop on a single key, or deconstruct it key-by-key for dramatic effect, drama that continues across ATMOSHERES - two experimental drum loops played live with various kits and percussion that reach beyond rhythm to capture the essential character of each instrument's sound. Then there are 13 TONAL WARPS, which transform percussive hits into tuned synths and pads - some dark, some bright, and some searing with chaos, behind which sit a range of premium effects accessed via five controls: REVERB - controls the amount of reverb being added from a bespoke collection of seven impulse responses, spanning short studios and rooms through to long, cavernous churches and halls; RELEASE - changes the length of the release of a note; TAPE SAT. (saturation) - controls the amount of tape saturation added; and ATTACK - changes the length of the attack of a note; plus, of course, Spitfire Audio's award-winning AAX-, AU-, VST2-, and VST3-compatible, NKS-ready plug-in's all-important dynamics fader - this time allowing NOK CULTURAL ENSEMBLE - TAPE PERCUSSION users to fade into a processed signal featuring bespoke effects by dub titan Mad Professor and his son, Joe Ariwa, at Ariwa Sounds, a renowned reggae studio setup in South London.

As a renowned hub of dub and reggae music, it is little wonder that NCE founder Edward Wakili-Hick worked with fellow percussionists Onome Edgeworth and Joseph Deenmamode (a.k.a. Mo Kolours) in both rooms at Ariwa Sounds to fuse together analogue and digital elements, recording live and straight to tape at Are we Mad? - Mad Professor's room, comprising equipment from the original Ariwa Sounds studio - with those tape takes then transferred to the digital plane in Ariwa Studio, a well-equipped air-conditioned control room designed especially for mixing, by Joe Ariwa. Indeed, in creating the NOK CULTURAL ENSEMBLE - TAPE PERCUSSION samples alongside recordings destined for Njhyi, Nok Cutural Ensemble's upcoming debut album release - itself the result of extended group improvisations on acoustic and electronic percussion already available to pre-order online (https://sarecordings.com/release/318283-nok-cultural-ensemble-njhyi-) as both a limited- edition vinyl and digital download release via London-based label and music platform SA Recordings (committed to releasing digital and physical works, commissioning creative projects, producing limited-edition merchandise, and developing bespoke, artist-led sample libraries in collaboration with Spitfire Audio), the collective of percussion prodigies concerned drew upon the legacy of the ingenious dub rhythmic scientists that changed the face of music, including such seminal figures as Lee Scratch Perry. "It's important to remember that dub is one of the original electronic musics," maintains Edward Wakili-Hick, who applied his

independent learning from African ethnomusicologists to technology: “Over lockdown I was learning more music tech and saw that - on a digital level - there are so many European frameworks in terms of how we think about sound.”

Amazing artist-led sampling - encapsulating explosive Afro-percussion articulated through free jazz sensibilities and glitching beats that unfold on African timelines to extend the futuristic pulse of dub technologies, recorded to tape at Ariwa Sounds - is clearly discernible when working with NOK CULTURAL ENSEMBLE - TAPE PERCUSSION, any result of which surely speaks for itself. “It will be an amazing addition to any producer or composer’s toolkit; whether wanting to add really cool, rare percussion sounds to a piece or just delve out of your comfort zone and make something that you’ve never made before, this library will definitely inspire you to do so,” summarises Spitfire Audio in-house composer Cairo St Luce-Sinclair - and rightly so.

NOK CULTURAL ENSEMBLE - TAPE PERCUSSION is available as an AAX-, AU-, VST2-, and VST3-compatible plug-in supporting Native Instruments’ NKS (Native Kontrol Standard) for Mac (OS X 10.10 - macOS 11) and Windows (7, 8, and 10 - latest Service Pack) that loads directly into any compatible DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) for a price of only £29.00 GBP/$29.00 USD/€29.00 EUR.

www.spitfireaudio.com

Phoca PDF